



Tenant and Resident Associations
Handbook Start-up Resource Pack

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This pack has been designed as a step-by-step guide if you are thinking about starting a Tenant and Resident Association (TRA) as well as being a source of good practice, tips and other useful ideas for those already involved in a TRA.

The Handbook has been designed to be easy to use and each section is clearly identified so that you can go to each section as you need to. This avoids having to read through the entire document.

This will supplement the Resident Participation Compact which outlines Hackney Homes' commitment to providing various types of support for resident groups, as well as stating the rights and obligations of those involved. The Compact recognises the role that residents play in the provision of services and outlines the importance of shaping current and future policy and practice.

DISCLAIMER: This document is correct at the time of printing. Hackney Homes cannot take responsibility for any changes that have taken place following the publication of this document.

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Foreword

From Faisal Pirbhai, Resident Participation and Communities Manager

We are pleased to introduce this Handbook for all our tenant and resident groups, forums, and all residents in Hackney interested in getting involved.

This Handbook aims to encourage you to work in partnership with us to improve the neighbourhood and services you receive. We will provide advice, support and financial assistance to you and in return, you can get involved and make a difference in your area.

You can refer to this Handbook at any time as there are clear guidelines and good practice on a range of topics including how to start up a Tenant and Resident Association in Hackney, standards and procedures that we suggest Tenant and Resident Associations work towards and a range of other topics.

We hope that throughout this booklet you will understand our commitment to getting residents involved, to ensuring that we are involving a wide variety of residents and that we are keen to communicate closely with residents.

Thank you for taking the time to read the Handbook and, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch. You can find all our contact details listed in the section entitled **'Get in touch with your Resident Participation Team'**.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Pirbhai', written in a cursive style.

Faisal Pirbhai
Resident Participation and Communities Manager
Hackney Homes

What is a TRA?

TRA is the commonly used abbreviation for a Tenant and Resident Association. You could also use TA (Tenant Association) or less commonly RA (Resident Association) but these are all referring to the same type of group.

TRAs are organisations that are set up and run by local residents to represent the views of people living in the local area. The Association will not take up individual issues such as repairs inside the home or housing transfers, as mechanisms will already be in place to deal with these types of issues. However, the TRA will comment on the effectiveness of these mechanisms especially when taking part in consultation exercises.

The area that a TRA represents can be defined as a whole estate or individual blocks – a single street or a number of adjacent streets.

The TRA will want to ensure that the area is not so large that the issues affecting residents of one part of the area are of no interest to those in another part. It will also want to be sure that it is not so small as it can be difficult to get enough residents together to form an association.

All TRAs can be registered with Hackney Homes and sign a constitution. Some groups will exist without being registered, but this will result in the group not accessing funding or grants from Hackney Homes. More information about registration is available in the section entitled **'How to set up a TRA?'**.

Why have a TRA?

The first function of a TRA is to work with Hackney Homes to improve the quality of the housing services that the landlord provides and to ensure that the local environment is safe, secure and welcoming as a place for people to live.

TRAs act as a local watchdog and feed back their findings (and residents concerns) to the landlord.

Some other areas that the TRA gets involved in are:

- taking part in consultations and meetings where the TRA will represent the views of its members
- attending Steering Groups as well as being involved in a Neighbourhood Panel. In these circumstances, the members of the association are called 'reps' as they are representing the views of the association to another group.

Additional areas can be found in the section called **'Beyond the TRA'**.

Whilst some of the areas mentioned above may seem time consuming, the TRA should consider taking part as it will help members to find out about strategic plans at an early stage and get involved. Taking part in other participating groups may help the TRA to improve its opportunities to directly influence decisions made by the local authority which affect the living environment of its members.

TRAs can also play a proactive role by campaigning for changes/developments before Hackney Homes or the local authority has even begun to consider them. Using their local knowledge, residents will often know the requirements of an estate better than staff when it comes to play areas, car parking and other estate facilities.

Ultimately having a TRA will give residents a collective voice to address the local authority so that its concerns can be heard.

The second function of a TRA is usually to organise different community activities which are of interest to its members. This part of a TRA's role can sometimes be forgotten as residents concentrate on the service improvement side of things, but this can in fact produce some of the most rewarding and productive activities of a TRA.

Neighbours, friends and communities can be brought together and enriched by a range of social activities involving as many people as possible. For more ideas, see the section called **Making a difference**.



First steps

The main question to ask is: What 'issues' do local residents have in common? The answer to this question is always a vital part of bringing people together. People will have similar concerns to be addressed and this is always a good place to start.

A resident, familiar with their own area, may assume that they are aware of all the concerns. Joining a TRA, you may find that others share your views and in the process you may come to know other points of view.

Finding out the views of others can be done by calling a preliminary meeting where people are invited to come along and talk about issues affecting the area.

Residents need to be careful that the meeting doesn't become an unstructured 'talking-shop' which can actually put people off the idea of joining a TRA.

It can be more helpful to carry out an 'issues' survey before calling a meeting so that an agenda can be set. Surveys can be carried out door to door or by a questionnaire dropped through each letterbox on the estate.

The Resident Participation Team will be a good source of assistance and support in obtaining views from local people.

Once residents have established the issues that are of concern, they will need to gauge the level of commitment from fellow residents. Taking part in a TRA can be time consuming and will need people to commit themselves to carry out certain tasks.

Many TRAs fail to get off the ground because not enough people get involved. However, don't be too put off by an initial lack of interest.

A minimum number of ten interested people can make a good start as an informal group, with others encouraged to join later on. Having less than the minimum number may not reflect

a true representation of views when key decisions are made.

Once all of the preliminary meetings are over and enough interest exists to go forward, the association will need to hold an inaugural (the first) Annual General Meeting (AGM) where they will formally elect their committee members and agree a constitution.

What is the 'committee'?

It could prove impractical to have every meeting of the TRA open to all residents as this could potentially involve a great many people. An association will therefore elect a committee to carry out the day-to-day business of the association. This will include talking to Hackney Homes on behalf of the association and attending other meetings. It might also include arranging social or fund-raising activities or producing a newsletter to keep members informed.

The committee will be made up of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer and at least six other members willing to carry out a supportive role. There is no hard-and-fast rule about numbers, but with fewer than five members the committee could be in danger of becoming overloaded or unrepresentative.

More than twelve committee members could make the group difficult to manage. Every committee will be unique in some way. It may have professional people sitting on it or it may have absolute beginners sitting on their first ever committee. It will almost certainly have a mixture of people with various levels of experience and knowledge of the local issues and who come from various backgrounds and age groups. Although residents don't require a qualification to be on a committee, they need a willingness to learn.

The Chair

The Chair is the main spokesperson for the group and makes sure that meetings are run effectively. Between meetings the Chair should:

- be aware of all the activities carried out by or on behalf of the association
 - ensure that other committee members are carrying out their tasks and arrange help if necessary
 - help plan and prepare the agenda and invites for meetings (with the secretary)
 - attend other meetings on behalf of the association (unless another committee member has been nominated for that duty, eg a Neighbourhood Panel rep).
- During meetings the Chair should:**
- make sure that the meeting starts on time and is properly time-managed to get through all the agenda items
 - introduce each item on the agenda, give the necessary background information, and make sure that everything is covered and decisions are made when necessary
 - stop people talking too long, ensuring that the discussion stays on point (no private or personal discussions)
 - deal with differences of opinion and conflicts (including invoking the Code of Conduct if necessary)
 - make sure that as many people as possible get a chance to take part
 - be positive, unbiased and help the group find solutions
 - summarise the main points of the item under discussion so that they can be properly recorded by the minute/note taker.



The Vice-Chair

If a Vice-Chair is elected, this person will deputise for the Chair when necessary and therefore should be aware of all the current issues likely to be of interest to the committee.

The Secretary

The main duty of the Secretary is communication. This includes doing some or all of the following:

- taking minutes/notes at the meetings, keeping an attendance list, noting the decisions that are taken and who has agreed to take on follow-up work
- copying and circulating minutes to committee members, Hackney Homes staff etc.
- making sure that notices of meetings or agendas are drawn up and sent out in good time and in line with the constitution
- making sure that a suitable meeting place is arranged for the meetings
- raising any matters at meetings that the members need to make decisions on
- making sure that the right number of meetings take place, in line with the association's rules
- helping the Chair with follow-up work between meetings
- writing and receiving letters on behalf of the association and reporting on correspondence sent/received at meetings
- filing correspondence to and from the association
- sending out publicity or other information
- keeping all information that is relevant to the association.

The Secretary's role, more than any other, is the one that can be shared out to different committee members to help reduce the demands this would place on a single person.

Some of the main divisions could be:

- minutes secretary
- correspondence secretary
- publicity/newsletter secretary.

The Treasurer

The Treasurer looks after the finances of the group, keeps the accounts in order and updates other members on the financial position.

The Treasurer's duties include:

- opening a bank account
- keeping a record of all money going in and out of the account
- keeping petty cash for paying day-to-day expenses
- paying any bills promptly and keeping a record of money spent
- giving regular updates of income and spending to the committee
- preparing a financial statement for the committee, Annual General Meeting and auditor
- overseeing fundraising and any funding applications to outside bodies.

Payments from the association's bank account should require at least two signatures. In order to guarantee that there are always at least two people available to sign, a number of authorised signatories should be nominated (usually three).

It is important that the signatories are from different households and different families.

The Treasurer's role is another that can be shared among different committee members such as having a separate committee member responsible for fundraising. However, in order to maintain continuity, only one person should be involved in keeping the books and reporting to the association's meetings.

See the Managing an association's finances section for more help on keeping accounts for the association.

Representatives and delegates on other bodies

Associations do not exist in isolation and many of the issues that affect them may be decided by other groups. The association may be entitled to send representatives to these other groups so that their views are taken into consideration when decisions are made. Alternatively issues raised can be progressed to another level (ie taken to Neighbourhood Panels or Resident Liaison Group). See more information about other groups in the section called 'Other ways to get involved'.

It is therefore important that certain committee members are nominated as representatives/ delegates to sit on other bodies.

These may be the same committee members who have already been nominated for another role but new people should always be encouraged to come forward so that all the work doesn't fall on one person. It is important to emphasise that, when representatives go along to other meetings, they should report back to the rest of the group and keep the committee updated.

Other committee members

The group may want to nominate committee members for special responsibilities such as:

- entertainments officer
- police/crime liaison officer
- youth involvement/liaison officer.

The group might also set up sub-committees to deal with specific issues similar to those mentioned above.



The constitution

A constitution is the 'rule book' of the association and must be agreed before an association can be registered. It will state why the association exists, (eg 'To make the Anytown Estate a safer, cleaner place to live') and it will state the geographical area that it represents (eg 'All blocks on the Anytown Estate and street properties on Main Street').

The constitution will also contain details of how the committee of the association will be elected, and how much notice must be given to call meetings. It must also contain an Equal Opportunities Statement and a Code of Conduct.

In order to be registered with Hackney Homes, the association must be open to all council residents in the constitution's named geographical area who will automatically become members of the association.

A copy of a model constitution is available in the **Useful documents** section. Residents can also request an electronic copy from the Resident Participation Team – see Contact Numbers in the section called **'Get in touch with your Resident Participation Team'**.

The inaugural Annual General Meeting (AGM) which acts as the launch of the TRA will need to be minuted or noted in some way and an attendance sheet should be signed by all those who attend the meeting. It is currently a requirement of Hackney Homes that an officer is in attendance to oversee the AGM and take the role of Chair during the election process to ensure that it is fair, open and democratic (this will also happen at all subsequent AGMs).

It is recommended that the AGM is publicised to all people living within the area and this is usually done by putting up posters in all the blocks either on a community notice board or by the lifts (if the block has them). If there are street properties or only a small number of dwellings, it might be possible to drop leaflets through the letter boxes as well as putting up posters at the local neighbourhood housing office.

And finally?

Once the first AGM has taken place, a copy of the constitution, minutes and attendance list must be sent to the Resident Participation Team along with the registration form. The association will then receive a letter confirming that the group has been registered.

In subsequent years a copy of the constitution will need to be sent only if it has been changed in some way but annual accounts, minutes and attendance lists will have to be provided every year.

Holding meetings

There are a number of important areas to consider. These are described below.

A meeting place

All new associations will have to arrange a regular meeting place for both its committee meetings and general meetings. If an association has its own meeting place then this will not be a problem. However, many associations do not have their own meeting place or community centre and will need to make other arrangements.

Committee meetings will have fewer people and can usually be held in a small room in a community centre or hired space. Sometimes commercial premises have function rooms for hire at 'community rates' for TRAs although, if these are licensed premises (eg a room above a pub), the association will need to be careful that it is not excluding people from taking part who may have objections for cultural/religious reasons.

The same might be true for rooms in a building that is a place of worship. Always check with residents that there will be no objections.

'General' meetings (these are meetings open to all residents) will require more space as a large number of residents might turn up. The association may need to hire a hall for its general meetings. Again this may be from a leisure/ community centre or other local organisation.

It is always worth checking with nearby TRAs to see if they have access to meeting space which they could make available to your association. Hackney Homes encourages all groups responsible for community halls to make them available to other community-based groups free of charge or at a nominal fee.

