

**Tower  
Hamlets  
Homes**

# **Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs)**

## **Information Pack**

**Reviewed July 2018**



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## **Why start a Tenants and Residents Association?**

There are many reasons for tenants and residents to get together and form an Association. Listed below are a few of the main ones:

- To work together with Tower Hamlets Homes to improve the services and building improvements you receive;
- To liaise with LBTH, Councillors and others on community matters such as parking in the neighbourhood or anti-social behaviour.
- To campaign for/against something, for instance the closure of a local school, changes in the caretaking services or the effects of new housing laws;
- To make sure your voice is heard and help build a sense of achievement and pride in the community;
- To organise outings and other social events such as summer fun days;
- To apply for grants to benefit the community – e.g. setting up a pensioners' group;

If you are interested in setting up a Tenants and Residents Association in your neighbourhood please read the policy and procedure for doing so.

## **THH Policy on Tenants and Residents Associations**

Tower Hamlets Homes are strong advocates of tenants and residents associations (TRAs). We are committed to grassroots community voice and representation and we believe that resident groups help in creating better communities.

Tower Hamlets Homes believes a Tenants and Residents Association is a great way for residents in our neighbourhoods to come together to liaise with us on housing issues as a collective group of residents. A Tenants and Residents Association is also an organisation that can benefit the community by promoting activities and events which promote social cohesion and well-being.

Tower Hamlets Homes will financially support a Tenants and Residents Association and supply staff to attend meetings as long as a Tenants and Residents Association adheres to our Recognition Criteria.

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## **Being 'recognised'**

THH supports residents to set up a Tenants and Residents Association and will provide the following benefits:

- Provide relevant staff attendance at meetings
- Give a small annual administration grant to the Tenants and Residents Association (£100 plus 0.50p per property)
- Facilitate access to free training
- Provide photocopying, printing, computer access, etc. at the Residents Resource Centre
- Invite representatives to take part in consultation meetings, events & estate inspections
- Consult the Tenants and Residents Association on major changes

To benefit from the above, the Tenants and Residents Association must be 'recognised' by THH.

## **Recognition Criteria**

- TRAs must adopt a constitution (set of rules). The THH model constitution is available and can be varied to reflect the group's specific aims and objectives but it must be agreed with THH. The constitution must include a code of conduct and an equal opportunities policy.
- A Tenants' and Residents Association should have clearly defined geographic boundaries e.g. an estate, block or named streets.
- An inaugural (initial) general meeting to set up the TRA must take place and all residents in the designated area must be invited to it. This shall be followed by three general meetings (one per quarter) and the next year's Annual General Meeting.
- TRAs must keep clear and accurate records showing the income received and how it has been spent. All groups should have clear financial systems to minimise the potential misuse of funds and be open and accountable.
- THH (or an independent organisation/individual agreed with THH) shall be invited to oversee all AGMs to insure transparency and compliance with constitution.
- TRAs must co-operate with any requests for information by THH and supply this within an agreed and reasonable timeframe.
- TRAs must supply details of their AGM i.e. copy of notice, annual report, accounts, committee details and contact information for THH web site.

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## **How to set up a Tenants and Residents Association**

Anyone interested in setting up a Tenants and Residents Association shall canvass the support of at least 10% other residents using our survey template. Depending on circumstances of the support, the following step will then be pursued:

A minimum of 10 people who expressed an interest in getting involved in a TRA shall meet with a THH Community Partnerships Officer, to work together to agree a draft constitution, roles and responsibilities and agree dates and plan for the inaugural AGM.

a.

Once a decision to proceed is made, the draft constitution will be made available either at a local community centre, THH office or online, for all residents review prior to an inaugural (set up) general meeting. The meeting shall agree the constitution and vote in a Committee /Officers.

Once the committee/officers are voted in they will sign the constitution and give a copy to Tower Hamlets Homes.

Tower Hamlets Homes will supply the Tenants and Residents Association with a grant application form. The Community Partnerships Officer can assist the Tenants and Residents Association at the first few meetings (as required) and advise on what training is available to help the association function effectively.

# **TOWER HAMLETS HOMES**

## **Annual Small Grant for Tenants' & Residents' Associations**

### **Small Grant Application Form**

**and**

### **Guidance Notes**

Tower Hamlets Homes  
Resident Engagement Team  
Jack Dash House  
2 Lawn House Close  
London  
E14 9YQ

**1. Official TRA name & postal address:**

(Please note this will be published on our website and in newsletters)

**2. Contact Name & Position:**

Tel No: .....

Can this be published?                      YES:                      NO:

E-mail: .....

Can this be published?                      YES:                      NO:

**3. Contact Address** (if different to above – if Community centre does not have a letterbox, please do not use this address):

**4. When was your TRA set up?**

**5. Does your TRA have a Constitution?**                      YES:                      NO:

**Does THH have this on file?**                      YES:                      NO:

If not, please attach.

