

## **Residents' Association Handbook**

### **A Guide to Running Your Association**

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## Introduction

Welcome to your handbook designed specifically to help and support residents run an effective Residents' Association.

Residents' Associations are vital in shaping the services Sutton Housing Partnership provide to residents in the London Borough of Sutton, and we think it is important that running an association is made as simple as possible.

All of the sections in this handbook have been written to help you through just about situation or problem you may encounter. If we have missed anything then please contact the Neighbourhoods Team who will be happy to assist you through whatever enquiry you may have.

This guide doesn't deal with how to establish a Residents' Association, as you will be able to draw on the services of the Neighbourhoods Team for support to do this.

London Borough of Sutton and Sutton Housing Partnership have a long history of involving residents in decisions that affect the way they live and this is another example of our continued support for you.

We hope you find it useful.

### Contact Details:

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## Constitutions

This is probably the most vital piece of paper your association possesses and yet it is often the most overlooked and ignored as well. You must have a written constitution in order to be officially recognised as a Residents Association. A well written constitution will give you the means to address nearly any problem you may encounter in the day to day running of the association.

It is important because:

- Without one you may find members of your association working at crossed purposes and things won't get done
- It is a good reference point to assist members in resolving any problems that may occur from time to time
- Sutton Housing Partnership (or any other body you work with) must be satisfied that you are democratic and accountable. This means laying out clear procedures by which decisions can be made.

### What is a constitution?

*“A constitution is a formal document adopted by your association that states the aims and objectives of the organisation and how it will be run”. (TPAS - Tenant Participation Advisory Service)<sup>1</sup>.*

The constitution will detail:

- The name of the association
- What the association will do (aims and objectives)
- Who can be members of the association
- Ending membership
- Who will be on the committee (numbers and officers)
- Code of conduct (usually a reference to a separate document)
- Number of meetings per year (committee and general)
- Voting rights
- Subscription levels if any
- What the funds raised will be used for
- Who will open the bank account
- Who can sign cheques and the amount of signatories required
- Who will manage the accounts
- Procedure for and at Annual General Meetings
- Procedure at general meetings
- Quorum
- The role of the Secretary
- Amending the constitution
- Dissolution.

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<sup>1</sup> Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) – constitutions for Tenants' and Residents' Associations information sheet.

There is a lot to be covered in what is usually a brief document but by including all of the points in the list above, and being aware of the detail of the constitution you will ensure your association runs smoothly.

Before you set out to draft your associations' constitution, or to revise it, you should set out in your own minds what you want to achieve and ask yourself some basic questions. The constitution needs to be agreed by the members of the association and you should seek to include as many members as possible in the drafting of it. Once completed, it will need to be adopted at the Inaugural General Meeting.

Attached is Sutton Housing Partnership's model constitution which incorporates sections on all of the above (Appendix I). It is your responsibility to ensure that the sections reflect the particular circumstances of your association and that members adhere to the constitution.

## The Role of Officers

### The Chairperson

A common misconception is that the Chairperson does everything. They do not. They ensure that everything gets done!

The main responsibilities for the Chairperson are:

- Ensuring that the meeting gets through all of its business in the allocated time available
- Making sure everyone is clear what decisions have been taken
- Ensuring that everyone knows who is going to do what tasks
- Keeping the meeting in order – ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to be heard and stopping inappropriate interruptions and irrelevances
- Setting agendas in partnership with the secretary.

It is particularly important to note that the Chairperson does not have any special powers in the committee. In fact, sometimes a chair will not vote except to have the casting vote when a vote is tied.

Chairing requires a particular skill to ensure that the resources and skills of all committee members are utilised to the full. In this way the association will be much more effective. The post of Chairperson should not be used as a platform from which the holder promotes their own views.

It can be difficult at times to keep meetings in order, given this, it is useful for everyone to sign up to a Code of Conduct (Appendix xxx) when they join the committee (make it a requirement) so that everyone knows the rules and parameters.

Depending on the size of your committee it may be useful for people to “speak through the Chairperson”. What this means is that people should put their hands up when they have something to say and the Chairperson controls who is able to speak. It is very important that everyone is given an opportunity. Be aware that some people, often new to the committee find it difficult to talk at meetings and you should look to make sure they are included and make it as easy as possible for them. However, the Chairperson also needs to be aware that some people have a lot to say and may need firmer control to allow time for others.