Some other areas to consider

- TRAs should avoid holding meetings in the home of one of its members wherever possible

- Has the meeting space got lots of stairs to access the room? Are you considering residents' needs in terms of access to the meeting room and space?

The agenda

The agenda is the document that lets everyone know what the meeting will be discussing. The Chair will guide the meeting through the agenda items and will try to ensure that all the items on it are discussed.

Agendas should not be too full as people will be disappointed if an item of particular interest to them is not covered due to lack of time at the meeting. It can also be useful to have timings listed alongside each item in order to help the Chair get through all the items and finish on time.

An example of a good agenda is listed in the section called **'Useful documents'**.

Agendas and any other papers for the meeting should be sent out in plenty of time. It's a good idea to include the main items to be discussed on any publicity posters that have been produced. Make sure that the required notice is stated in the constitution especially when calling an AGM.

As committee meetings involve fewer people they can be arranged less formally. Committee meetings can be publicised without written notice.

Minutes of a meeting

Many people are put off volunteering as Secretary of the association by the thought of having to take minutes at meetings. People usually have visions of desperately trying to record every word said by every person and then having the minutes embarrassingly corrected at the next meeting when errors are pointed out. They may also be worried that they are not able to produce type-written minutes.

Minutes don't have to be a long-winded record of everything that was said (usually called verbatim minutes) nor do they have to be printed.

Minutes are usually taken by the Secretary; however, some groups can share this task out on a rota system which helps relieve the burden falling on just one person.

Good minutes will do two main things:

1. They will note the item under discussion
2. They will note any decision made for that item.

For examples of minutes, see the section called 'Useful documents'.

Are minutes a true record of the meeting?

Minutes are a note of the meeting. They are taken by a person who has written what they heard or understood only. Therefore there is always a chance that something someone said was missed out or heard incorrectly.

This is why at the start of every meeting the minutes of the previous meeting are agreed. It is at this time that corrections can be made. Minute taking is not the easiest of jobs, especially at busy meetings, so please be patient and supportive of the minute taker at meetings.

Caution! The minute taker should never personalise disagreements or add their own comments.

The Chair plays an important part in making the minutes more accurate by giving a good summing up at the end of each item. If the minute taker is in any doubt they should always ask the Chair to check the agreed actions.

Types of meetings


There are four types of TRA meetings:

General meetings: These are open meetings for all residents on the estate. All residents have a right to vote at these meetings.

Committee meetings: These are for TRA committee officers but other residents can attend as observers.

Enhanced TRA (ETRA) meetings: These meetings are held four times a year with the Estate Manager and ward councillors. They discuss estate matters and community funding.

Housing Managers attend the ETRA meetings to record the actions that have been agreed and discussed by the committee.

Enhanced TRA agreed action list (page no.)				 <small>In partnership with Hackney Council</small>
Name of TRA	Date of meeting	Leading Officer/Estate Manager		
Names of councillors & officers attending meeting				
Designation				
Contact details for TRA Representatives (email, posting address, phone, etc.)				
TRA enquiry/issue				
Location	Enquiry/issues	Action agreed (eg log to enquiry system respond, phone call, no further action, etc.)	Sign off date by TRA chair or representative	
Eib project submissions				
Project details		Comments		
Agreed by TRA chair/representative signature _____ date _____ Lead officer/housing manager signature _____ date _____				

The Annual General Meeting (AGM): This is the most important meeting of the year. This is where the current committee has a duty to report on all the activities that the association has carried out over the past year. Members of the association will also get the chance to vote for a new committee (which may consist of members of the old committee).

The AGM should follow a recognised format in order to ensure that it is open and democratic. The AGM will require more notice than normal general meetings. Between 14 and 28 days is the norm as this allows people to clear the date in their diary. It also allows time to have some follow-up publicity nearer the time and ensure the maximum opportunity for all to take part.

Types of reports

The annual reports There may be annual reports from a number of committee members especially if the association is involved in a number of community activities, but the main reports will be the Chair's and the Treasurer's reports.

Chair's report The Chair will usually thank all the members for their efforts and support throughout the year. The main achievements of the association will be listed and the Treasurer will then be invited to give an end-of-year financial statement.

Treasurer's report The Treasurer will tell the meeting how much money the association had coming into its account over the past year and will list the main sources of income. Similarly the total spending will be advised along with the main items of expenditure. The Treasurer will make copies of the detailed accounts available to the members. At the end of the report, the Chair will invite the members to accept or reject the Treasurer's report.

Changes to the constitution

Any amendments or changes to the constitution will be agreed at this point. It is very important that the details of the proposed changes are made known to members before the meeting and proposals should be sent out with the first notices of the AGM.

Elections

Once the reports are finished, all the existing committee members (including the Chair) will stand down. The Chair will now be taken over by an independent person, this is usually a Hackney Homes Officer.

The Hackney Homes Officer will call for nominations for each committee position and where more than one person has been nominated a vote will be held. If only one person is nominated they will have been deemed to have been elected unopposed and a vote will not be necessary.

Voting is usually carried out by a simple show of hands although more complicated elections can use ballot cards if necessary. The Hackney Homes Officer will repeat this process for each committee position until all the positions have been filled. When this is achieved the Hackney Homes Officer will hand over to the newly elected Chair and the TRA can continue its business for another year.

Once the formalities of elections and reports are out of the way, committee members can then use the rest of the meeting as a social gathering.

Support and training

The Hackney Homes Resident Participation Team is the main point of contact for getting involved. The team consists of officers who cover all the neighbourhoods within Hackney. There is also an officer based in the team who focuses on youth engagement projects, working closely with specialist agencies within this field.

The Resident Participation Team work closely with local residents to provide encouragement and support and to develop a cohesive community spirit with residents being actively involved in their local neighbourhood.

Here is an overview of the support residents and groups can expect from Hackney Homes.

- Arrange and provide training for residents
- Update and manage participation and involvement data
- Assist with funding applications
- Oversee AGM election process
- Running focus groups and consultation
- Work with neighbourhood panels
- Liaise regularly with estate managers
- Work with under-represented groups
- Assist with publicity in organising fundays and events
- Work with groups to provide youth activity on estates
- Project manage local resident initiatives.

The team has also developed an alternative engagement platform that is primarily aimed at residents who are hard to reach or not associated with a resident group.

Alternative engagement within the Resident Participation Team covers many areas and can take different forms. They are structured as open meetings primarily focused on hard-to-reach groups or residents who have not joined a tenant and resident association.

Meetings are set usually on a quarterly basis. Some of the groups that come under alternative engagement are the Turkish and Kurdish Forum and the Over 55 group. The alternative engagement pathway is open to any resident and does not usually require elected members; however, some groups have become constituted as they would like to be more recognised on a national level.

Interested in joining an alternative engagement group?

For further details on this alternative engagement strand please contact the Resident Participation Team on: **020 8356 7845**.

Tenants Levy Funding

Hackney operates a Levy system to fund the activities of TRAs. Each tenanted household pays 10p per week on the rent (the 10p Levy) which is then administered by a group of residents called the Tenants Levy Steering Group (TLSG).

Once the association is registered it will be able to apply twice a year for Levy Funding. The amount that can be applied for will depend on how many properties the TRA covers. This is called the Grant Ceiling and applies to each of the two rounds. Please contact the Resident Participation Team and ask for further details on Levy Funding.

The Levy Funds most of the costs associated with running a TRA including the purchase of equipment items such as printers and computers. The Levy can also pay for public liability insurance for TRAs.

Applications can be made for additional Levy grants to pay for insurance for the community hall/ flat or outdoor event, or security works. These

applications are made separately from the Levy and can be applied for at any time of the year.

Please contact the Resident Participation Team and ask for a copy of the Tenants Levy Annual Report for full details of Levy funding.

ETRA Administration grant

The ETRA Admin grant is available for resident groups to support and run their four ETRA meetings as required within the registration criteria at Hackney Homes. You can apply for this grant once a year.

Training

Hackney Homes Resident Participation Team has a full training programme for residents. The courses are designed to improve skills, knowledge and experience, confidence and help residents represent their community effectively. The courses range from book-keeping to chairing skills.

The Resident Participation Team is also available to give guidance on any specific TRA training issues that committee members may feel that they do not fully understand.

You can request a copy of the Hackney Homes resident training programme by contacting the Resident Participation Team.

Getting Others Involved

Whether a group is small or large, it should strive to be representative of the area. Here are some suggestions for what can be done:

- Hold some association meetings in the afternoon so that residents with young children at school can attend
- Produce a regular newsletter to keep everyone informed. Everyone should know what the association is doing on their behalf



- Include a suggestion form in the newsletter so that residents can suggest items for the association to take up on their behalf. This is a good way to ensure that the association stays representative as it gives access to those who cannot attend meetings or are put off by public meetings.

TRAs can also start some smaller groups that can push ahead with specific issues that affect some members of the group. Examples of these are:

- fundraising sub-committee
- leaseholders' sub-committee
- entertainment sub-committee.

Suggestions for other groups:

- Gardening club
- Homework club
- Pensioners club
- Coffee morning club
- Crime/Neighbourhood Watch.

Another important way to get people, especially younger residents, involved is to set up a youth sub-committee. The Hackney Homes Resident Participation Team can assist you with this. See the section 'Useful contacts'.



Remember that a TRA is a community-based group and should be involved in community activities. The social and community aspects of a TRA should never be neglected.

Managing an association's finances

Most TRAs even the very small ones – will have some financial dealings that will need to be managed. This could be anything from buying small items of stationery such as pens and paper to holding a major entertainment event costing hundreds of pounds.

If there is one thing that is likely to cause suspicion and division within a TRA, it is the failure to keep good and transparent accounts. It is therefore important that accounts are kept as simple and as accurate as possible.

Who is responsible for financial management?

This task falls mostly to the treasurer. However, if a TRA has any sub-committee or individual committee officers authorised to spend on behalf of the TRA, they will be expected to work with the Treasurer. The following points cover the main role of the Treasurer.

The Treasurer

It's worth recapping on what a Treasurer does.

The Treasurer looks after the finances of the group and keeps the accounts in order so that other members can be given updates on the financial position. The Treasurer's duties include:

- opening a bank account
- keeping a record of all money going in and out of the account
- keeping petty cash for paying day-to-day expenses
- paying any bills promptly
- giving regular updates of income and spending to the committee
- preparing a financial statement for the committee and/or Annual General Meeting;
- overseeing fundraising and any funding applications to outside bodies.

We will now address each responsibility below.

1. Opening a bank account

Whether the association's finances involve £50, £500 or £5000, it is very important that this money is kept safe and accountable. Also, if a TRA applies for any funding, it may find that the organisation awarding the funds will insist that money is made payable to the association rather than an individual (eg the Tenant Levy fund is only paid to associations' bank accounts by electronic transfer). It is therefore sensible to recommend that a bank account is opened as soon as possible.

What type of account?

It is not advisable for the Treasurer to open a personal account on the TRA's behalf. Banks and building societies have a number of different accounts for non-personal customers most of which attract charges.

High street banks have a limited number of accounts available for community groups. These do not incur charges, provided that the numbers of transactions taking place are under a monthly limit. Some banks are reluctant to sign up new community accounts and will probably try to sign a TRA up to a business account. The TRA should be prepared to shop around for an account that has no charges.

Who should be the signatory?

The bank/building society will require evidence of the identity of each signatory. Unless they have an account with that bank already it will be necessary for them to provide:

- proof of identity – eg driving licence, passport
- proof of address – eg utilities bill, benefit book, bank statement.

The signatories should be people with good credit ratings.

Make sure that you tell the bank that you are a non-profit-making organisation. If you do not make it clear, you will be treated as a small business and you will pay additional charges that you need to, ie overdraft charges.



You may be charged for things like going overdrawn, stopping cheques, extra statements, opening an account. When you are looking for information on the internet remember that most banks refer to community and voluntary organisations as 'clubs and societies'.

2. Keeping a record

This is the traditional 'bookkeeping' side of the Treasurer's role but don't be put off thinking any qualifications are required to do this – it can be surprisingly simple.

As the heading above suggests, this comes down to two things;

- keeping a record of all money coming into the account
- keeping a record of all money going out of the account.

If this is done correctly, the association will always be able to find out how much money it has and how much it has spent. In order to make the accounts a bit more user friendly, the Treasurer needs to group the money coming in and going out into manageable chunks. To do this the accounts are balanced each month and a balance sheet is produced at the end of the year.



Starting the account

The first thing needed is an Opening Balance. If it is a new association, this will be zero. If a dormant TRA is being restarted, it may find that it has inherited some money to start with. When taking over the account it is advisable to have the last set of accounts agreed at the association's Annual General Meeting. The closing balance on those accounts will become the opening balance for the new accounts.

Recording what happens with the money

The traditional method for keeping books is to have two columns on a sheet – the left-hand column for money coming into the account (income) and the right-hand column to record money going out of the account (expenditure).

As you can see from the example below, if all transactions are recorded and balanced on a monthly basis then things shouldn't be too difficult and everything will be completely transparent.

3. Keeping petty cash

'Petty' means small and in accounting terms it is used to describe the small items of day-to-day spending which all organisations incur. It could be the milk and tea-bags for your meetings or the occasional postage stamps. It will cover all those items where it's easier and quicker to pay by cash rather than obtaining two signatories for a cheque.