**6(a) When did your TRA last hold an Annual General Meeting?**

**6(b) What is the date of your next AGM?**

**7. Please list the members of the TRAs Management Committee  
(name, address & telephone number):**

Chairperson:

Vice Chair:

Secretary:

Treasurer:

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**8. Where do you hold your meetings & how often?**

**9. Have you previously received a Small Grant funding from Tower Hamlets Homes? If so, when and how much was received?**

**10. How many properties does your TRA cover?**

**11. Name of Housing Estate(s) & blocks served by your TRA:**

**12. Equal Opportunities:**

(a) How does the TRA ensure that its services/activities are available to all local Estate-based tenants/residents represented by the TRA?

(b) How does the TRA aim to achieve equal opportunities/access in terms of people using and running the TRA?

(c) Is the building at which your TRA is based accessible to people with disabilities?

**13. Amount of Small Grant requested:**

(Note: All Groups are entitled to £100 plus an additional 0.50 pence per household in the defined area covered by the group's constitution or number of subscribed members to a maximum of £550.)

**14. Please provide your Bank Details:**

Account Name:

Sort Code:

Account Number:

Bank Address:

Cheque made payable to:  
(Name of group)



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**15. Declaration**

(Please print your name. You must sign and date the application form and tell us what position you hold in the organisation. The TRA's signatory must be a member of its Management Committee).

I declare that the information in this application form and attachments is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

FULL NAME

.....

POSITION IN TRA

.....

SIGNED

.....

DATE

.....

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## **Section B: Additional Information/Details**

### **1. Grant Supplementary Documents**

The following items must be provided by all TRAs with their application, if not already provided.

- Constitution
- Accounts or Income/Expenditure Statement
- Minutes from your last AGM.
- Equal Opportunities/Access Policy

Failure to provide any of the above items with the application will result in a delay in considering your TRA's application. If not supplied, the application for a grant will be rejected.

### **2. Where to send the completed application form**

Please return your completed application to:

THH  
Community Partnerships Team  
Jack Dash House  
2 Lawn House Close  
London  
E14 9YQ

### **3. Use of information included in application form**

#### **DATA PROTECTION ACT, 1984**

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets seeks to uphold the principles of the Data Protection Act. The personal information provided by you will be held upon computer. The data will be used for the purpose of the administration of grants. The personal data will be used exclusively within the Council and not disclosed to third parties.

GDPR

## **GUIDANCE NOTES**

Please read the guidance information and questions carefully before you begin. In answering each question, be as clear and concise as possible as it will help us make an informed decision about grant application.

Similarly, you will also find attached our criteria for recognising a Tenants' & Residents' Association (TRA). In order to be awarded the Small Grant, your TRA must meet all the criteria outlined in this document.

Applicants need to complete all Sections of the form, along with the 'Declaration' in Section B of the application form.

**GUIDANCE NOTES – APPLICATION FORM**  
(Refer to appropriate question on application form)

Section A: Details About Applicant

### **Questions 1 – 9:**

These are basic organisational questions. The key point is to ensure that the named contact person is the most appropriate person and is available to discuss the application.

### **Question 10:**

Please state the number of Tower Hamlets Homes properties your TRA covers.

### **Question 11:**

Please outline specifically the names of the Tower Hamlets Homes housing blocks that your TRA represents. Do not just provide the name of the housing estate in which your TRA is located. Please note that this information will determine the level of funding received by your TRA and, as such, will be verified by officers.

### **Question 12:**

As a significant provider of services and/or activities for local residents, the voluntary sector plays a vital part in ensuring that equal opportunities and accessibility for a wide section of the community is maintained. It is important to let us know how your TRA is working towards achieving equal opportunities and/or accessibility in your TRA. Please note that equal opportunities requirements have a significant input into all Tower Hamlets Homes policies, such as the work of the Strategic Engagement Team and the criteria for awarding funding such as an annual Small Grant.

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**Question 13:**

Please indicate the amount of grant requested from Tower Hamlets Homes.

Level of Grant available

All Groups are entitled to £100 per group and £0.50 pence per household in the defined area covered by the group's constitution or number of subscribed members to a maximum of £550.

**Question 14:**

Please provide details of TRA bank account. Payments either will be via Bacs transfer (quickest and safest) or cheques.

**Question 15:**

Declaration

Please print your name. You must sign and date the application form and tell us what position you hold in the organisation. The TRA's signatory must be a member of its Management Committee. Section B: Additional Information/Details

**Supplementary documents****Constitution:**

As well as outlining the rules and regulations of your TRA, a Constitution usually outlines the Association's aims/objectives, as well as describes the broad areas of interest for your TRA. Please ensure that we have a copy of your TRA's Constitution, or that you submit one with this application.

**Accounts or income/Expenditure Statement:**

Please check with your TRA's accounts, cash books and financial statements first before answering this question. Provide a summary of all income and expenditure for your TRA in your financial year.

**AGM Minutes:**

Please provide a copy of your most recent Annual General Meeting minutes.

**Equal Opportunities/Access Policy:**

Please provide details of those tenants/residents that will benefit, such as youth, elderly people and black minority ethnic communities. Include qualitative data, numbers of tenants/residents that will benefit from, and use, TRA activities/services, positive changes and impact throughout the neighbourhood/housing estate in addressing issues.