It can be helpful to ask “is there anyone who hasn’t spoken yet, who would like to say something on this?” or “Mr X has spoken several times on this already so I think we should hear from...”

The Chairperson may want to check that the committee briefly to check everyone is happy with their opportunity to speak and that the committee is ready to make a decision. Then make sure the meeting makes a formal decision (even if it is to defer until further information is obtained) and that this is recorded in the minutes.

It is very important that the Chairperson does not let one person interrupt too frequently! This will delay proceedings, may lead to confusion, frustrate other members, lead to frayed tempers and to people resigning from the committee.

### **An effective Chairperson**

An effective Chairperson needs to:

- Set a time limit for the meeting and if necessary for agenda items. The chair will make sure members know at the start when the meeting will finish – no-one likes meetings which go on for hours
- Ensure the meeting keeps moving and does not run on too much on any one subject. If it looks like doing so, check with everyone that they are happy with this and advise that it will mean that the meeting will go on longer than planned if they want to keep on discussing this subject (sometimes this can be a valuable discussion that people are happy to go on with)
- If it looks likely that the meeting will over-run suggest that some items are postponed until the next meeting, ensuring members are aware of any deadlines for items being proposed for postponement
- Be clear and concise. Vague suggestions and proposals are an invitation for an endless discussion
- Draw the item to a close by summarising the main points, what has been decided and who is going to carry it out
- Ensure the minute taker has time to record the decisions and who is going to carry it out, together with a timescale for any action

### **Remember!**

A Chairperson should not:

- Use their position to impose their views on the meeting
- Talk too much about them self
- Ignore people who want to speak
- Allow one or two people to do all the talking, meetings should be as inclusive as possible.

Finally, there is a common misconception about the power of the Chairperson outside of the committee meeting. Many organisations have something called “Chairs Action” whereby the Chairperson makes certain decisions outside of that committee meeting.

Essentially the Chairperson has no authority or power other than that delegated by the committee.

If you wish the Chairperson to act for the association outside of the committee then this must be formally delegated by the committee. This is known as a “Standing Order” and should clearly state what the Chairperson is allowed to do. This will give the Chairperson the necessary power to act on behalf of the association in the areas delegated. All action taken by the Chairperson must then be formally reported to the committee at their next meeting.

## **The Secretary**

The role of secretary is not as defined as that of Chairperson and will vary from one group to another. Your association should state and set down (at the outset) what it expects the Secretary to do.

However, there are some basic tasks that can be carried out by the Secretary; these include:

- Take the minutes in meetings, write them up and distribute within 7 days
- Keep the records of past minutes and meetings
- Set the agenda in partnership with the Chairperson
- Let the committee/members know when and where the next meeting will be held
- Keep the committee membership records
- Keep a log of all correspondence in and out
- Send and receive letters on behalf of the association
- Invite any guests to meetings

## **Minute Taking**

Only the main points of the discussion, and who is to carry out any agreed action, needs to be recorded. Minutes are not meant to be a verbatim record of what was said at a meeting.

Some tips to remember are:

- Take rough notes in the meeting – they can be written up later (but don't leave it too long)
- Know everyone at the meeting and where they are from (send a sheet of paper around and ask everyone to write their name and organisation)
- Sit where you can see who is speaking
- If it is not clear on what is being said or agreed ask for clarification (perhaps speak to the person presenting the item before the meeting for a better understanding of what is to be discussed)
- Record the names of those who propose and second motions
- Do not try to record everything but make sure there is a note of what has been proposed, who will carry it out and the completion date or deadline

After the meeting ensure that members get the minutes within two weeks after the date of the meeting (in line with the Resident Involvement Compacts' Agreed Standards) and that copies are kept of all past minutes (it can be worthwhile getting someone else who was at the meeting to check the draft before it is sent out).

## **Organisation**

- File records, such as minutes! It is important to be able to find records easily
- Do not let paperwork build up – it's more manageable to sort out papers regularly
- Get a book to record correspondence received and when they were answered, this should include any emails received and responded too

- Get a diary to record future meeting dates and where possible set these dates in advance for the forthcoming year
- Make a “to do” list – don’t rely on your memory
- Ensure when inviting guests, you give good time for them to respond and advise if they are attending

### **Share Information**

Make sure that any information received is forwarded to the relevant person. The Secretary often receives paperwork on behalf of the group and this must be shared. Ensure that the other committee members work closely with the Secretary.