But just because it's 'petty' it doesn't mean it's not recorded. Petty cash, like all association spending, must be properly agreed and recorded.

The amount of money to be held as petty cash must be agreed by the committee as a whole - this decision is not for the treasurer alone. All spending must be evidenced by receipts

Anyone receiving money from petty cash should sign a petty cash slip/duplicate receipt book.

Once the committee has agreed a petty-cash figure it is the Treasurer's job to keep enough money available for petty-cash purposes and to 'top up' the petty-cash account as necessary by transferring money from the bank account (this is called an 'impress').

If you have any fundraising cash (eg from hall hire/jumble sale) you might be very tempted to just use this money as petty cash. Don't!

Most problems with accounts occur when short-cuts are taken and using money from different sources is a sure route to confusion and problems. All income must be shown in the main bank account and all transfers to the petty-cash account should come from the main bank account. It may seem a bit over the top to pay cash into the bank account only to draw it out later for petty-cash use, but it will save many arguments later on if this procedure is followed.

4. Paying bills promptly

Your reputation as an organisation will depend on how promptly you pay your bills so make sure that this is not ignored. From phone bills to stationery orders, when an invoice is received make sure that it is paid by the due date.

Financial Period: January 2011 - December 2011

Date	Income	£	Date	Expenditure	£
01/11	Nov 2011– Opening Balance	£200			
	Total Income	NIL		Total expense	
30/11	Closing Balance	£200			

Some suppliers allow up to 30 days to pay an invoice which is very handy for large organisations to handle cash flow. A large organisation will have an accounts department with sophisticated computer software allowing them to pay on the very last day.

However, for a small TRA there is usually no added benefit in taking this extended credit period and, without a full-time accounts team to handle matters, payment of bills can easily incur delays leading to late payments and a damaged reputation. If the money is in your bank account, pay your bills straight away.

5. Give regular updates to the committee

If you have followed the advice above and balanced the accounts every month, it should be easy to give updates to the committee at every committee meeting and to the whole association at every general meeting.

Nevertheless, if any major issues arise (eg a threat of legal action for late payment or the books not balancing) these should be brought to the committee's attention as soon as possible.

Where the Treasurer fails to provide a statement of accounts at an AGM, it is imperative that, at the very next meeting, general or otherwise, the accounts are presented and signed off, i.e. the committee members approve the statement given.

6. ETRA Admin grant

The Enhanced Tenants Residents Association (ETRA) Admin grant is a small grant that provides funding for TRAs that hold quarterly ETRA meetings. The grant is provided to help cover the cost of running these meetings and can be applied for once each financial year.

The amount of each grant is set according to the number of properties on the estate that the TRA covers. As with all our grants the funds have to be fully reconciled each year with relevant receipts before any new grants can be paid out.

7. Preparing a financial statement

Most TRA's finances are too small to warrant having the accounts looked at by a qualified accountant/auditor. This would only happen for groups that have large incomes and manage a community hall.

The main financial statement will be the end-of-year balance sheet. At the Annual General Meeting the Treasurer will present the financial statement to the association detailing its financial affairs. This will usually be a one-page document listing all the money that came into the association and all the money that was spent on its behalf.

Only major items of spending will be listed separately (such as the purchase of a new computer), with all other items grouped into categories such as stationery, hire charges, expenses, etc. If you have kept simple and accurate monthly records as described, producing a balance sheet shouldn't be a problem. See the simple example on the page opposite.

8. Overseeing fundraising and funding applications

Any registered association can apply for funding from the tenants Levy. A copy of the tenants' Levy Annual Report and full details on how to apply can be obtained from your Resident Participation Officer.

However, it is a rule of the Tenant Levy Steering Group that all applications for Levy funds must be made by the Treasurer of the association. This is also best practice for any funding applications.

As an association grows and becomes more ambitious in its projects, it might want to apply for funding from organisations other than Hackney Homes. Funding organisations will usually require detailed information about an association's finances so if the guidance above is followed it should stand the association in good stead.

Youth involvement

Hackney Homes has a dedicated Officer who focuses on youth activities. The role comprises signposting young residents to existing Hackney-based youth provision as well as to assist in bringing this provision on to Hackney Homes' estates through developing partnerships with community groups and providers.

The post also ensures that Hackney Homes' young residents have appropriate forums to voice their views on services, ensuring that their views and opinions are heard at a strategic/senior level.

The dedicated officer also project manages a number of partnership projects.

Nemesis Street Dance

Nemesis Street Dance is a street dance project that runs on a few estates throughout Hackney. Trained street dance experts teach young people from age 8 to 19 various different forms of street dance and work with young people of varying abilities.

Young people have access to nationally recognised accreditation and pupils work towards performances at various events throughout Hackney. These have included performances on the main stage at National Play day, the Hackney Youth Awards and many other community events.



Fawcett and Nightingale bike projects

The Hackney Homes bike projects are run by Interlinkx CIC in partnership with Cycle Club Hackney and the Metropolitan Police.

The bike projects have been a real success with high numbers attending as well as high levels of accreditation offered and gained, which has enabled a number of young people to gain employment. There is also a progression route for attendees of the project with the projects taking on trainee bike mechanics.

Young people have a chance to build their own bike and learn all levels of bike maintenance. There have been a number of awards won by the bike projects including a recent Gold medal at the London Youth games; there are also exchange projects offered to the young people as well as bikes built and sent to charity projects worldwide.



The Youth Engagement Project

The Youth Engagement Programme (YEP) is a project that encourages young people to help make a difference where they live by joining one of the various Hackney-wide youth committees.

Youth committee members meet on a monthly basis to apply for external funding to put on activities and events in their communities while also representing the views of their fellow peers through Tenant and Resident Association meetings, Neighbourhood Youth Forums and within the Hackney Youth Parliament.

Young people are also involved in regular consultation meetings to ensure that young people's views are taken into account regarding housing management-related decisions.

YEP's aim is also to increase the amount of youth and community activities taking place on its estates, while being a sounding board for its landlords in order to help bring about change. We want to see a growth in young people's active resident participation as a result of our work.

YEP offers support to every young person who gets involved in the project by offering them training to develop new skills in community work, decision-making, presentation skills, chairing meetings and leading focus groups, in order to develop their roles as effective committee members.

YEP members are offered a range of incentives as a way of acknowledging all their hard work. This includes organising monthly social activities, residentials, gaining training in individual areas of interest, gaining work placement opportunities and receiving one-off voluntary expenses for member's involvement in longer-term pieces of work. At the end of each year, all YEP members will receive formal recognition for their achievements.



Beyond the TRA

Joining a TRA can be many people's first introduction to organised resident groups, but TRAs are just one part of an overall participation structure.

TRAs hold four meetings per year with their Estate Manager, which are attended by their local ward councillor. These are open meetings that all residents can attend.

TRAs also have access to local budgets to spend on estate improvements. Hackney Homes has a system to record and track any issues raised at TRA meetings. If you have a concern, it will be dealt with.

Neighbourhood panels are made up of TRA representatives who meet regularly to discuss neighbourhood issues with Hackney Homes staff. The panels also decide which TRA projects obtain funding from the 184 Walkabout Budget (see the **Explanation of some frequently used terms** section).

Other groups

Tenant Levy Steering Group

This group is responsible for administering the 10p Levy on behalf of residents and to decide which applications from TRAs for Levy grants should be approved. It is made up of resident representatives and meets to discuss the sort of things that TRAs should be funded for and to decide if applications from TRAs should be allowed.

The Resident Liaison Group

The Resident Liaison Group (RLG) is made up of residents from neighbourhood panels, leaseholder forum, other resident groups, a council representative, Hackney Homes Board Members and senior Hackney Homes staff.

This group is strategically placed within the involvement platform at Hackney Homes as they are able to interact with senior managers

and monitor and comment on performance and policy issues of Hackney Homes.

The Youth Active Residents Group

The Youth ARG is made up of young residents from throughout Hackney who meet regularly to monitor and comment on the performance and policy issues of Hackney Homes.

The group provides a platform for young Hackney Homes' residents to have a strategic input into the decision-making process.

The Resident Participation Compact

A compact is an agreement between two or more groups. The Resident Participation Compact explains how everyone should be working together to achieve the best for residents. It has been agreed by residents, Hackney Homes and Hackney Council.

Hackney Homes has several aims. These are to deliver excellent, responsive housing, services with decent homes and estates, and to help residents lead healthy lives in safe and sustainable communities.

Other ways to get involved

There are various other groups that operate some for specific purposes and some for one-off purposes. There are also ways to get involved that don't require you to attend meetings or to be part of an established group.

Other methods of involvement can include:

Hackney Homes is committed to involving as many residents as possible in key decision-making. To do this, we have set up Resident Forums or particular groups in our community. These include:

- African and Caribbean Consultative Forum
- Asian Women's Forum
- Turkish Forum

- Street Property Forum
- Disability Forum
- 100 Club
- Over 55 Group.

We consult with members of these forums discussing and consulting on new policy initiatives.

Engaging with young people

Hackney Homes' Resident Participation Team can signpost residents to existing Hackney-based youth provision as well as assist in bringing this provision to Hackney Homes' estates through developing partnerships with community groups and providers. The Resident Participation Team also project manages a number of partnership projects as well as leading on youth consultation within Hackney Homes.

Here are some examples of this:

Nemesis Street Dance

A street dance project that runs on estates throughout Hackney. Trained street dance experts teach young people from age 8 to 19 various different forms of street dance and work with young people of varying abilities.

Fawcett and Nightingale Bike Projects

The bike projects are run by Interlinkx CIC in partnership with Hackney Homes, Cycle Club Hackney and the Metropolitan Police. The bike projects have been a real success, with sessions attracting up to 30 young people as well as accreditation offered which has enabled a number of young people to gain employment.

The Youth Engagement Project

The Youth Engagement Programme (YEP) is a project that encourages young people to help make a difference where they live by joining one of the various Hackney-wide youth committees. Youth committee members meet on a regular basis to apply for external funding to put on activities and events in their communities while

also representing the views of their fellow peers through Tenant and Resident Association meetings, Neighbourhood Youth Forums and within the Hackney Youth Parliament.

If you require further details on the youth service please contact the Resident Participation Team on **020 8356 7845** or email: **getinvolved@hackneyhomes.org.uk**

Reader panels

Hackney Homes' Reader Panel provides comments, ideas and suggestions about Hackney Homes publications, including Hackney Homes News and Leaseholders and Freeholders News.

You can also get involved by:

- survey contact for specific surveys
- responding to general surveys
- web and email-based participation
- taking part in an issue-specific focus group.

Please refer to your Resident Participation Team if you would like further information about these methods.

Note Please note that there are other forms of engagement. See the Resident Participation Compact on page 42 for further information.

Explanation of some frequently used terms

Enhanced Tenant and Resident Association Administration Grant (ETRA)

A grant given to TRAs who undertake Enhanced TRA meetings on a quarterly basis to help with the cost of running these meetings

Agenda

A written plan of how a meeting is intended to be held, listing all the items to be discussed.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The most important meeting of the year for all TRAs. At this meeting reports will be given by the committee before it stands down and a new committee is elected.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Behaviour that lacks consideration for others and that may cause damage to society, whether intentionally or through negligence, as opposed to pro-social behaviour, behaviour that helps or benefits society.

BME

Black and minority ethnic – a phrase used to describe residents from minority backgrounds that are sometimes prevented from taking part (either deliberately or inadvertently) because of their ethnic origins.

Code of Conduct

A set of rules advising residents on how they should conduct themselves in carrying out the business of their group.

Committee

A smaller part of a TRA made up of those elected to do a certain task (eg Chair, Secretary, Treasurer). The committee will carry out all the functions involved in running the TRA between open meetings.

Community cohesion

Community cohesion means recognising, supporting and celebrating diversity. It is about building and maintaining strong and positive relationships among individuals and groups living in our neighbourhoods.

Constitution

The foundation document (or rule book) for a residents' group. It explains how members will be elected and how frequently the group will meet.

Discrimination

Making a positive or negative judgement about someone based on bias, assumptions or prejudice. Discrimination can be either direct or indirect.

Diversity

Diversity means understanding that each individual is unique and values the differences of individuals and groups.

Environmental Improvement Budget (EIB)

A budget used by Tenant and Resident Association's for local improvements on their estate.

Equality

Equality means treating people fairly and giving people fair and equal chances regardless of particular characteristics such as their race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age.

Enhanced Tenant and Resident Meeting (ETRA)

This is the name given to the four meetings that the tenant and resident association undertakes per year in accordance with Hackney Homes registration process.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

This is the name given to the account that pays for all housing management functions. It is made up of rents and subsidies and is strictly controlled by government rules.

Tenant Levy or Levy

A small amount of money (currently 10p) collected with rents and used to support the activities of TRAs.

Minutes

A written note of the meeting showing which items were discussed and what actions were agreed.

Neighbourhood panel

A group based in one housing neighbourhood area and made up of representatives from local TRAs.

Open/general meeting

A meeting at which all residents on the estate can attend. TRAs should usually hold four open meetings each year, including its Annual General Meeting.