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# THH Model Constitution

## TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

### 1. NAME

1.1 The association shall be known as

.....Tenants and Residents Association.

1.2 The area and blocks covered by the Association are

.....

### 2. OBJECTS

The objects of the Associations shall be:

- To promote residents rights and seek to improve the housing and other services;
- To encourage a sense of community by promoting a multi-racial society and opposing racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination;
- To represent the interests of residents in consultation with the local authority and other bodies;
- To provide regular information to all members;
- To regularly consult all members;
- To be non-party political and non-religious.

### 3. AFFILIATIONS

The Associations shall have the power to affiliate to any body whose objects may benefit the membership.

### 4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Membership is open to all THH tenants and residents living in the area, (stated above 1.2).

4.2 One tenant or one leaseholder per household can be a voting member.

4.3 Councillors of LBTH are not eligible for membership.

4.4 It is a condition of membership that Members at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable manner at meetings or in premises used by the Association. A member may be suspended for breach of this condition, or for any other conduct not in line with the aims of the Association. Any member so suspended has the right of appeal to the following General Meeting before expulsion takes place. Racist or sexist behaviour will not be tolerated and will be grounds for suspension.

### 5. SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Annual General Meeting shall have the power to decide what subscriptions (if any) shall be paid by members.

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## 6. THE COMMITTEE

6.1 The business of the Association shall be conducted by a committee, elected at the Annual General Meeting which shall consist of a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer (the Officers) plus no more than 4 others. Not more than one committee member shall come from any one household.

6.2 The Association shall try to ensure the composition of the Committee shall represent the multi-racial character of the estate.

6.3 No officer shall hold office for more than three consecutive years unless this is the express wish of the AGM.

6.4 Any member or officer delegated to represent the association in consultation with any other body shall act on the instruction of the Association and shall report back to the following committee or General Meeting, whichever is the sooner.

6.5 The election or removal of officers or committee members may only be carried out by an Annual or General Meeting of the Association. The committee may temporarily fill any vacancy arising among the officers of the Association from its other members until the next General Meeting or AGM.

## 7. MEETINGS

7.1 The committee will make every effort to facilitate the attendance of all members to any of the meetings outlined below by ensuring, as far as possible, appropriate times, dates and venues giving consideration to the difficulties of the membership regarding disability, childcare responsibilities, infirmity etc., and by arranging for the translation of publicity into the appropriate languages if necessary.

### 7.2 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Committee shall meet as necessary as and not less than two times a year. Committee meetings shall be open to any member of the Association wishing to attend who may speak but not vote.

### 7.3 GENERAL MEETINGS

Each year the Associations shall hold at least four General Meetings (including the AGM) which shall be open to the general membership. All decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of members present and voting. The decision of a General Meetings shall be binding on the Committee.

### 7.4 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Association shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM). A representative of the landlord shall be invited to attend.

7.5 The AGM shall:

- 
- Receive an annual report from the Committee
  - Present audited/verified accounts to members
  - Appoint an independent auditor/verifier
  - Elect the Committee
  - Consider any resolutions put forward by members
  - Vote on any amendments to the constitution

#### 7.6 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

A Special General Meeting may be called by the Secretary if requested by at least 10 members at least 28 days before the date on which those members request the meeting to be held.

#### 7.7 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

This Tenants & Residents Association is fully committed to the principle of equal opportunities in its role as a representative organisation for all those living on the Estate. It is our aim that no one resident or group of residents shall receive less favourable treatment than another on grounds of gender, race, colour, religion, age, carer's responsibility's, disability, or sexual orientation. The TRA will try to ensure that all those with whom it works shall be aware of the Equal Opportunities Statement.

### 8 QUORUM

8.1 The quorum for a Committee Meeting shall be one third of the elected members or 4 members whichever is the greater.

8.2 The quorum for General Meetings shall be ten members or 5% of the membership whichever is the smaller.

### 9 NOTICE

9.1 COMMITTEE MEETINGS – All members shall be given not less than seven days' notice displayed locally.

9.2 GENERAL MEETINGS – All members shall be given not less than 14 days written notice delivered to each eligible household. (or displayed locally)

9.3 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – All members shall be given not less than 21 days written notice delivered to each eligible household. The notice must include an agenda, details of nominations to the Committee and any resolutions which include any proposed changes to the constitution.

9.4 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING – At least 10 members or the committee may call a SGM. Members shall be given not less than 21 days written notice delivered to each eligible household. A SGM may only consider the proposal for which it was convened.

### 10 VOTING

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Each voting member shall have one vote on any resolution put before an AGM, General Meeting or Special General Meeting. All votes shall be counted and entered in the minutes.

## 11 MINUTES

All of the above meetings must be minuted and the minutes formally approved by the next relevant meeting. All minutes shall be available for inspection by members of the Association.

## 12 FINANCE

12.1 The Association shall keep proper accounts of all income and expenditure. A bank account shall be opened in the name of the Association by the Treasurer. All cheques issued in the name of the Association shall be signed by two (from a pool of up to five) authorised signatories. The signatories should be from different households and not related to one another.

12.2 The accounts of the organisation shall be available for inspection by any member of the organisation or the representative of the landlord within 28 days. The request for information must be made in writing to the Treasurer.