### **Do not do everything!**

Make sure that the workload is shared amongst other members. Do not let the Secretary get overloaded, others can take the minutes or take on any one of the duties. This helps to maintain a reasonable workload and gets others more involved.

If there is too much to do raise it with the committee, and see if other volunteers will assist.

### **The Treasurer**

The Treasurer is the person who has day-to-day responsibility for the association’s money and for keeping accurate financial records. However it is the committee who has responsibility for deciding how the money is used. This is an important distinction to remember.

It is also important to note that whilst the Treasurer has day-to-day responsibility, the committee is the body with overall responsibility for ensuring that the finances are managed properly.

If you are elected as Treasurer, there are a few simple rules which will assist in carrying out this role:

- Be methodical and keep clear records of money received or paid out. Do not rely on memory!
- Ensure your paperwork is accurate and all transactions are recorded promptly– do not keep scraps of paper as records, these are easily mislaid or lost
- Record everything in and out separately – do not offset one against the other when entering in the accounts ( i.e if you have collected membership fees and paid for some stationary with some of these fees, record both transactions and not just the remaining sum)
- Keep the association’s money separate from your own
- Do not keep large amounts of cash – put it in the bank
- For petty cash, ensure that the amount held equals the figure in the cash book
- Ensure that the bank account requires two signatures for cheques or withdrawal forms
- Check the bank statements carefully and regularly, usually on a monthly basis

When receiving money ensure that you:

- Issue a receipt. You can buy small numbered duplicate books from most newsagents/stationers. Record the total, the date, the name of the person from whom the cash is received and a description of what it is for (e.g. membership fees). Hand over the top copy and keep your copy in the book
- If you receive a cheque, file any accompanying paperwork and write the date and amount received.

When making payments ensure that you:

- Make sure payments are made by cheque – this provides a clear record of who has been paid, how much they were paid and this can be verified by bank statements
- Always get an invoice or receipt whether you pay by cash or cheque (if the receipt does not identify what the item was remember to write this on the receipt)
- For cash payments fill out a petty cash voucher and ask the person receiving the money to sign for it. Staple any receipts to the voucher number it and keep them in order
- Write the date and number of the cheque on the bill/invoice, if you have requested the bank/building society to raise a cheque from your account.

## Filing Systems

As previously stated you should be methodical in the way you act as Treasurer, having a good filing system will assist in this function.

An effective filing system should have four files:

- **Invoices (waiting to be paid)** – these should be kept in date order as they arrive.
- **Invoices (which have been paid)** – these should be filed in date order as they are paid, and numbered so that you can easily trace them. It often helps to use file dividers and have a section for each month, so you can quickly find them at a later date.
- **Petty Cash slips and receipts** – these should be kept in date order, with monthly dividers. The petty cash slips should be numbered.
- **Bank statements** – filed in date order.

## The Cash Book

You should keep separate books for your petty cash and your bank/building society account. See Fig 1 for what a cash book should look like.

It is essential to always complete the cash book in pen – do not use a pencil!

Fig 1

Money In					Money Out				
Date	Rec from	Ref	Total	B/F	Date	Paid To	Cheque Number	Invoice Number	Total
21/07/2008	LBS		£250		22/07/2008	Tesco	3507	1	£26.57
						BT	3508	2	£37.92
						E-On	3509	3	£43.55

The section to the left of the centre line records all payments into the bank. There are columns for the date money was paid in, where it came from and how much it was for.

The section to the right shows the payments which have been made. There are columns for the date on which the cheque was drawn, who it was made out to, the amount and cheque number. There is also a column for the invoice number. This is for your own numbering system – write the invoice number on each invoice as it is paid, as well as in the cash book. This will make it easier to check the invoices against the books, depending on the size of your association and how many invoices are paid out; you could have additional columns for payment descriptions.

### Using the cash book

#### Example

You have received a bill for the telephone service of £55.00 then you should follow the steps below:

1. Remove the invoice from the “to be paid” file.
2. Write the cheque and enter the detail in the cheque book.
3. Enter the date, who the cheque is made out to, the amount and cheque number in the correct columns.
4. Enter your own sequential invoice reference number.
5. Write a note on the invoice to say that it has been paid, initial it, and write the date of payment and your own reference number.
6. File the paid invoice under the month in which it was paid in the “invoices paid” file.

It is usually a good idea to file at the same time as payments, this avoids the possibility of invoices being mislaid or lost.