184 budget

A walk-about takes place on each estate between officers and residents to highlight areas requiring works/improvements. A report is then sent to neighbourhood panels for agreement before works start which are paid for by the 184 budget.

Safer neighbourhoods team

Teams of officers based in London neighbourhoods providing a more accessible, visible, accountable police service for local communities, giving them a real say in deciding the priorities for the areas in which they live, allowing the police to provide long-term, local solutions to local problems while maintaining a focus on reducing priority crime.

Sub-committee

A group of TRA members set up to deal with a particular function/issue, eg fundraising sub-committee, hall management sub-committee.

Tenant Association (TA)

See TRA.

Resident Participation Compact

An agreed statement among residents, Hackney Homes and the Council on how residents can take part in the decision-making process.

Tenant Managed Organisation (TMO)

A situation where residents have decided (through a formal ballot) to take over some of the management functions of their estate. The TMO will set up a management committee of residents and will have a detailed management agreement with the council to provide services to the estate.

Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS)

Government-funded national body supporting residents.

Tenant and Resident Association (TRA)

A group of residents (usually on an estate) coming together to improve their local environment and to take part in consultations with the local authority.

A list of TRAs who have registered with Hackney Homes between 2010 and 2012.

Central NH

Acton Estate TRA
 Alden and Broadway TRA
 Appleby Estate TRA
 Blackstone Estate TRA
 Fields Estate TRA
 Grand Union & Dublin TRA
 Lockner Estate TRA
 Mapledene Estate TRA
 Regents Court TRA
 Regents Estate 1 & 2 Pensioners Association
 Regents Estate TRA
 Shrubland TRA
 Warburton & Darcy TRA
 Welshpool House TRA
 Whiston & Goldsmith TRA

Homerton

Banister House TRA
 Boscobel House TRA
 Aspland and Marcon TRA
 Sherrys Wharf TRA
 Frampton Park TRA
 Gascoyne 2

Jack Dunning TRA
 Linzell TRA
 Mountford Estate TRA
 Nisbet House TRA
 Nye Bevan TRA
 Trelawney TRA
 Wayman Court TRA
 Wilton Estate TRA
 Wyke Estate TRA
 Parkside TRA

North East

Beckers TRA
 Beecholme & Casimir Community Association
 Darenth Road and Kyverdale TRA
 East Reservoir Residents Assoc.
 GABS TRA
 Gooch House TRA
 High Hill Estate TRA
 Holmleigh Road Estate TRA
 Hunsdon TRA
 Ickburgh Estate TRA
 Jack Watts TA

Joseph Court TRA
 Keir Hardie Estate TRA
 Landfield Estate TRA
 Lea View House TRA
 Lincoln Court TRA
 Lordship North TRA
 Manor TRA
 Nelson Mandela TRA
 Nightingale Luncheon Club
 Nightingale Partnership Residents Assoc
 Priestley Close TRA
 Radley Square & Southwold TRA
 The Mount TRA
 Tower Gardens TRA
 Webb Estate TRA
 Wrens Park TRA

Shoreditch

Charles Square and Pitfield TA
 Charles Square Over 60s Community Club
 Colville TRA
 Cranston Estate Pensioners Club

Fairbank Community Association

Fellows Court TRA

Follingham Court TRA

Haberdasher Estate TRA

Harman Estate TRA

Hobbs Place Estate TRA

Provost TRA

Shepherds Market TRA

St Johns Estate TRA

St Marys Estate TRA

Stanway TRA

York Row TRA

Stoke Newington

Burma, Arakan and Clissold TRA

Cressington Close TRA

Darville Road TRA

Forest, Acer & Holly TRA

Hawksley Court TRA

Holly Street Luncheon and Social Club

Lister Court TRA

Mayfield & Forest TRA

Milton Gardens TRA

Morris Blitz TRA

North & South Defoe TRA

Rhodes Estate TRA

Shellgrove Estate TRA

Smalley Road TRA

Somerford & Shacklewell TRA

St Johns Court TRA

Yorkshire Grove TRA

List of TMOs currently registered with Hackney Homes as at 1 January 2012

North and South Arden

Clapton Park

Cranston

Downs

Lordship Sth

Suffolk Estate

Tower Management Organisation

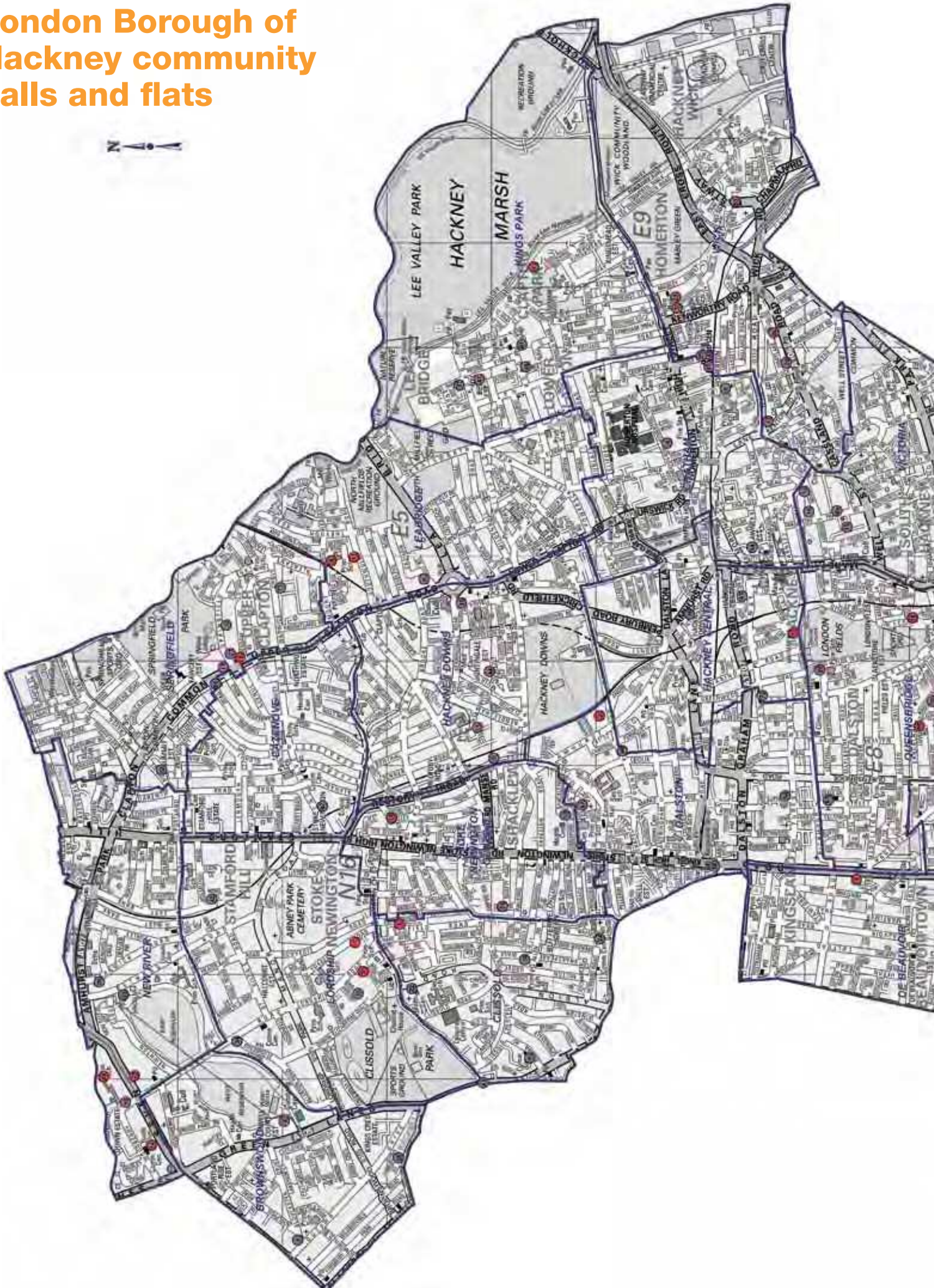
Wenlock Barn

Wick Village

Wyke Estate

*As this list is constantly changing, it is accurate at the time of print. For up to date details please contact the Resident Participation Team on 020 8356 7845.

London Borough of Hackney community halls and flats



Frequently asked questions

Where can I find further information on resident participation?

If you would like further information about Hackney Homes Resident Participation Team, please email us on getinvolved@hackneyhomes.org.uk or alternatively contact us on **020 8356 7845**.

A nationally recognised leading body on resident participation is the Tenant Participation Advisory Service.

They inform tenants how to challenge, influence and control how their housing services are delivered.

You can contact them on:

**TPAS Ltd, 5th Floor, Trafford House,
Chester Road, Manchester, M32 0RS**

tel: **0161 868 3500**

fax: **0161 877 6256**

e-mail: info@tpas.org.uk

Is there a resident association in my area?

Contact Hackney Homes Resident Participation Team on **020 8356 7845** or go to www.getinvolved@hackneyhomes

How can I get involved if there is not a resident association in my area?

If you would like to set up a new association in your area, the Hackney Homes Resident Participation Team can offer help and support to enable you to do this.

How much will it cost to get involved?

There is no cost in getting involved with your resident group as recognised groups can apply for running costs at Hackney Homes.

What is the time commitment?

Time commitment varies for each individual. We believe that people should be involved at a level that suits them and can get involved as much or as little as they wish.

What are the benefits of starting a resident association?

Residents can develop a greater sense of community spirit, and help build a constructive relationship between the residents and housing provider.

Residents have an opportunity to participate in and help shape the policies, procedures and services that affect them.

Residents can attend quarterly meetings with housing manager and local ward councillors, to identify communal repairs, etc.

Do you offer any training to run a resident association?

Yes we have a training programme that is available for residents; please contact the resident participation team on:

**getinvolved@hackneyhomes.org.uk
020 8356 7845**

I don't have the time to join a TRA, but would still like to get involved.

Hackney Homes recognises that many residents may not want, or be able, to get involved in a formal group such as a TRA or neighbourhood panel, therefore we have worked hard to expand our alternative forms of engagement to offer the opportunity for hard-to-reach groups to get involved. Contact Hackney Homes Resident Participation Team for further details on the alternative forms of engagement.

Do you need to be a member of a TRA to get involved?

Have you thought of becoming a block or key representative for your neighbourhood panel? Hackney Homes has recognised that there are a number of estates, small blocks and street properties that do not have Tenants and Residents Associations and are therefore under-represented. As a result we have initiated a pilot project, allowing residents from these properties the opportunity to become a member of the panels as key and block representatives. Key and block representatives will have an important role

in the panel, being the voice of your estate as well as being entitled to put forward projects for 184 funding for community improvements plus a number of other opportunities.

You will be offered support and training from the Resident Participation Team who will assist you in your role as key and block representative.

What grants are available to TRAs and how do they apply for them?

Resident groups have access to two funds: the Tenant Levy grant and the ETRA Admin grant. The Tenant Levy grant is taken from the Tenant Levy fund (each Hackney Homes tenant contributes 10p a week to the fund).

You can apply for this grant twice a year. The ETRA Admin grant is available for resident groups to support and run their four ETRA meetings as required within the registration criteria at Hackney Homes. You can apply for this grant once a year.

Grants are available every year and the Levy application forms are sent to registered resident groups automatically.

Are there any additional funds that are available to TRAs and how do they access them?

Resident groups can access the estate improvement budget which is allocated to each resident group to spend on improvements to estate communal areas and is calculated according to the number of dwellings.

Resident groups do not receive this money directly, instead they are asked to submit ideas for spending the budget based on their allocation at their ETRA meeting.

How do we book a community hall?

Usually hiring of community facilities is operated and managed by a recognised resident group; on some occasions the neighbourhood office manages the facility. You can contact the resident group directly or the Resident Participation Team on: **getinvolved@hackneyhomes.org.uk** or **020 8356 7845**, who can provide further details on hiring community spaces.

Who can use the community hall or flat?

The community hall and flat is for community use; however, not all of these facilities are hired out. For a current update on what halls or flats are available to hire out please contact the Resident Participation Team on: **getinvolved@hackneyhomes.org.uk** or **020 8356 7845**

Where do we find the contact numbers for community halls?

For a current update on what halls or flats are available to hire out please contact the Resident Participation Team on: **getinvolved@hackneyhomes.org.uk** or **020 8356 7845**

Are community halls just for residents on that estate, or available for surrounding tenants and residents?

The community facilities are available for the local community as well as the general public. Some restrictions may apply where local residents will have preference.

What happens if there is a dispute within a residents association?

Residents are expected to resolve disputes among themselves where possible. If the dispute becomes difficult to resolve then the resident participation team will offer impartial support. Where the dispute has become irresolvable or where there has been a serious breach of action from either a tenancy agreement or resident group constitution, then Hackney Homes will review the whole matter. This could result in either de-registering, ASB monitoring, or the committee looking at third party independent mediators and making adjustments to their constitution and Code of Conduct. For further details on our mediation procedure please see our section in 'Useful documents' that states our Hackney Homes' mediation procedure.