12.3 The Association shall be a non - profit making organisation and any surplus at the end of the financial year shall be carried forward to the next year but may not be distributed to members.

12.4 Each year, the accounts shall be audited – either by a suitable independent person or an appointed independent auditor. These shall be presented to the AGM.

## 13 CONSTITUTION CHANGES

13.1 Any proposal to alter this constitution must be submitted to the Secretary of the Association not less than 28 days before the General Meeting at which is to be discussed. To be valid, such a proposal must be supported by the signatures of at least ten members. Any such alteration shall require approval of two thirds of those present and voting at the meeting.

13.2 Every member of the organisation shall be given a copy of the constitution when they join. Members shall be given copies of any changes to the constitution.

## 14 DISSOLUTION

If the Committee decides (or if a Committee no longer exists then if any ten members decide) that the Association should be dissolved, they shall give at least 21 days' notice to all those eligible for membership of a meeting at which the matter shall be discussed. For the sole purpose of dissolution a quorum need not apply and the Association may be dissolved by a 2/3 majority of those present. The assets, financial and otherwise, remaining when the Association has satisfied its liabilities, shall



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be applied for such purpose in accord with the objects as the meeting shall decide.

This constitution was adopted at a general meeting on:

.....

**Chairperson**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

**Secretary**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

**Treasurer**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Guidance on understanding your Constitution

Firstly, once you have signed a Constitution you are expected to follow it. This guidance has been produced to address some common issues which have arisen regarding the rules of a Tenants & Residents Association.

**What is a Constitution?** It is a set of rules that sets out what you will do and how you will do it. THH has to agree to the rules to 'recognise' the Tenants & Residents Association to apply benefits such as access to grants, training, staff etc.

**The Constitution states the minimum requirements** that you have agreed with your members and THH. You can always have more meetings but you cannot have less.

### You must do what it says:

- You cannot decide not to bother with for example, a notice in each door for the AGM.
- You cannot decide to hold your AGM longer than one year after the last one.
- The AGM notice must contain the agenda that is stated in the Constitution.
- Your accounts cannot be verified by a member/resident of your Tenants & Residents Association.
- One person cannot have two roles.

**If something is not in** your constitution it does not mean that you cannot do it. For instance, the THH model constitution does not contain a clause on sub-committees because Tenants & Residents Associations have very rarely had any. However, if you do wish to set up a sub committee please contact THH for advice.

**Changing your Constitution** must be done as stated in the rules. However, it may be sensible to act accordingly before waiting for e.g. the next AGM. If your rules do not suit you it is better to change them than break them. Contact us and we can agree a variation until the rules can be changed.

**Breaking your rules is serious.** Any member of the Tenants & Residents Association. Local councillor, member of staff, contractor etc. could put in a complaint that the Tenants & Residents Association is not following its rules. THH would have to investigate and a possible consequence could be that THH would 'de-recognise' the Tenants & Residents Association. This would mean benefits would cease e.g. access to grant, staff at meetings, etc.

Do not forget we are here to help. Get in touch if you are not sure about anything to do with your Constitution.

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**Example Tenants and Residents Association set up flyer**

**Any Estate Residents Meeting**

All residents are invited to a meeting to set up a Residents' Association for Smith Street on:

**Thursday 10th June 20..**

**7pm – 8pm**

**Residents' Hall  
On Any Street**

The benefits and responsibilities of forming a Residents' Association will be discussed and residents in attendance will then make a decision on a set of rules and elect a committee.

For more information about this meeting call

**\*\*\*\*\***

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## **Example Equal Opportunities Statement for Tenants and Residents Associations**

Tenants' and Residents' Associations are required to demonstrate a commitment to an Equal Opportunities Policy in order to receive recognition and support from Tower Hamlets Homes.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ TRA believes it must work towards a harmonious multi-racial community.
2. Therefore, it is committed to opposing all forms of discrimination and oppression. This includes racism, sexism and all forms of discrimination faced by black people and other ethnic communities; by women; by gay men and lesbians and by people with disabilities. The TRA is also committed to acting without discrimination on the grounds of nationality, political or religious belief.
3. The Tenants' & Residents' Association will introduce measures to remove direct and indirect discrimination in any of its activities.
4. The Tenants' & Residents' Association will work towards the development of awareness of equal opportunities issues.

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## **Guidance on Committee Roles**

### ***The Role of the Chair***

The Chair is often the central person of a Committee and is seen as the spokesperson for the group.

#### **A Chairperson should not:**

Take on all the work, responsibilities should be delegated and others should be encouraged to take part.

Express any view that has not been previously discussed by the Committee. The Chair can be often asked to represent the views of the Committee and TRA to external agencies.

Dominate meetings, he/she should maintain control but allow flexibility, encourage everyone to participate while ensuring time is used effectively.

#### **The Chairperson should:**

Prepare the agenda with the Secretary. Make sure it is not too long, and important items are prioritised on the agenda. Work out how long each item should take and ensure enough time is allocated to each item.

Ensure the meeting starts on time and that new people are welcomed. Everyone should be introduced including the guest speakers.