### Balancing the cash book

This needs to be done on a regular basis (monthly) in order to ensure that you know how much money the association has available.

To balance the cashbook simply rule off the pages and cross through any blank entries (there will always be blanks either in the money in or money out columns unless you have had exactly the same number of transactions on each side) and total the columns.

In the example (Fig 1), this will give a total income of £250.00, with out-goings totalling £108.04, giving a total of £141.96 in the bank.

You should carry out this exercise every month and whenever you do a bank reconciliation.

Remember to carry forward the remaining balance in the cash book as this is effectively the first “income” in the next period.

### **Bank reconciliation**

This is simply checking the entries in your cash book against your bank statements. The bank balance should be the same as the balance showing in your cash book on the same date.

If it is not the same, then you will need to check the entries on the bank statement against those in the cash book to locate where the difference has occurred.

It may be that a cheque has not been presented or cleared yet or there is an error which should be corrected. If you find any errors make a note of them and amend the books/statement. If there is an error on the bank statement then this should be followed up with the bank immediately.

*Remember: It is your cash book that tells you how much money is currently available not the bank statement.*

The form in Appendix 2 may assist in carrying out a reconciliation.

### **Reports to committee**

Your report should be a summary of the current financial position of the association taken from the cash book. It may be either written or verbal depending on the size of your association and the requirements of the committee.

You should always be in a position to state how much money the association has available and whilst this may be sufficient for small associations it is best to report:

- Money available in bank/building society
- Amount received and paid out in the year so far
- Expected income and bills due over the next month or quarter
- For an example of a written report see Appendix 3.

### **Report to the AGM**

This must be a written report available to all members of the association and should show:

- Total income broken down into sections (grants, membership fees etc)
- Total expenditure again broken down in sections (stationary, electricity etc)

- How much money is left and where it is held. You should name the bank(s) used by the association and state how much is in each account. You should also state how much is held in petty cash, including the date.

For an example of a report to an AGM see Appendix 4.

### **Auditing of accounts**

This is an independent check of the account and is carried out on a yearly basis before an Annual General Meeting. You should submit your draft accounts at least a month in advance before your AGM, to the Neighbourhoods Team at Sutton Gate.

The reasons why you should do this are:

- Provides an itemised written account to present to the AGM
- Helps and reassures new treasurers
- Identifies and deals with any problems with the accounts
- Demonstrates to your members that the finances are in order.

## Meetings

### How long, how often?

This is for your association to decide but we would suggest that you do not meet too frequently unless there is an absolute necessity or for a special event.

Your constitution will dictate the minimum number of meetings that you must hold per year. If this proves to be inadequate for your association then use the correct procedure in the constitution to amend the amount.

When deciding whether or not to hold a meeting consider the following:

- Do you need the meeting?
- Do you need to hold it now?
- What subject(s) will be discussed?
- Who needs to be invited?
- Venue, access and special equipment needed, e.g. hearing loop

If it is necessary to hold a meeting, set a convenient time and date for members to attend. It is worth checking with committee members, on at least an annual basis, which times/dates are most convenient.

Set a fixed meeting duration (e.g. 1 ½ hours). People lose interest in meetings that last too long. This will need an effective Chairperson to ensure that any business is conducted within the allotted time, which means that residents and other interested groups will be much happier to attend. **Always start on time!**

### Why have an agenda?

It gives you a structure around which to base the meeting. It is useful because:

- It helps you plan the meeting
- It helps you to get through the business of the meeting efficiently, for example helps identify important issues to be dealt with first
- It helps those members attending follow what is going on
- It gives members the opportunity to think about the meeting in advance.

Generally it is the Chairpersons' job to draft the agenda, however the Secretary often collaborates and it can be worthwhile to get input from other committee members in advance by using one of the following methods:

- A suggestion sheet on a notice board
- At the current meeting ask for items for the next meeting
- When you send out invitations to the meeting ask for items for the agenda.

### What should be on the agenda?

Figure 2 gives an example of what should be included. In addition, you could set a time limit for each item to ensure that discussions do not take too long, although you may want to be flexible on this if the discussion is particularly useful.

**Do not put too much on an agenda.** This will lead to either very long meetings or too brief item discussions, both of which will be unsatisfactory for participants.