Get in touch with your Resident Participation Team

2 - 4 Olympus Square
Nightingale Estate
London E5 8PL

Tel: **020 8356 7845**
Email: getinvolved@hackneyhomes.org.uk
Website: <https://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk>

Reporting issues on estates

Our Housing Contact Centre provides assistance for all queries relating to repairs, cleaning and maintenance. The phone number is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Telephone: **020 8356 3691**

Neighbourhood Housing Offices

- **North East Neighbourhood Office (Stamford Hill)**

Clock House
149 Stamford Hill
London N16 5LG

Tel: **020 8356 6500**
Opening hours:
Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

- **North West Neighbourhood Office (Stoke Newington)**

Stoke Newington Municipal Offices
Stoke Newington Church Street
London N16 0JR

Tel: **020 8356 6151/6152**
Opening hours:
Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

- **Homerton Neighbourhood Office**

92 Well Street
London E9 7JA

Tel: **020 8356 3330**
Opening hours:
Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

- **De Beauvoir and Queensbridge Neighbourhood Office**

31 De Beauvoir Road
London N1 5SJ

Tel: **020 8356 3330**
Opening hours:
Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

- **Shoreditch Neighbourhood Office**

1 Cropley Street
London N1 7PT

Tel: **020 8356 3330**
Opening hours:
Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

Hackney Today is published by **Hackney Council** and is delivered free to every home and business in the borough each fortnight.

If you or any resident whom you know has not received their edition of the newspaper and would like it delivered please contact David Roberts:

Email: david.roberts@hackney.gov.uk
Tel: **020 8356 3275**

The Knowledge Hub

Overview

Why not get involved and join the Hackney Homes online community group **The Knowledge Hub**.

In 2011 LBH Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission conducted a review of Hackney Homes' Resident Participation Services (please view the full Scrutiny Report at the following web-link: www.hackney.gov.uk/4109.htm).

Within the report's recommendations, LBH proposed that Hackney Homes create an online forum to engage with residents and share information.

In consultation with LBH, Hackney Homes choose an online platform hosted by the Local Government Association (LGA) called 'Communities of Practice' (CoP). In July 2011 Hackney Homes launched the 'Hackney Homes – Resident Participation Community Group' CoP.

In early 2012 LGA replaced the CoP online platform with 'The Knowledge Hub' (KHub), which is a continuation and development of Communities of Practice. The Hackney Homes Community Group moved to the KHub platform in February 2012. KHub provides tools to help people connect to, share with and learn from each other.

The latest technology and social networking models enable individuals to create connections to peers and experts in their fields of interest, helping them share learning, experiences and ideas, and drive sector self-regulation and improvement.

Recommendation 4 of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Report states: 'The Commission recommends that Hackney Homes provide effective ways of sharing information across groups and individuals at estate and street property level'.

This may be through an online forum that is facilitated by residents but involving Resident

Participation Officers, where contact details for people willing to share their experiences can support those who are keen to mirror their practices.

How to register to the Knowledge Hub

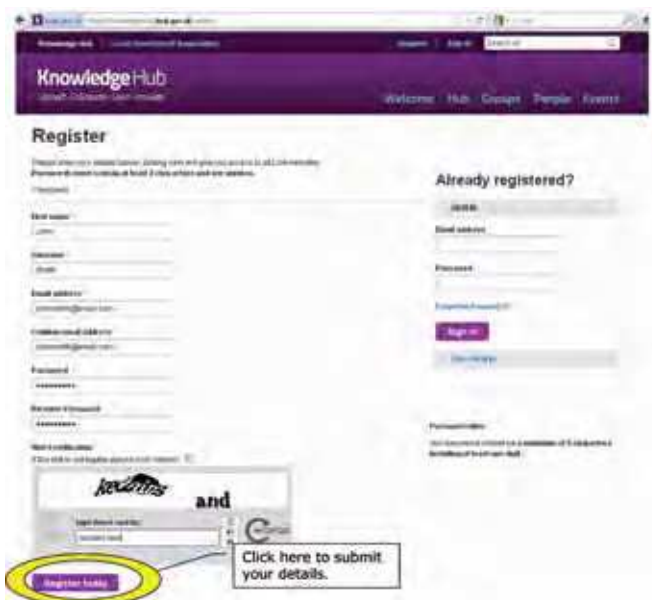
Step 1

Go to <https://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk>. On the top right corner of the webpage, click on the 'Register' option, as displayed below.



Step 2

You will now be brought to the Registration page where you can fill in your details as indicated. Please ensure that you complete the 'Word Verification' security box located at the bottom of page. And finally, click on the 'Register today' button located at the bottom of the page, as highlighted below.



Step 3



You will now be brought to the following webpage, which confirms your registration.

A verification email will also be sent to the email address that you provided. Please check your email account and read the email sent. A web-link will be contained in this, on which you will need to click. Once you have finished this process, you will be fully registered to the website.

Step 4

On your first occasion of logging in, you will be asked to agree to the Terms of Use of the Knowledge Hub. Please scroll down to the bottom of this screen and click on the 'I Agree' option there.



Congratulations! You are now fully registered to the Knowledge Hub. So please take a look around the website and explore.

Additional information

The Knowledge Hub hosts a number of video tutorials to provide members with guidance on the website's features. We recommend that members view these videos, which will provide them with an overview of how to build their profile, the various features and sections of the website and other useful features.

To view these videos, please go to the following webpage: <https://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk/video-walkthroughs>

In this section, we provide you with a range of documents that are good practice model guidelines for resident groups.

- **Code of Conduct**
- **Constitution**
- **Tenant and Resident Association Financial Regulations**
- **Important notice on the Child Protection document**
- **Model Equality and Diversity Statement for Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs)**
- **Important notice on Conflict and Resolution**
- **Hall Hire Agreement**
- **Examples of minutes**
- **Examples of agenda**
- **Examples of TRA meeting poster**
- **Example of a financial balance sheet**

Code of Conduct

The purpose of having a Code of Conduct is to set standards of behaviour for all members. In order to encourage all members of the Tenant and Resident Association to participate fully at meetings, it is essential for TRA business to be conducted in a manner that does not exclude anyone and allows everyone to participate equally.

To this end, all members are expected to abide by the following procedures that are adopted:

- To speak only when called by the Chair
- To listen without interruption to other speakers
- To indicate to the Chair when you wish to speak
- To keep comments brief and to the point
- To avoid using offensive language (ie swearing, racist or sexist remarks)
- To send apologies to the Chair in advance of the meeting if you are unable to attend
- To allow the Chair to direct the meeting, including bringing discussion to a close
- The Chair has a duty to run the meeting with fairness to all present
- Individual issues must not be discussed at the meeting. Individuals can report their issues to the relevant officer at the end of the meeting.

Confidentiality

The group may deal with difficult and sensitive issues; discretion and care must be exercised during and after the meetings.

Members should respect all individual tenants/residents confidentiality. Information about individual tenants and residents will not be discussed at public meetings.

1. Conduct at Meetings

Members shall do the following:

- Members of the association should follow the guidance of the Chair in the conduct of the meeting and only speak when called to do so by the Chair. They should enable the Chair to direct the meeting, including bringing discussion to a close. The Chair has a duty to run the meeting with fairness to all present.
- Members must be courteous to each other at all times, allow each other to speak and listen without interruption to other speakers and keep comments brief and to the point. The use of offensive language (eg swearing, racist or sexist remarks) or behaviour that belittles or excludes groups or individuals is unacceptable and will be considered as an act of gross misconduct.
- Members must remember that the purpose of the meeting is to benefit residents generally and not specific individuals.
- Members must abide by the equal opportunities policy of the association and operate within the terms of the constitution.

2. Conduct of the committee

- Members should not bring the association into disrepute, eg Anti-social behaviour.
- Members should not speak or write on behalf of the group without the prior agreement of the group. Any correspondence sent on behalf of the group should be made available to all members of the group.
- Members of the association should at all times work within the rules laid down in the constitution.
- Members should observe collective responsibility for committee decisions.

3. Conflicts of interest

Members should disclose any interest, whether personal or on behalf of any group that they represent, that they consider could affect or influence their approach to the matter under discussion.

4. Political affiliation

TRA members may not represent a political party in their role as a committee member, nor may local authority elected members serve on a TRA committee.

5. Breach of the Code of Conduct, exclusion and disciplinary procedures applicable to all meetings

- If a member of the Committee or those attending the meeting do not abide by the code of conduct they will be warned by the Chair.
- The Chair may give the person concerned two further warnings (a maximum of three warnings in any one meeting and/or three consecutive meetings}. Breaking the code three times means that the resident will be asked to leave the meeting.
- If the person continues to ignore these rules and refuses to leave the meeting after being warned by the Chair, then the Chair has the power to close the meeting.
- A complaint that a committee member has failed to abide by the Code of Conduct despite receiving three warnings, or has committed an act that is considered to be gross misconduct, should be tabled at a committee meeting called for this purpose only. All parties must be notified in writing in advance and care must be taken to ensure that all concerned parties are given a fair hearing. On the findings of this hearing, the committee can suspend a member subject to the evidence provided, with a majority vote deciding the decision. The suspension will be ratified at this meeting, and the suspension can take place with immediate effect and last for one year.

- Members who fail to attend three consecutive general or committee meetings without an apology or good reason will automatically be removed as a member of the committee.
- Exclusion from that particular meeting will take place when a majority of those present at any meeting of the group or AGM vote to exclude a member.

6. All members must observe this Code of Conduct whenever they:

- attend meetings of the TRA
- are acting in their role as a committee member
- are carrying out the work of the association or acting on its behalf.

This Code of Conduct/Rules of Procedure were adopted by [insert name] Tenant and Resident Association at a general meeting of its members held at:

Signed: _____
Chair.

Signed: _____
Secretary.

Date agreed: _____.

Constitution

The name of the group shall be known as [enter name] Association.

The group will endeavour to work on behalf of residents living in [enter area].

1. Aims

- (a) To promote the interests of all residents of the area, and to assist in maintaining good relations between all members of the community in consultation with the local authority and other bodies.
- (b) For the furtherance of these objects to promote and represent all residents' rights and the maintenance and improvement of housing conditions, amenities and the environment. To provide facilities for recreation and amenities and to encourage a community spirit.
- (c) To promote equal opportunities by being positively committed to opposing all direct and indirect discrimination in all its activities and services.
- (d) To work towards encouraging all members of usually excluded groups to participate in the association. Encouraging participation of hard to reach groups.
- (e) The Association seeks to implement a programme of positive action, by ensuring that no member receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, sex, age, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnerships, sexual orientation and disability.
- (f) The Association shall have the power to affiliate to any body whose objectives may be of benefit to its membership
- (g) Monies raised by or on behalf of the Association shall only be applied in furtherance of the objectives of the Association.

h) The Association shall be non-political.

2. Membership

- (a) Membership shall be open to all who reside in [enter area].
- (b) All members shall have an equal vote.
- (c) All members should actively seek to represent the various needs of residents, and must not discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, age, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnerships, sexual orientation and disability.
- (d) Members shall at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable manner when attending meetings, or in premises used by the Association or any other function in connection with the group. Any member may be excluded for breach of this condition, or for any other conduct contravening the objectives of the Association, by the majority of those present and voting at any committee or general meeting.
- (e) Ordinary membership shall be open to all secure tenants and residents (including freeholders, leaseholders, licensees and authorised occupants) living within the boundaries of the Association.

3. The Committee

- (a) The Committee shall meet at least four times a year. General meetings shall be open to any member of the Association wishing to attend.
- (b) Any items for the agenda should be submitted to the secretary in writing not less than seven days in advance of the meeting shall be placed on the agenda.
- (c) Committee members must attend at least one committee meeting per calendar year or their membership of the Committee ceases and they shall not stand for re-election for [enter years] years.

4. Conduct of business

- (a) A committee shall be elected to carry out the business of the Association.
- (b) The business of the Association shall be conducted by a committee elected at each Annual General Meeting. The committee shall be made up of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and [enter number] committee members
- (c) The Chair or in his or her absence the Vice-Chair will preside over meetings. In their absence members in attendance will elect a member to preside for the duration of the meeting.
- (d) No two or more officers shall be elected from the same household.
- (e) Eligible elected Councillors of the Landlord Authority may attend the TRA meetings for their estate, but only as observers. They will not be eligible for election as officers of the Association, nor shall they represent the Association in its dealings with the council and committee members or any other body.
- f) Minutes of all meetings shall be available to all members
- g) Vacancies arising during the year can be filled by an election at a general meeting, but as an interim measure the committee may fill any vacancies until the next general meeting.
- h) The election or removal of officers or committee members may only be carried out by a general meeting of the Association.

If the Association activities involves work with children or adults working with children, it is the responsibility of the Association to ensure that they are working to their child protection protocol.

5. Finance

- (a) All money raised by or on behalf of the Association is to be used only to further the aims of the Association.
- (b) The Treasurer shall open a bank account in the name of the Association.
- (c) Cheque signatories will be nominated by the committee (one to be the treasurer). There shall be three signatories. These must not be from the same household.
- (d) All cheques and instructions to the Association's bankers shall require two of the agreed signatures, one of whom must be the Treasurer .
- (e) The Treasurer shall have the accounts checked by an independent person with adequate financial experience, for example, a representative of a community organisation, law centre or council for voluntary service, at the end of each financial year.
- (f) The accounts shall be made available to members at the AGM.
- (g) Hackney Homes can intervene if financial regularities are identified with the accounts.