Introduce each agenda item explaining some background and what decisions need to be made.

*During the meeting, ensure –*

Everybody is encouraged to contribute to discussions;  
Ask if translation is needed and make time for this;  
Decisions are made and are understood;  
Order is kept;  
No member dominates the discussion;  
Any jargon (technical terms) used are explained.

At the end of each item, summarise the main points, outline action to be taken and ensure people are encouraged to take on follow up work.

At the end of a meeting set a date, time and place for the next meeting. Thank everyone for attending.

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## ***The Role of the Secretary***

The Secretary is responsible for the organisation of meetings, recording the meeting with minutes, writing letters, keeping members informed of meetings and future events, receiving correspondence and general organisation.

Depending on the size of the TRA, the amount of work can be vast so it may be better to split the job up e.g. minutes taken by the Secretary.

### *Day-to-day duties:*

Writing and receiving letters on behalf of the group.

Keep an up-to-date record of Committee Members' details.

Organise an understandable record keeping system for minutes, correspondence, constitution etc.

Acting as the first point of contact for other organisations.

Keeping all residents informed through newsletters and annual report, including the next TRA meeting dates.

### *Meetings:*

Receive agenda items. Prepare and distribute the agendas and minutes to residents as per the Constitution. For internal/external staff members at least 10 days before a meeting.

Ensure the meeting place is booked, that someone will open up, arrange the venue and close up after the meeting.

### *During the meeting:*

Have a signing in sheet

Take apologies, agree minutes of last meeting;

Record matters arising, present correspondence to Committee;

Record discussion of meeting as simply as possible;

Record decisions accurately, record time meeting ended.

Write up the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting while it is still fresh in the mind and send to committee and staff who were present.

## ***The Role of the Treasurer***

The Treasurer has the overall responsibility for the group's finances. The role of the Treasurer is very important but the amount of work is dependent on how much money the Residents' Association deals with.

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The Treasurer's duties:

Open and maintain a bank or building society account;  
Keep accurate account books of all financial transactions with receipts and invoices;  
Prepare regular financial reports for the Committee;  
Allow, upon reasonable notification, any resident to inspect the account books;  
Prepare the books for an annual audit or independent verification to be presented at the AGM;  
Ensure the bank mandate is up-to-date;  
If considering on-line banking ensure you have policy for use (sample enclosed and available from THH)

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## **Example Code of Conduct for Meetings**

1. Speak through the Chair
2. Follow the guidance of the Chair in the conduct of a meeting
3. Be courteous to each other
4. Respect each participant's view
5. Refrain from making derogatory personal remarks or comments about another member
6. Allow each participant the opportunity to speak without interrupting. Remember only one person can speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak at the same time, the Chair will decide who shall speak first
7. Remember the purpose of the meeting and do not deviate from the agenda
8. Work in partnership with all resident members and Tower Hamlets Homes staff to seek the best results
9. Do not dominate the proceedings at a meeting. This includes – repeatedly muttering, shouting, swearing, talking too long and preventing others from sharing their views or comments, ridiculing others opinions or forcing their own views on others
10. Never use offensive or racist language
11. Never discriminate against another because of their ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, sexuality, class, income, employment status or religious belief
12. Assist all participants to reach effective decisions



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## Signing in Sheet / Register

Any Group TRA Meeting

Thursday 23rd September 2018

7:00 pm – 8.30 pm

Union Hall

Name	Address	Email/Telephone
Bob Smith		
Mohamed Khan		
Patricia Brown		
S. Ali	THH	Ext: 5015

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## **Example of the Any Group Tenants and Residents Meeting Agenda**

Thursday 23rd May 2017  
7.00pm- 8.30pm  
Union Hall, Union Road

### Agenda

1.	Welcome & Introductions	7.00pm
2.	Apologies for absence	7.05pm
3.	Minutes of the last meeting – are they correct?	7.10pm
4.	Matters arising from the minutes	7.20pm
5.	Underwater Rescue International Conference	7.40pm
6.	Funding for Projects	7.50pm
7.	Ideas for training  Members should identify individual topics for training and consider whether a regular training programme is required.	8.00pm
8.	Any other business	8.10pm
9.	Date, time and place of next meeting	8.20pm

## Example of Minutes

**Minutes of Blackwell Tenants' & Residents' Association  
Meeting  
Tuesday 23 May 201 at RHG Community Hall  
7.00pm–8.30pm**

**Present:** *names must be entered to show that it was your members at the meeting and to agree that the minutes are correct at the next meeting.*

### **Apologies:**

**Advice – do not put people's names in minutes e.g. "Ali Baba said ...." ...because Ali Baba may well take up 10 minutes of the next meeting saying he didn't say that. Minute the point, not who said it. Names are needed for actions.**

1	Welcome and Introductions	Action
2	Apologies for absence	
3	Minutes of the last meeting – are they correct?  <b>If not,</b> minute : Item 1 delete " " and insert " " Then when satisfied: (With these corrections), the minutes were agreed as a correct record.	
4	Matters arising from minutes 4.1 4.2	
5	Underwater Rescue Conference: It was agreed that Micky and Mini Mouse will attend	MM & MM
6	Funding for projects; The meeting was informed that ..... and .....grants are available. It was decided ....	
7		
	Date, time and place of next meeting:  Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday 28 April 2018 at 6.00 - 7.00 pm	

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## **Guidance for TRAs on planning an AGM**

This is your celebration of achievements over the year and your chance to recruit new members to your committee - make it informative and enjoyable. Plan well in advance.

