

TENANT ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS





Residents Associations

Getting Started

Steps to Success

- 1. Talk to your Landlord** - If you feel that a residents' association would be a good thing for your community, you might want to first contact your Landlord and talk through your ideas with them. Often Landlords can provide help and support to help you get started.
- 2. Talk to residents** – it is important that you find out if there is any support for having an Association in the area, otherwise it is unlikely to survive. There are many ways you can do this, including knocking on doors, speaking to people as you see them locally or at social events in your area. Once you know there is an interest in setting up an association, you can organise an informal get together at a community venue to talk about
 - The important issues in your area
 - Explain what a residents' association is and what it can do
 - What needs to happen to set up a formal set up an association
 - Set up a steering group
- 3. Setting up a steering group** - It is a really good idea to have group of people at the beginning who can “steer” the setting up of the Association and share what needs to be done before the association is formally up and running. The types of tasks the steering group can carry out to set up a formal association are:
 - Agree the aims of the residents' association (for example to work with our teams and other agencies to bring about environmental and home improvements in your area; to build community spirit and cohesion; to influence services that impact on your community)
 - Develop a constitution – there are lots of examples of constitutions on the internet or you can look in the Tpas Resouce Hub too.
 - Organise a public inaugural meeting to agree the constitution and elect a committee to run the association.
- 4. Support Places for People can offer**
 - If the resident association is constituted with a bank account it may be eligible for a £100 set up grant from Pfp. This will be to help cover any initial costs such as room hire, publicity and stationary. To claim this grant an 'RA start-up grant application' form must be completed.
 - A constituted resident association may also be eligible for a £100 annual running grant after review by the Customer Engagment team. The residents association would need to be able to demonstrate that during the previous year they have adhered to all relevant Pfp policies in relation to customer engagement, code of conduct and equality and diversity. To claim this grant an 'RA annual grant application' form must be completed.



- For a non-constituted residents association without a bank account the Customer Engagement team will offer appropriate support and guidance, and may cover costs directly on behalf of the group for items such as room hire, publicity and stationary.

5. Organising your inaugural public meeting:

Prior to the meeting

- Choose a venue, day and time that is likely to be convenient for most people
- Make sure your venue is accessible
- Make sure you appoint an independent person to chair the meeting and also ask someone to take the minutes.
- Send out notification advising the date of meeting. This can be done as part of a newsletter. Also invite people to put themselves forward to be on the new committee. Advise anyone who is interested to E mail you with their details and what position they are interested in
- Agree the agenda for the meeting. This should be quite short and include agreeing the constitution and election of the committee. You will find an example of an agenda in Appendix A
- Prepare a formal invitation and send it out with the agenda and proposed constitution to everyone who you are hoping to represent. This should be done at least 10 days in advance. You can also invite further nominations for the committee but if so you will need to include a deadline date, say a week before
- Once you have all committee nominations in you can send out a role description of the positions they are interested in and also explain how election process will work at the meeting – see below. Example role descriptions and an idea of the skills required for each role are shown in Appendix B
- Print out copies of the constitution, agenda, voting forms for distribution at the meeting. Example voting forms can be found in Appendix C

At the meeting

- The independent Chair should welcome and introduce people to the meeting
- They should give some background as to why the Resident Association has been set up and what it is hoping to achieve
- The constitution should then be agreed
- Next the Chair should read out the nominations for each position and ask for volunteers from the floor to second each nomination. If a nomination is seconded, the next step is to conduct a vote by a show of hands.
- If the number of nominations received is greater than the number of places available on the committee, a ballot will be required to elect the members. Elections should be overseen by the independent chair
- Once the committee is finalised the independent chair can hand over the elected new chair to complete the meeting outlining the next steps and planned business.