6. Annual General Meetings

- (a) There shall be an Annual General Meeting(AGM) held every [enter month] at which the committee shall report on its work and present a statement of accounts.
- (b) At the AGM members in attendance will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair and elect the other officers and the committee to serve for the next calendar year.
- (c) The AGM shall vote on recommendations and any amendments to the constitution.
- (d) The secretary will notify all members of the date of the meeting not less than 21 days before the AGM and make the agenda available at least 7 days before the meeting.

7. Other general and special meetings

(Open meetings and special general meetings)

- (a) There will be an open meeting for all members every [enter number] months
- (b) Minutes of meetings will be submitted for approval to the next appropriate meeting.
- (c) A special general meeting open to all members shall be called by the secretary at the request of a majority or other officers of the committee or on receipt of a written request by no fewer than [enter number] members of the Association, giving reasons for their request. The Secretary shall give not less than 7 days notice of the holding of a Special General Meeting which shall take place within 21 days of the receipt of the request.
- (d) The Secretary or officers will publicise all general meetings at least 7 days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- (e) The agenda for all meetings will be sent to each member or be publicised in the most prominent position and area.

8. Sub-committees

- (a) The committee may appoint such sub-committees as may be required to carry out the activities of the Association. The committee shall agree in advance the terms of reference of any sub-committee
- (b) Where any sub-committee is to continue in existence beyond the AGM following its appointment, its members shall submit themselves for re-election at that meeting and annually thereafter.
- (c) All sub-committees shall keep proper accounts of income and expenditure, and a proper record of all meetings, and shall report on them or deliver them up as required by the committee or general meeting.

- (d) The committee or general meeting may dissolve any sub-committee, whereupon the accounts, records and assets, financial and otherwise, of the sub-committee shall pass into the hands of the committee.

9. Duties of officers

- (a) Chair: shall conduct the meetings of the Association and committee.
- (b) Vice-Chair: in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall conduct the meetings of the Association and committee.
- (c) Treasurer: shall open and maintain the Association bank account. All cheques shall be signed by the Treasurer and other committee members nominated by the committee as signatories. Shall keep proper, transparent accounts of income and expenditure and report on them or deliver them up as required by the committee or general meeting.
- (d) Secretary: shall be responsible for the convening of all meetings, preparing the agenda and giving the prescribed notice to all members. Shall ensure that a proper record is kept of all meetings of the Association, its committee and sub-committees in the form of minutes; and shall deliver up such records as required by the committee or general meeting. The Secretary shall permit the minutes to be examined on receipt of no less than 7 days' notice by any member of the Association.
- (e) Members: committee member(s) or officer(s) appointed to represent the Association in consultation with any other body shall report back to the following committee or general meeting, whichever is the sooner.
- (f) Committee members of the Association shall act on the instructions of the Association and consult with the Landlord Authority on matters of housing management.

10. Quorum

- (a) No general meeting or annual general meeting shall take place if less than one-third of members or fewer than [enter figure] members are present at the meeting (whichever is less). This may vary according to each TRA depending on its size of membership. Please refer to the guidance table below.
- (b) No committee meeting shall take place if less than one-third of the committee members or fewer than four members are present (whichever is less).

Association members	Quorum number
40	13 – 14
30	10
20	6 – 7
10	4

11. Voting

- (a) Any member may make a proposal. In order for it to be voted on by the meeting it must be seconded by another member.
- b) Only members present at the meeting may vote.
- c) Before voting any member may propose an amendment to the proposal which must also be seconded. Each amendment shall be taken in turn. If the proposal to amend is seconded, a vote will be taken on whether to approve the amendment. If the amendment is approved, the meeting will then deal with the next proposed amendment and, if there are none, will vote on the amended proposal.
- d) Each member shall have one vote.
- e) In the event of an equal vote, the Chair shall have the casting vote.

12. Changes to the constitution

- (a) The constitution can only be altered at an Annual General Meeting or at a special general meeting called for that purpose
- (b) A member who wishes to alter the constitution must send to the secretary the wording of the proposed alteration. Within 14 days of its receipt, the Secretary will give at least 21 days notice of the meeting together with the wording of the proposed alteration.
- (c) Any alteration(s) or changes to the constitution must be agreed by two-thirds of the members present at the meeting.

13. Dissolution

- (a) The association may only be dissolved at a special general meeting called for that purpose and must be advertised 21 days before the meeting.
- (b) For the sole purpose of dissolution the quorum shall not apply and the Association may be dissolved by a two-thirds majority of those present of at the meeting.
- (c) Any assets (financial or otherwise) remaining after the payment of all debts and liabilities shall be given to charitable purposes according to the wishes of the majority of the members present at the meeting. Any monies or assets belonging to Hackney Homes or Hackney Council must be returned prior to any other distribution.

Signed _____
(2 x members)

Signed _____

Dated _____

Tenant and Resident Association Financial Regulations

1. The Association's bank account is withbank, at

2. [insert number] committee members shall be authorised to sign cheque. Of these, two must be the Treasurer and Chair of the Association as named below:

.....
 Chair

.....
 Treasurer

3. Two of the authorised signatories must sign every cheque. This should be the Treasurer and one other.

4. Changes to the members authorised to sign cheques must be agreed at meeting of the Association.

Financial Records

5. The Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping full financial records of the TRA and for entering details of all transactions in the books. The Treasurer shall keep a cash book and a petty-cash book up to date at all times.

6. Only the Treasurer, or an appointed person acting on behalf of the organisation, may make entries in the books, unless authorised (and minuted) by the TRA committee.

7. The books shall not be removed from the office and/or designated place of keeping of the TRA, unless authorised by a meeting of the committee.

Authorising payments

8. All payments, other than petty cash, must be authorised as follows:

- Amounts up to £..... may be authorised by the Treasurer and Chair of the committee.
- Amounts over £..... must be authorised by the full committee.

9. Payments will be authorised only on production of properly completed invoices. Photocopies of invoices will not be accepted.

10. Payments amounting to more than £.....will only be made by cheque.

11. Loans will not be given to members and personal cheques will not be cashed.

12. All cheques must have the payee and the amount of payment filled in before they are signed. Blank cheques must never be signed.

13. The Treasurer must mark all paid invoices as paid, date them and ensure that they are filed away.

Paying money into the bank account

14. The Treasurer will check that all income received by the Association is correct, and agrees to the relevant receipts.

15. The Treasurer will ensure that all income received by the Association is banked on a regular basis and keep the stamped bank receipts on file.

The cash book

16. The Treasurer will ensure that all income and payments are entered into the cash book as soon as possible after the transaction has taken place.

17. The Treasurer will ensure that grants for a specific purpose, eg Levy, hall hire income, can be easily analysed in separate columns

of the cash book and that each source of income and expenditure is clearly defined.

18. Any member of the TRA may inspect the cash book in the presence of the Treasurer or the Chair of the TRA.

Petty cash

19. The Treasurer shall operate an imprest petty-cash system. The most common system is the petty cash system. The Petty-cash imprest system allows only replenishment of spending. So, if you start the month with £100 in your petty-cash float and spend £50 of that cash in the month, an amount of £50 will be then placed in your petty cash float to bring the balance of your petty cash float back to £100. The replenishment is credited to the primary cash account and the debits will go to the respective expense accounts, based on the petty-cash receipts.

20. All payments from petty cash must be supported by receipts.

21. A petty-cash vouch must be made out, in ink, for each payment. The amount paid out and what the money was for must be clearly entered.

22. The petty-cash voucher must be signed by the person making the payment and both the person receiving the money. The Treasurer shall make sure that all petty-cash vouchers and receipts are filed.

23. The Treasurer shall write up a petty-cash book and make sure that there is enough money in the petty-cash box. The petty-cash box will be kept in a secure place at all times.

24. Where monies are claimed for travel expenses (eg training sessions, conferences) the following details are required: reason for attendance, date of attendance, destination to and from, and total claimed.

25. Where monies are claimed for telephone calls an itemised bill is required which identifies all calls to which the claim refers.

The Bank Reconciliation

24. The Treasurer will carry out the bank reconciliation each time that a bank statement is received.

25. The Treasurer will report to the committee on any irregularities that may arise, and confirm that all cheques can be accounted for.

Financial reports

26. The Treasurer will report to the TRA at least once a quarter on how much money has been received, how much has been spent and how much money the TRA has in the bank. The report will also highlight any money that is committed but has not yet been spent.

27. At least one month before the TRA's Annual General Meeting, the Treasurer should ensure that all the books are up to date and ready for examination by an independent person with a knowledge of bookkeeping.

Code of Conduct

Confidentiality

The group may deal with difficult and sensitive issues; discretion and care must be exercised during and after the meetings.

Conduct at meetings

Members shall:

- be courteous to each other and support each other with the aim of achieving the best possible decisions
- allow each other to speak and be heard
- allow no one particular member to dominate any discussion

- follow the guidance of the Chair, Vice-Chair or other member elected to act as chair on the conduct of the meeting
- operate within the terms of the constitution
- declare any conflict of interest and withdraw from participating and voting on the issue.

Exclusion

Members shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a reasonable manner at meetings and may be excluded if they act in an abusive, offensive or obstructive way, or if they contravene the objectives of the group.

Exclusion from that particular meeting will take place when a majority of those present at the vote to exclude a member.

Signed _____
Chair

Signed _____
Committee member

Date _____

Important notice on the Child Protection document

The Child Protection document is a key area that Tenant and Resident Associations can consider undertaking to adopt safeguarding practices towards the welfare of all children and young people

Due to the important nature of the Child Protection policy we have listed a summary guideline that sets out what should be included in the document.

Resident Groups adopting this document would be expected to undertake training on Child protection, as proof that they are up to date on current practices and that they understand the legal requirements, regulatory and policy changes within this field.

If you require further details on the Child Protection policy please contact the Resident Participation Team on: **020 8356 7845** or **getinvolved@hackneyhomes.org.uk**

Summary of the Child Protection policy

Safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone.

This Child Protection policy applies to all volunteers within the Tenant Resident Association (TRA). It includes all those who come into contact with children and families even if it isn't their main job to look after them eg Treasurer, Chair and Secretary.

[Insert Name of Association] fully recognises the responsibility that it has under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 to safeguard children under the age of 18, and to have arrangements in place concerning safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.'

'Through their day-to-day contact with children and young people and direct work with families on the estate, they have a crucial role to safeguard children in line with the London Child Protection Procedure (2011) and 'Working together to safeguard children' (2010).'

This policy sets out how the [insert name of association] discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The [insert name of association] will ensure that every officer and every volunteer knows:

- the [insert the name of the nominated person]
- the role and responsibility of the nominated person
- the [Insert name of association] will be responsible for implementing and reviewing the policy.
- the policy will be monitored and reviewed every 3 years at a Special General Meeting or at an Annual General Meeting
- the [insert name of association] will strive to implement this policy in accordance with the current legislation on the Childrens Acts 1989 and 2004.

Model equality and diversity statement for Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs)

[Insert name of association] aims to ensure that we promote fairness and equality of opportunity in everything that we do.

Therefore

We will not discriminate against people on any grounds. This includes grounds of age, race, marriage, civil partnerships, pregnancy, maternity disability, gender, gender reassignment, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

We will take steps to ensure that everyone in the community is able to participate fully in all the Association's activities.

In particular we will actively encourage involvement from sections of the community who are under-represented in the TRA.

We will challenge any racist, sexist, homophobic or other offensive remarks or behaviour at our meetings, at our events or in the conduct of our business.

We will ensure that any members are treated fairly and equitably.

We will seek to give active assistance and support to disadvantaged groups, and will build and maintain links with relevant local, regional and national organisations to further these ends.

We will consider the needs of all sections of our community and ensure that our meetings are accessible in timing, location of meetings, events and the information and publicity that we produce.

We will encourage members to take up training opportunities, including equality and diversity awareness training. We will monitor levels of involvement in all of our activities and will set and review targets with the aim of becoming

fully representative of our community. Failure by any member to uphold any part of this statement will be grounds for withdrawal of TRA membership as a last resort.

We are committed to the aims and objectives of the Hackney Homes Single Equality Scheme and action plan 2010 – 2013 and other relevant Hackney Homes' policies.

How complaints and concerns are to be dealt with

Breaches of our Equality and Diversity statement will be regarded as misconduct. The committee will meet to discuss the appropriate action where necessary. Decisions will be decided and agreed by a majority vote of committee officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, and ordinary committee members) The casting vote will be decided by the Chair.

Who is responsible for the statement?

The [insert name of association] will be responsible for the statement.

How frequently the statement will be reviewed

The statement will be monitored and reviewed every 3 years at a Special General Meeting.

Good practice

Making meetings as accessible as possible

The [insert name of association] will strive to ensure that meeting venues are accessible and comfortable. Where funds and resources permit the Association will strive for venues to be appropriately equipped to support and assist with mobility difficulties, wheelchair use, hearing impairments and visual impairments.

Make information as accessible as possible

Where funds permit the Association will strive to provide large print documents and have documents translated for meetings.

Dealing with offensive behaviour or language or misconduct?