Consider:

- What date is likely to get maximum attendance – maybe an evening or weekend?
- Notice period needed for residents (check your constitution).
- What will be on the agenda? Your constitution will state minimum requirements but you can add items.
- Date by which annual report will need to be printed/copied/distributed
- Deadline for production of accounts- get books etc. to auditor/independent verifier in time.
- How will Annual Report be distributed –volunteers or pay a company?
- Do you want to invite a speaker? Think who is most likely to attract attendance. Send invitations immediately.
- Who else is to be invited- THH, funders, Councillors?
- Provision of refreshments / meal / entertainment.
- How will you conduct elections? Maybe someone independent takes this item? (usually THH Community Partnerships team)
- At the meeting, give vote of thanks to outgoing committee and others who have helped over the year.
- Get photograph of newly elected committee for feedback to residents/noticeboard etc.

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## **Example AGM flyer**

(Insert name) TRA AGM

All residents are invited to our Annual General Meeting (AGM)

(Insert date)

(Insert time)

(Insert location)

Speaker: ..... on .....

- Come and find out what we have been doing over the year
- Find out what money we have had and how we have spent it
  - (Any changes to the constitution )
- Come and join us: Elections will take place for: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee members

If you are interested in the above positions or would like more information then please contact

(insert contact details)

*All welcome*



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## **Guidance on producing an Annual Report for TRAs**



This is an important PR document for the TRA. You want people to support you and join you. You want them to come to your AGM. You can also use it to support grant applications. It needs to:

Inform residents who you are – put in a photograph and the names of committee members. Contact details.

Sell the TRA – what have you achieved over the year, not just what you have done.

Highlight what you will be pursuing in the coming year.

**Include** your (simple) financial statement: money in and money out = balance to spend. Thank funders.

**Make** it nice to look at, colourful, with photographs – you want people to want to read it. Any events you held – include photographs. Keep it simple to read.

**Ask** your Community Partnerships Officer for assistance with production or printing.

**Circulate** widely – to every household. Also to other interested parties, landlord, Councillors, funders, voluntary groups.

For further information or advice contact Community Partnerships Officer  
0207 364 5015

**Sample template: Any Tenants & Residents Association**  
**Annual Report**  
**1st January 2015 - 31st December 2016**

<p>Photo:</p> <p><i>Of the committee</i></p> <p><i>Or of a successful event</i></p>	 <p><b><u>Achievements over the year:</u></b></p> <p><b>This year we:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Got more police patrols</li> <li>• Persuaded THH to do increased cleaning</li> <li>• Got Veolia to supply more recycling bins</li> <li>• Held 5 meetings about the major works</li> <li>• Attended 6 estate inspections</li> <li>• We held .....events in the community centre</li> </ul> <p><b>Name .....</b>  <b>Chairperson</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Come and join us next year!</b></p>
<p><b><i>Finance report ££££££££</i></b></p> <p><b>This year we had</b>  <b>£.....income and spent</b>  <b>£ .....</b></p> <p>We have £ .....  available to spend so come to the AGM with ideas of what to spend it on.  <b><i>The full accounts will be available at the meeting.</i></b></p>	
<p><b><i>Going on in the Community Centre</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Toddlers</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Over 50's</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Youth club</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Women's group</i></li> </ul> <p><i>See noticeboard for more information.</i></p>	
<p align="center"><b>Come to our AGM on .....</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Time.....</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Place.....</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Hear more about our year</b>  <b>Accept the accounts</b>  <b>Appoint the auditor/bookkeeper</b>  <b>Vote for your committee</b></p> <p align="center"><b><i>All welcome</i></b></p>	

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## **Guidance on digital engagement within TRAs:**

The purpose of this note is to:

- 1) Acknowledge the growing use of digital technology and social media within TRAs.
- 2) Facilitate the use of these platforms by TRAs in their communications with members.
- 3) Ensure that communications within TRAs remain open, transparent and accountable to members and THH (as well as others, such as THH and funders).
- 4) Ensure that digital forms of communication do not exclude residents who do not use technology or smart phones.
- 5) Increase participation in TRAs by opening them up to those who are unable to attend meetings in person.

### Calling/holding meetings

(e.g. via WhatsApp, email, messenger, Facebook, TRA website etc.)

- You cannot use these applications as a substitute for written notices unless you know that absolutely everyone in the area you represent has access to them.
- If you wish to use them for committee meetings when everyone does have access, you will need to be able to demonstrate the record for this – e.g. take a screenshot and keep it on file.
- You will need signed and dated consent from people to be included or not included in an application (cross reference to Data Protection Guidance).