Appendix A

Example agenda for Inaugural meeting

Anyplace Residents' Association

Public meeting

6pm until 7pm on 7 April 2017 at Local Community Centre

AGENDA

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Welcome and introductions | 6pm to 6.05pm |
| 2. Information/Background the residents' association | 6.05pm to 6.15pm |
| 3. Constitution for Anyplace Residents' Association | 6.15pm to 6.35pm |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview of the constitution• Questions and any proposed amendments• Vote to adopt the constitution | |
| 4. Election of committee | 6.35pm to 6.50pm |



- Nominations
- Voting
-

5. Next Steps and Questions

6.50pm to 7pm

Note: The above timings may be different depending on availability of the venue, length of time residents are available, the arrangements for covering each agenda item and how much information is circulate in advance.

Appendix B – Example Role Descriptions and Skills

Chair

Role description for the Chair

1. Overview of the role

The role of the Chair is to ensure that:

- The residents' association functions properly
- There is full participation at meetings
- Effective decisions are made and carried out.

2. Functioning of the residents' association

The Chair is responsible for the following specific tasks relating to the functioning of the association:

- To plan and run meetings in accordance with the constitution, code of conduct and equality and diversity policy
- To ensure matters are dealt with in an orderly and efficient manner
- To agree the minutes (brief notes) of the association's meetings, prior to circulation by the Secretary
- To facilitate change and address conflict within the committee
- To plan for recruitment of members.

3. Represent the association

The Chair will be expected to:



- Communicate effectively the vision and purpose of the association
- Advocate for and represent the association at meetings with external agencies
- Submit funding bids on behalf of the association.

4. Chairing meetings

During a meeting, the Chair should:

- Welcome everyone and request details of any apologies received
- Ensure the agenda is followed, including managing the time available for the meeting
- Bring impartiality and objectivity to meetings and decision making
- Ensure that there is full participation at the meetings and facilitate, not dominate, the discussions taking place
- If a vote is carried out at a meeting, and there is no conclusive outcome, the Chair will have the casting vote.

5. Qualities and skill required

The Chair will require the following key qualities and skills:

- Good leadership skills
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- A commitment to equality and diversity
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences
- Ability to ensure decisions are taken and followed up
- Good time keeping and attendance
- Tact and diplomacy
- Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the association's committee
- A commitment to personal development.

6. Time commitment

The role of Chair requires an estimated time commitment of at least 10 hours per month.



Treasurer

Role description for the Treasurer

1. The main duties of the Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- a) Receive any membership fees (if the association has these), grants or other contributions. All funds received will be deposited promptly in the association's bank account
- b) Pay all bills and invoices when ordered to do so by the committee of the association, only making payments with written authority signed by two members of the committee (one of whom must be the Chair)
- c) Keep clear and up to date records of all of the association's financial transactions, including all copies of remittances, invoices, receipts and expenses forms
- d) Report the association's account transactions and the balance, at each committee meeting and at the AGM
- e) Ensure that the association's funds are being spent in line with the objectives set out in the constitution
- f) Ensure any grant funding is used in accordance with the grant criteria
- g) Keep an inventory of any equipment purchased or owned by the association.

2. Qualities and skills required

- a) Good numeracy skills
- b) Ability to keep accurate account details either in writing or in an electronic spreadsheet
- c) Good administration and record keeping skills.



Secretary

Role description for the Secretary

1. Duties of the Secretary

The Secretary shall perform the following duties:

- a) Receive and forward correspondence to the relevant member(s) of the committee
- b) Assist the Chair in arranging meetings, including the AGM. This will include booking venues, preparing the agenda for meetings with the Chair, sending out meeting invitations and meeting agendas
- c) Prepare committee meeting agendas with the Chair. This will include capturing agenda items from members and partner agencies
- d) Record apologies received in advance of each committee meeting and report such apologies at the committee meeting
- e) Take minutes of each of the committee's meetings
- f) Check committee meeting minutes, with the Chair person, prior to circulation
- g) Circulate minutes from each committee meeting in advance of the next meeting
- h) Keep accurate, up to date membership records.

2. Qualities and skills required

- a) Good organisational and planning skills
- b) Good literacy skills (computer literacy would be an advantage)
- c) Ability to set up and maintain record systems.



Appendix C – Voting forms

(TRA LOGO)	(TRA NAME) Election of (ROLE)	PLEASE VOTE FOR ONE CANDIDATE ONLY