- If a serious misconduct issue arises the Association will implement an investigative process which can be initiated by a full committee.
- Where an incident of misconduct is reported directly to a committee officer, a preliminary meeting with the majority of committee members will be necessary to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant further action.
- Where it is determined that there is sufficient evidence to take further action, the committee will decide the best course of action to take, which may include verbal and written warnings and, as a last resort, exclusion.

Promoting equality and diversity and community cohesion

The Association is open to all residents on [name of estate, location] and will always promote the equality and diversity statement.

Signed
(2 x members)

Position

Signed

Position

Dated

Important notice on conflict and resolution

Tenant and Resident Associations are committed to actively engage within their surroundings and to embrace community values. However, there can be occasions when conflict arises and it cannot be resolved by the Association good practice framework.

Hackney Homes provides support and assistance to address sources of conflict, using a wide range of methods.

This will usually result in establishing safe and common ways to address differences and promote processes to help build community cohesion and healthy communication for the groups involved.

If our standard methods fail to resolve the conflict, our approach then is to refer the matter on to an independent mediation company, as this field of work requires specialist skills

This service is only offered as a last resort, as the long-term objective for the Association is to be able to manage conflict independently in accordance with their constitution and good practice guidelines.

We have listed a summary guideline that sets out the conflict and resolution procedure

If you require further details on conflict and resolution methods and procedures please contact the Resident Participation Team on: **020 8356 7845** or **getinvolved@hackneyhomes.org.uk**

Summary of conflict and resolution

Resolving conflict and disputes

Special provisions to the mediation procedure

The process is as follows:

- Request for mediation, after all avenues of Hackney Homes' standard methods have failed
- A detailed statement of the facts to be submitted to Hackney Homes for determination
- Hackney Homes shall determine the mediation process, taking into account the dispute and the complexity of the dispute.

Appointment of the mediator

Hackney Homes shall proceed with the appointment of the mediators.

Confidentiality

Proceedings under mediation rules are confidential.

Procedure before the process begins

- **Written submissions**

Detailed testimony and any witness statements shall be filed, together with the parties' submissions.

- **Hearing**

The mediator shall conduct the mediation session. Unless the parties agree otherwise, the hearings are not public

- **Outcome**

The outcome shall be final and binding upon the parties. It may not be challenged by way of an action.

Between [insert name of hire]

Contact Name	
Contact Address	
Telephone Number	
Reference	
Fax Number	
E-mail Address	

Booking reference: [insert name] Community Hall – [insert hall address]

Date of event	
Contact on the day	[insert name]
Building	Non smoking building (Please be advised no smoking is to be brought in from outside and/or consumed or smoked on premises.)
Timings	Please be informed that closing time for the venue is 11pm weekdays/weekends.
Venue capacity	The venue can hold 100 people. Breach of this will render the venue insurance void.
Notice board wording	Please advise no notices are to be erected without the permission of Hackney Homes.
Hired Space	Main Hall Only
Usage of agreed space	Use of the Main Hall, means within the confines of the hall itself. The client/hirer are responsible for ensuring that the activities are kept within the hired space. PARKING

Equipment:**Beverages**

No alcohol can be sold on premises.

Charges/Fees

Value of booking

Event Billing Instructions

All Hire fees and deposits must be paid in advance of hall hire

Full pre-payment is required 14 working days prior to the event on [insert date]

Please tick as required:

- Postal Order
- Cash
- Cheque

I, the undersigned, confirm the booking of the facilities and rates as quoted. I have read and fully understand that the contract is subject to the terms and conditions.

Agreed hire date

[insert date of hire]

Name**Signature****Date****Witnessed on behalf of the
[insert name] TRA****Name****Signature****Position****Date**

Terms and conditions

We are delighted that you have chosen the [insert name] Community Hall to hold your event. Below we have listed the terms of our agreement. We are mindful that requirements can change when organising an event and as such we have attempted to offer you as much flexibility in these terms as possible.

**[insert name] Community Hall –
[insert hall address]**

Client/Hirer – [insert name]

Confirmation by the Client /Hirer

- All bookings are provisional until the contract is signed by the Client. Once the contract is signed, all such provisions reserved on your behalf will be subject to the terms and conditions of the contract.
- A deposit is required on confirmation of the booking agreement in order to guarantee and secure the booking. The full hire charge is payable 14 working days prior to the event date. The deposit will be returned within 14 working days, following an inspection after the event has taken place.
- If the Client/ Hirer fail to meet any such extra costs (damage or breakage) that may arise or it is not met by the full deposit, the entire deposit will be retained and any extra cost billed to the client / Hirer. If the Client/Hirer fails to meet any such extra costs this will result in Hackney Homes taking further action at their discretion which may lead to the client/Hirer being permanently disbarred from future hiring and usage of the venue
- Failure to sign the agreement and pay the deposit, Hackney Homes reserve the right to release the provisional booking, although all efforts will be made to discuss this with you before any space is released.
- The Client/Hirer is aware of the venue capacity, acknowledges it and complies with it.

Amendments by the Client/Hirer

- Any amendments to numbers and/or arrangements must be confirmed to Hackney Homes in writing, 14 days prior to the event date.

Cancellation by the Client /Hirer

- In the unfortunate event that you have to cancel or postpone your confirmed booking or reduce numbers at any time prior to arrival, Hackney Homes will withhold the hall hire fees according to our sliding scale, but we will return the deposit.
- The following cancellation charges are applicable for all contracted bookings: -
 1. 7- 12 Days prior to arrival date = 50% of contracted hall hire fees charges
 2. 48 hr notice prior to arrival date = 100 % of contracted hall hire charges you will lose the full amount of the fees.
- Written confirmation of any cancellations are required from the Client.
- For bookings over several days, cancellation terms will be calculated from the start date of the event.

Payment

- We request that payment terms be agreed at the time of confirmation and these will be shown on the agreement.
- If payment is to be made by bank transfer, the Client will be responsible for any bank transfer charges incurred. (Bank details available on request).

Credit Facilities

- We regret that Credit facilities cannot be offered to private individuals and / or companies.

Cleaning

- The main Hall, kitchen and public areas, must be left in the same condition as upon arrival, if not cleaning charges will be applied and deducted from clients deposit.
- Cleaning charges will be pre-arranged and added to main invoice, (deposit will then be refunded in full).

Timings

- The meeting rooms are available from the time shown on the contract. Please advise if you require any additional time.

Client /Hirer Responsibility

- No advertisement, notice sign, decorative flag, emblem or device referring to the group may be attached to or displayed in or about the interior of the Hall without prior approval of Hackney Homes. The same applies for outside advertisements.
- The client remains responsible for any damage caused by its' guests, whether in the room or in any part of the public areas and undertakes to make good or pay full restitution for the making good of any material damage to furniture, fixtures or equipment.
- Nothing shall be affixed to floors, walls, ceilings or columns of the allocated rooms by screws, nails, drawing pins, tape or any other means or be suspended from the roof or ceiling of the room, without prior permission.

Hackney Homes Responsibility

- Hackney Homes will not be liable for any resulting damage suffered by the Clients relating to industrial action, fire, flood, power failure, government regulations or any other disaster beyond its control.
- The Hall reserves the right to cancel the booking if: -

a) The Client/Hirer is more than 30 days in arrears of previous payments to Hackney Homes

b) Hackney Homes becomes aware of any alteration in the Client's /Hirer's financial situation.

THE CLIENT/ Hirer agrees with Hackney Homes to observe and perform the provisions and stipulations contained or referred to in the Standard Conditions of Hire as set out in the First Schedule below (an understanding of which the Client/Hirer hereby acknowledges) together with the Special Conditions set out in the Second Schedule (if any).

In the event of the Standard Conditions of Hire being varied before the date of the event Hackney Homes agrees to notify the Client/Hirer of the varied Standard Conditions of Hire at which time all variations of the Standard Conditions of Hire shall be deemed to be incorporated in this Hire Agreement PROVIDED THAT the variation shall not render it impracticable for the Client/Hirer to use the Premises for the event in which case the Client/Hirer will be at liberty to give notice to Hackney Homes terminating this Hire Agreement and requesting the return of any deposit paid.

I hereby confirm that I have read and agree to the terms and conditions stated above: -

Name _____

Position _____

Signature _____

Date _____

The first schedule

Standard conditions of hire

1. The Client/Hirer will, during the Hire Period, be responsible for supervision of the Premises, the fabric and the contents, their care, safety from damage however slight, or change of any sort and the behaviour of all persons using the premises whatever their capacity, including proper supervision of car-parking arrangements so as to avoid obstruction of the estate and noise level to residents when leaving the premises.
2. The Client/Hirer shall not use the Premises for any purpose other than for the Purpose of Hire as described in the Hire Agreement and shall not sub-hire or use the Premises or allow the premises to be used for any unlawful purpose or in any unlawful way nor do anything or bring onto the Premises anything which may endanger the same or any insurance policies in respect thereof nor allow the sale of alcoholic liquor or any beverage containing any alcohol whatsoever on at or near the Premises.

The Client/Hirer shall not use the Premises for public meetings with political, religious, or any other content where the matters for discussion are, in the Hackney Homes opinion, obscene, sexist, homophobic, racist, offensive, controversial, sensitive or likely to breach the TRA's/Council's commitment to community cohesion. Hackney Homes reserves the right to ask for an agenda at least 14 days before the scheduled date of the meeting. The Client/Hirer will also provide details of any speakers or performers at least 5 days prior to the event if asked to do so. If this information is not forthcoming, the Hackney Homes /Council can refuse/cancel the booking.

The Client/Hirer shall inform Hackney Homes, at the time of hire, of the precise nature of any proposed event, as well as the names of any individuals or organisations involved or likely to benefit from it, either directly or indirectly. This information is required at least 5 days prior to the event. If this is not received the Hackney Homes/Council are able to cancel/refuse the booking.
3. The Client/ Hirer accepts responsibility for injury to persons or loss of or damage to any property arising from the hire and hereby confirms that public liability insurance cover is held for the use of the Premises by Hackney Homes with a reputable insurance company in a sum of not less than £2 million (evidence of such insurance to be provided if required by Hackney Homes).
4. Clients/Hirer working with children and young people must provide written confirmation that all members of their leadership are known to be suitable persons in compliance with the Home Office publication of September 1993 'Safe from Harm' or any modification thereof. They will need to produce and provide evidence of professional certificates/qualifications / CRB checks to Hackney Homes
5. The Client/ Hirer shall ensure that all requisite licences permissions and consents that may be required for the use of the Premises whether by statute, statutory instrument or otherwise shall be obtained before the date of hire and that all such (and any conditions attached thereto) shall be complied with at all times.
6. The Client/Hirer shall comply with all conditions and regulations made in respect of the Premises by the Fire Authority, Local Authority, the Local Magistrates' Court, and Police Authority or otherwise, particularly in connection with any event which includes regulated entertainment.
7. The Client/Hirer shall comply with all statutes statutory instruments regulations codes of conduct codes of practice and other relevant matters relating to the proposed use of the Premises pursuant to this Agreement.
8. The Client/Hirer shall indemnify Hackney Homes against all loss damage liability claims or threatened claims arising from the Hire Agreement, including the cost of repair of any damage done to any part of the premises which may occur during the Hire Period or as a result of the hiring.
9. The Client/Hirer shall ensure that all persons at the Premises pursuant to the Hire Agreement

shall comply with all terms and conditions and provisions of the Hire Agreement. The Client/Hirer shall be responsible and liable for any failure or non-compliance.

10. If the Client/Hirer cancel the booking before the Hire Period and there is no replacement booking, Hackney Homes shall not be obliged to refund or waive all or any part of the Hire Fee.
11. Hackney Homes RESERVES the right to cancel this hiring in the event of the Hall being required for use as a Polling Station for a Parliamentary or Local Government election or bye election, in which case the Client shall be entitled to a refund of any deposit already paid.
12. AT THE END of the hiring, the Client/Hirer shall be responsible for leaving the Premises and adjoining and neighbouring areas in a clean and tidy condition, with the Premises properly locked and secured unless directed otherwise and any contents temporarily removed from their usual positions properly replaced, otherwise Hackney Homes shall be at liberty to make an additional charge. All equipment etc belonging to the Client/Hirer or brought onto the Premises by or at the bequest of the Client/Hirer or by any person using the Premises during the Hire Period shall be removed promptly at the end of the Hire Period by the Client/Hirer.
13. IN THE EVENT of the Premises or any part thereof being rendered unfit for the use for which it has been hired Hackney Homes shall not be liable to the Client/Hirer for any resulting loss or damage whatsoever.
14. Hackney Homes shall have the power, to terminate long term usage of the premises. In these circumstances the user shall be given reasonable time in which to vacate the premises, usually this will be one months notice, or whatever time set by Hackney Homes.
15. Hackney Homes do not accept liability for any accident or injury occurring to the users (including any person engaged by the Client/Hirer) of the premises during the period of hire or usage, nor to the loss of, or damage to property left on the premises at any time.
16. The Client/Hirer has a legal responsibility by law to ensure that smoking is not allowed on the premises.

Examples of minutes

Look at these three sets of minutes on the next page which deal with a single agenda item.

Example 1

Item 4 Overgrown trees blocking out daylight

MT brought this item to the meeting's attention. MT distributed some photos of the ground floor flats that are affected the most by the overgrown trees.