### Consulting members:

- As above, there must be a printed record of messaging threads for any conversations that have bearing on a decision.
- For any conversations that take place over the phone, there must be a saved record of any important conclusions reached.
- Outcomes of using these methods of consultation should be reported to the next committee or general meeting and include in minutes.

### Decision making:

- Any issue which is to be put to a vote must be very clearly explained. Residents should be given the opportunity to discuss any issues in person with a committee member.
- Any vote cast using digital platforms must be saved on record (i.e. by screenshotting the evidence).



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Tips:

- You may wish to save screenshots and other messaging thread records in a central cloud system such as Dropbox. Members could be given read-only access, and the Secretary editing permissions.
- You could consider using SurveyMonkey as a way of getting people's views on a topic. Seek advice from THH in wording questions as you must be careful not to lead people to certain answers. Please note that you should not be voting on SurveyMonkey.
- You could consider using a free site such as <https://www.wix.com/> to create a simple website for your TRA.

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## **Guidance to TRAs on Data Protection**

The new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) means that all organisations must be more transparent about their use of data.

TRAs will probably be collecting names, addresses and contact details in the following ways:

- Meeting attendance sheets
- Resident details in minutes
- Event registrations
- Email databases and other contact lists
- Social media/websites

### Storing data:

You need to tell residents where this information will be stored, e.g. locked filing cabinet in office/personal flat. This place will need to be secure and you will need to name the people with access.

### Using and sharing data:

You must inform residents about the exact uses to which you will put their data, including any intent to share data with third parties or other members of the TRA. The third parties must be named and a reason for the sharing of information given. You must gain stated consent that is dated and stored in a safe location. This will need to be consent from the child's parents if they are under 16 years of age. Consent can be withdrawn at any time, meaning that the data should be deleted.

### Photographs:

Let residents know if you intend to take photographs at events or meetings and secure stated consent that is dated and stored in a safe location. Inform them that these photographs may be used in annual reports, event publicity, or by THH for promotional purposes. Always offer people the opportunity not to be in pictures.

### Attendance details:

Signing in sheets for meetings should include names, addresses and contact details (email or telephone) but only the name should be entered into meeting minutes. Event registration should also contain this information. TRAs should be clear with residents that this information may be shared with THH or funding organisations for monitoring purposes.

If you are unclear on any of the above points then contact THH for advice. It is advised that you name a person responsible for data handling and processing who can be a point of contact for both THH and residents on this subject.

For more information visit [www.thh.org.uk](http://www.thh.org.uk) or the Information Commissioner's Office: <https://ico.org.uk/ESDWebPages/Entry/Z1261726>.

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## Data Protection Policy for \_\_\_\_\_ TRA

*The intent of this document is to inform residents who attend meetings and events what information will be collected and how it will be used.*

1. The TRA will have reason to collect information from residents. This information will be used for:

- Meeting attendance sheets
- Resident details in minutes
- Event registrations
- Email databases and other contact lists
- Social media/websites
- Add more as required: \_\_\_\_\_.

2. This information may include:

- Names
- Addresses
- Contact numbers
- Email addresses

3. This information will be stored in the following location (tick or delete as appropriate):

(✓)

- Filing cabinet in community centre office
- Filing cabinet in committee officer's home
- Computer in community centre office
- Computer in committee officer's home
- Other (to be specified): \_\_\_\_\_.

4. The TRA may share this information, on request, with:

- Tower Hamlets Homes
- THH external partners
- Grant funders
- Other TRA members only if consent is given
- Any others (to be specified): \_\_\_\_\_.

5. This information will be kept for a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ years (recommended five). Paper information will be shredded and digital information will be deleted. If you wish to have your information deleted, please contact the person named below.

6. The contact within the TRA responsible for resident information is:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact info: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information visit [www.thh.org.uk](http://www.thh.org.uk) or the Information Commissioner's Office: <https://ico.org.uk/ESDWebPages/Entry/Z1261726>.

## Tenants & Residents Association Accounts - 2017/2018

### Basic Cash Book Example

Money in	Date	Description	Money Out	Date	Description	Receipt received
£200 (Cheque)	.....	THH grant towards the fun day	£20	....	Balloons/ Helium	YES
			£20	.....	Bunting	YES
			£ 100	..... ..	Bouncy castle	Yes
Total in: £200			Total spent: £140			

Balance carried forward to next month: £60

**If you will be managing several grants and/or a community building you will need more sophisticated accounting. Contact THH for advice.**

# Sample Financial Report

**Any Tenants & Residents Association**

**Date from – Date to (not just year)**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
Hall hire	
Over 50's	
Grant for events	
Somali women's grant	
THH TRA grant	
THH Inspiring Communities Fund grant	
Misc.	
<b>Total income</b>	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Insurance	
Repairs	
Rubbish collection	
Over 50s	
Grant for events	
Office	
Equipment	
Somali Women's Grant	
THH Inspiring Communities Fund grant	
Misc.	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	

**Income - Expenditure = balance £ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Balance brought forward from last year = £ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Final balance for the year = £ \_\_\_\_\_**

**This includes Over 50's funds of £ \_\_\_\_\_ and £ \_\_\_\_\_ of Somali women's group funds** *(include any money is not the TRA's)*

**Therefore, operating (useable) balance is £ \_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Treasurer**

**Accounts prepared by: Name**

**Accounts audited/verified by: Name, Address, Contact details**

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**Debit Card policy of ..... adopted at  
.....meeting on .....**

The .....(name of group) shall have only one debit card. The debit card can be used by a maximum of two authorised persons who shall be bank signatories.

The management committee will issue a debit card to.....for use in relation to purchases and payments only for and by..... (if two, enter two names)

Use of this card can be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of the management committee and must be returned to the Treasurer if the user leaves the organisation.

The user is personally responsible for the use of the card and cannot allow anyone else to use it or advise anyone else of it's number/ password/ etc. It must be kept in a secure place. Any unauthorised or improper expenditure on the card shall be reimbursed to the group by the user. The user shall be expelled from the group.

Use of the Card will be limited to purchases up to £500/1000?

Written authorisation for any expenditure shall be required by Officers of the group (an email trail is allowable and must be printed and attached to invoices/receipts to accompany the accounts)

Purchases above the agreed amount must be authorised by a committee meeting or general meeting of the group.

Images of the card must never be published or sent out to anyone.

Cards should be signed as soon as they arrive.

Card numbers should only be used in secure transactions and should not be provided in response to unfamiliar or suspicious websites, emails, text messages, telephone calls, mobile phone applications or social media messages.

If conducted on websites, card transactions should be conducted only on secure websites. An indicator of a secure website is a URL that begins with "https" in the address, the "s" standing for "secure." The "https" prefix should be on every page of websites used to conduct transactions, in addition to the sign-in page.

Options to "Remember my card number" on websites where transactions are conducted should not be used.

Cards should not be left in visible or unsecured locations.

Lost or stolen cards should be promptly reported to the card issuer.

Cards that are unused, have been cancelled or have been replaced by a new card should be securely eliminated, for example by cutting them.

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Transaction receipts should be saved and compared to statements to ensure that unauthorized charges have not been added. Any transactions made by unauthorized parties should be reported to the appropriate financial institution, card issuer or biller.

**On-line banking**

The computer to be used will be kept up-to-date with antivirus software, operating system patches, firewalls etc and ensure the browser is set to the highest level of security.

The user will be wary of unsolicited emails or phone calls asking you for PINs or passwords – your bank or the police would never ask for these in full.

The user will always type the bank’s address into the web browser and never follow a link in an email and then enter personal details.

The user will ensure a locked padlock or unbroken key symbol should always appear in your browser window when banking online. The ‘http’ at the beginning of the website address will change to ‘https’ when a secure connection is made.

When making a payment, the user will always double check that you have entered the correct account number and sort code.

The user will never leave your computer unattended when logged in and log off as soon as you’re finished, especially on any public computer.

The user will:

- Check statements regularly – if you notice anything strange, contact the bank immediately.
- Be wary of any unexpected or suspicious looking ‘pop-up’ windows that appear during your online banking session.
- Stop and think about the process you normally go through to make a payment to someone – be suspicious if it differs from the last time you used it.
- Watch out for fraudsters who sometimes try to trick people into making a real payment by claiming “it’s just a test”.

Signature of agreed user

.....

Print name

.....

Date .....

Signature on behalf of.....(group)

.....

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Print name .....

Date .....

ADVICE:

**Stay safe when shopping and banking online.**

Shopping online can be quick and convenient, but you need to protect your financial information. Make sure that you're using a secure website before entering any personal details.

There are ways to spot that a website is secure, including:

- the website address starts with 'https' - the 's' stands for secure
- the address bar is green, which is an additional sign that you're using a safe website
- a padlock symbol in the browser where the website address is (but don't be fooled if the padlock appears on the page itself)
- a current security certificate which is registered to the correct address. (this appears when you click on the padlock)

Be aware that a padlock symbol is not an absolute guarantee of safety. If you ever have doubts it's best to leave the page.

To help protect you while shopping or banking online, follow these simple tips:

- Beware of pop-up messages that warn you about a website's security certificate. They may direct you to a fake website that's designed to get you to hand over your security details.
- Use online retailers with a good reputation, as either high-street shops or established online stores.
- Look for the company's full contact details. A reputable company will always display this information on its website.
- Cross-check information on the internet to see if anyone has experienced problems with the retailer.
- Find out where the seller is based because consumer rights vary from country to country. To find out more information about buying from sellers based in other EU countries, you can visit the UK European Consumer Centre website.
- Use the same credit card for internet transactions only. If anything goes wrong, you can always cancel this card.
- If a deal looks too good to be true, it probably is, and be cautious of anything offered in an unsolicited email



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## **Useful contacts**

Tower Hamlets Homes Community Partnerships Officer

Tel: 0207 364 5015

Email: [Residentengagement@thh.org.uk](mailto:Residentengagement@thh.org.uk)

Tower Hamlets Homes

Tel: 020 7364 5015

Website: [www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk](http://www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk)

Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS)

Website: [www.tpas.org.uk/](http://www.tpas.org.uk/)

Tower Hamlets Federation of TRAs

Website: <http://th-federation.org.uk/>