The area was very dull and some paving stones were being broken by the tree roots. Two residents said that they needed to have the lights on all day in their living room, even in summertime.

There were added problems with bird droppings from nesting birds and when the leaves fell in the autumn the front gardens were a complete mess.

SP said that the trees were a benefit to the estate and added colour and bloom for most of the year. She said that the problem was Hackney Homes failing to prune the trees correctly and that it would be a great loss to the local environment if the trees were cut down. AG wanted to know if the trees had any kind of preservation order

Agreed

TS to find out if a preservation order exists. If no order exists then the committee will lobby Hackney Homes to remove the two trees closest to the block and to set up a regular pruning programme for the rest.

All three examples given above are valid!

If your Association has the resources to produce minutes as in example 1 then you can consider yourself lucky – but example 3 is just as valid and will suit many new start-up associations.

Example 2

Item 4 Overgrown trees blocking out daylight

Agreed

- Trees blocking out daylight
- Lifting paving slabs
- Bird droppings nuisance
- Adds colour in summer
- Hackney Homes not maintaining properly.

Example 3

Item 4 Overgrown trees

Blocking out light and roots are lifting up the paving stones.

Bird droppings are H+S risk.

But trees bring colour in summer so wouldn't want to lose them.

Problem might be that Hackney Homes is not maintaining them or maybe a preservation order exists.

- TS to find out if a preservation order exists.
- Try to get Hackney Homes to remove the two trees closest to the block
- Get Hackney Homes to set up a regular pruning programme for the rest.

Agreed

TS – check for preservation order

- Ask Hackney Homes to move two trees closest to the blocks
- Check if regular pruning programme exists.

Agenda

Estate: Tenant and Resident Association
 Date: Tuesday 14 June 2010
 Venue: Anytown Community Hall
 Time: 7:00pm

Make sure that each person has agreed to that lead on an item (don't just put names in without asking!)

No.	Item	Who is taking the item	Time allowed
1	Introductions	Chair	5
2	Minutes and matters arising	Chair	15
3	Report back from delegates/ sub-committees (feedback from members attending other groups or subcommittees carrying out work)		15
4	Environmental Improvement Budget	All/Housing Manager	15
5	Fun day	All	15
6	Any other business (AOB)	Chair	

Meeting to finish by: 8:30pm

The Chair may ask for notice of AOB items at the start of the meeting to ensure that there is enough time to deal with them at the end.

You are likely to get better turnouts if meetings finish on time and before 9pm. Tip! Don't forget to try daytime meetings as well!

Timings will help the Chair get through all the items and finish the meeting on time.

[insert name of group]

Invite you to the

[insert meeting title]

on

[insert day/date/year]

at

[insert time]

[insert location including
full address and postcode]

[add some information about the meeting and list any invited guests]

All residents of [insert area covered by the group]
are welcome to attend.

[add meeting/group name]
[add date of meeting and start time]
[add location]

Attendees [list all those present]

Guest [list officers of the council and other guests including their job title]

Apologies [list all those who have given their apologies for non-attendance]

1. [insert title of first agenda item]

Notes [write down the introduction to this topic]

Additional discussion points [note important points raised]

Decision [note what action is to be taken, by when and by whom]

2. [insert title of second agenda item]

Notes [write down the introduction to this topic]

Additional discussion points [note important points raised]

Decision [note what action is to be taken, by when and by whom]

[continue this for each agenda item]

3. Any other business

[note any business discussed that was not on the agenda and any agreed actions]

4. Date of next meeting [insert the date of the next meeting]

[note the time the meeting ended]

Anytown Tenants and Residents Association

Summary of income and expenditure for the period

to

Amount £

Opening Bank Balance

1352.58

Income:

Levy Grant

300.00

Fundraising

135.65

Hall Hire

200.00

Total Receipts

1988.23

Less Expenditure:

Telephone

124.68

Printing

95.53

Furniture (10 folding chairs)

220.00

Equipment (Tea urn and Microwave oven)

186.25

Coach Trip (Southend)

450.00

Kids Christmas Party

200.00

Pensioners Hampers (x15)

375.00

Total Payments

1651.46

Closing Balance

336.77

Cash in Bank Account

300.00

Petty Cash

36.77

Total cash funds

336.77

Variance

0

Beecholme Signage

Aim

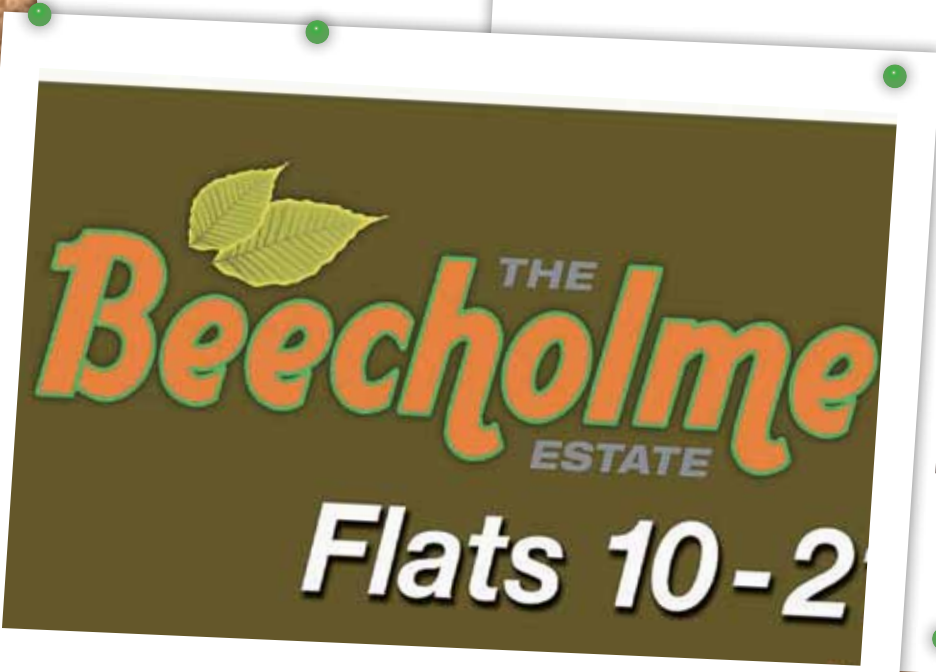
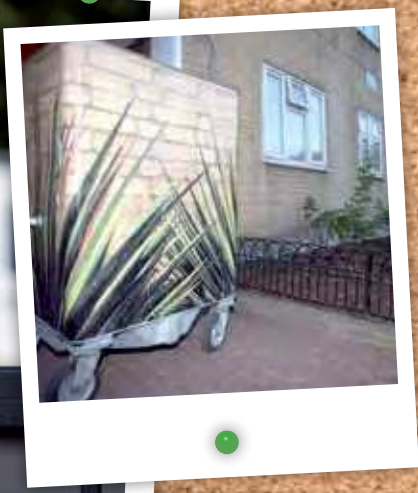
To improve the estate environment for the benefit of the residents

Actions taken

To design and install additional items on the estate which makes it more welcoming and user friendly.

Outcome

Installation of newly designed estate signage and community bench on the estate. Awarded 5 star national rating in the Clean Britain award 2010 for being a pleasant place to live and visit.



Boscobel House Scented Petal Garden

Aim

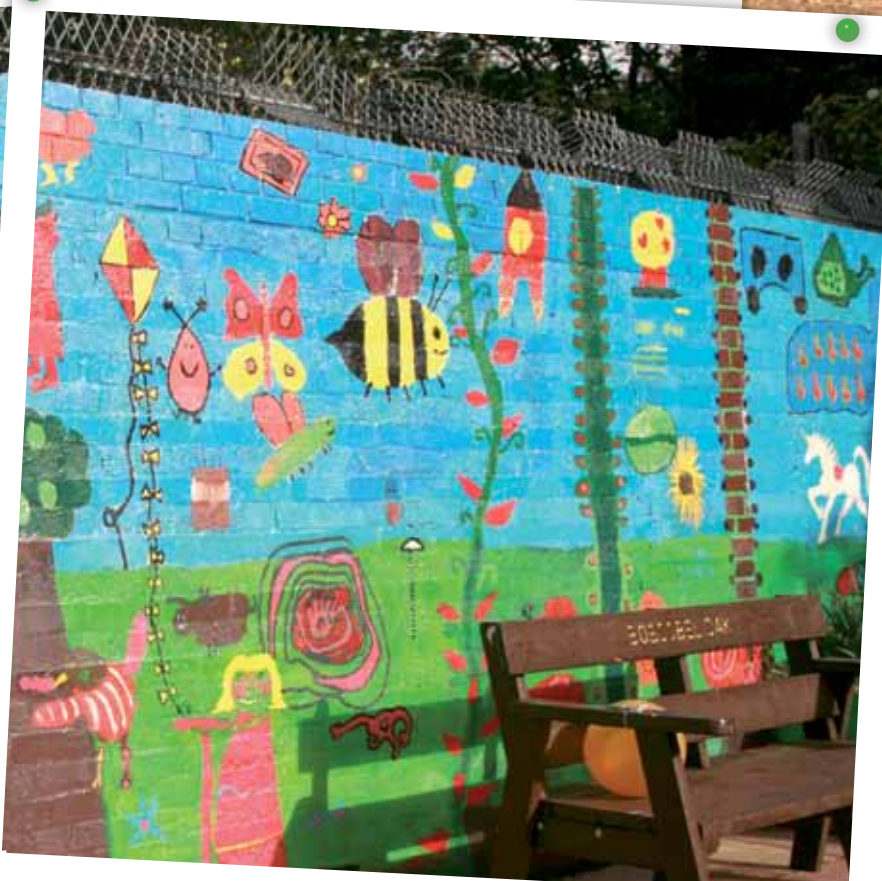
To involve children and young people living on the estate in arts, gardening and outdoor activities

Actions taken

Created a mural and vegetable/flower planters visible from Wilton Way.

Outcome

Engaged children on the estate in meaningful activities that resulted in a better understanding about how to care for and beautify their estate



Rhodes Estate Community Event

Aim

To bring residents together in a fun and informal environment and help bring about community spirit

Actions taken

To work with residents to organise a community event that would meet the needs of everyone.

Outcome

A community event was held with bouncy castles, face painting, music and food for all residents. Many residents from the estate attended but also from the surrounding streets helping to break down the divide between council tenant and private homeowners.



Becker Estate Community Event

Aim

To improve the estate environment for young children and families by involving them in redesigning their own community play area and space.

Actions taken

To create a fun play space in which children can engage and connect effortlessly.

Outcome

A play space was designed with input from local residents. This has made a difference to the estate by not only enhancing the landscape but also providing the opportunity for local children to play in a safe and welcoming environment.



If you would like to find out what this document says please tick the appropriate box, put your name, address and phone number at the bottom of this page, and return it to the address below.

Bengali

এই দলিলে কি লেখা আছে সে সম্পর্কে যদি আপনি জানতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে উপযুক্ত বাক্সে টিক দিন, এই পাতার নীচে আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও ফোন নম্বর লিখুন এবং এটি নীচের ঠিকানায় ফেরত পাঠান।

Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

French

Si vous désirez connaître le contenu de ce document, veuillez cocher la case appropriée et indiquer votre nom, adresse et numéro de téléphone au bas de cette page et la renvoyer à l'adresse indiquée ci-dessous.

Spanish

Si desea saber de lo que trata este documento, marque la casilla correspondiente, escriba su nombre, dirección y número de teléfono al final de esta página y envíela a la siguiente dirección.

Kurdish

Ger hun dixwazin bizanibin ku ev dokument çî dibêje, ji kerema xwe qutîka minasib îşaret bikin, nav, navnîşan û hejmara telefona xwe li jêrê rûpel binivîsin û wê ji navnîşana jêrîn re bişînin.

Turkish

Bu dökümanda ne anlatıldığını öğrenmek istiyorsanız, lütfen uygun kutuyu işaretleyerek, adınızı, adresinizi ve telefon numaranızı bu sayfanın alt kısmına yazıp, aşağıdaki adrese gönderin.

Polish

Jeśli chcesz dowiedzieć się, jaka jest treść tego dokumentu, zaznacz odpowiednie pole, wpisz swoje nazwisko, adres i nr telefonu w dolnej części niniejszej strony i przeslij na poniższy adres.

Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn biết tài liệu này nói gì hãy đánh dấu vào hộp thích hợp, điền tên, địa chỉ và số điện thoại của bạn vào cuối trang này và gửi lại theo địa chỉ dưới đây.

Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Chinese

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Return to: Freepost RSTU-LXTJ-ABEU, Hackney Homes Communications Team, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA

A THANK-YOU MESSAGE FROM HACKNEY HOMES

We would like to thank everyone involved in producing this Handbook.

Your ideas and suggestions have been implemented throughout the process to create a comprehensive Handbook which covers many areas that are important to you. We have tried our best to ensure that recent changes have been incorporated; however, we do recognise that there will be areas that are always changing.

New sections have been added following your feedback including, a Question-and-Answer section, templates that can be used to guide you in your work in your resident group and case studies so that you can see what is happening across Hackney.

We can't name everyone who has helped here but you know who you are.

Thanks for all your input.