Fig.2 Model Agenda

<b>Anywhere R.A</b>
(Date, Time & Place of meeting)
<b>Agenda</b>
1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of last meeting
4. Matters arising
5. Item 1
6. item 2
7. Any other business
8. Date, time & place of next meeting

**Remember:**

- Most of the agenda will be items you need to discuss. Make each important matter a separate item.
- Look through the minutes of your last meeting. Are there things to report back on? Are there items to be discussed again?
- Have you received information you need to tell others about?
- Look at the minutes of the last meeting and agree their accuracy (or correct any discrepancies) and get the chairperson to sign them.

Any other business should not be used to discuss the majority of the business. It should be about important issues/information that has come up since the agendas were circulated.

Meeting items should have been included on the main agenda or should be put back to the next meeting when it can be included formally.

Try and end on a positive note.

If you have anyone specially invited to the meeting, it is usually customary for them to be placed at the top of the agenda so that they can leave once their matter has been dealt with.

Meetings, for some people are seen as a waste of time and they may leave a meeting dissatisfied. In order to avoid this, conduct a quick check with each member to ensure that they are happy with the meeting so far. Leaving it to the end will be too late. In this way, if members have concerns about the meeting they can be addressed immediately.

Always end the meeting on time and agree the next date and time of the meeting.

## **The Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

This is the residents' association yearly general meeting and subject to the same rules regarding notice given to call the meeting etc.

Where the AGM differs, however, is that there are specific items of business that must be conducted at the meeting.

These are usually defined in your constitution and include the passing of the annual accounts, appointment of an auditor (sometimes) and electing the committee.

Some constitutions state that officers (chairperson, secretary, treasurer etc) are elected directly by members at the AGM while others state that it is the committee that are elected and at the first subsequent committee meeting they elect the officers.

The AGM is also a good opportunity for the committee to inform members of the residents' association's achievements.

Whatever the constitution states there are some basic requirements that you must meet:

- Ensure you give your members sufficient notice of the meeting, this is usually 28 days
- But always check how long does the constitution require
- Where should notification be sent?
- Can it be posted or must it be delivered by hand? Do you only need to notify members or all estate residents?
- How can members add items to the agenda and have you allowed them sufficient time?

If nominations are required for the committee make sure these are invited in the correct format and that they are received at the correct address and within the specified time frame. Depending on what your constitution states, this will be in advance of the meeting or it may allow you to accept nominations in the meeting.

The notice calling the AGM should state the date, time and venue for the meeting, all business to be discussed and also how the elections will be conducted.

See Figure 3 overleaf for an AGM model agenda.

Fig.3 Model Agenda

<b>Anywhere R.A AGM</b>
Date, Time & Place of meeting
<b>Agenda</b>
Welcome & Introductions
Apologies
Minutes of last AGM
Matters Arising
Chairperson's or Annual report
Treasurer's report
Election of committee/officers
Guest Speakers
Any other business (of which due notice has been received)

### **Electing the committee**

#### **How will this be done?**

Plan in advance how you want this to be undertaken. If your constitution requires nominations to be submitted in advance of the meeting, you will have a clear idea of how many people are interested and whether there is sufficient space on the committee to allow them all to join, or if you will need to have a vote.

The downside is that most people forget to submit nominations in advance of the AGM. It is useful to give the opportunity to those attending the AGM to join the committee.

If, however you need to have a vote you should decide in advance how this will be conducted. Will it be sufficient for a show of hands or will you require a "secret ballot".

If the latter, make sure you have voting forms drawn up (allowing extra space for nominations at the meeting), a "ballot box" and someone ready to count the votes – perhaps schedule this for a break for refreshments.

Consider who is going to count the votes, it helps to have a neutral or independent vote counter to avoid problems or concerns over any election results.

One way to ensure there is continuity from year to year is to consider electing committee members for a period of three years.

One third of the committee members would then be required to stand down each year to seek re-election (if they want). For the first two years draw lots amongst the committee (all in the first year, the longest serving two-thirds in the second) to see who has to stand down and seek re-election.

You may also want to insert a clause in the constitution stating that after three elections a committee member must stand down for a year (and not be co-opted back on). This will ensure that there is an opportunity for all members to stand and sit on the association's committee.

## **Take time to plan**

All this may seem very involved and time consuming and it is easy to skip some bits and not bother with others and, for the majority of the time there will not be a problem. However, if a problem does arise, you must be able to demonstrate that you have followed the constitution.

Therefore, you should put a little extra time aside each year in advance of the AGM to plan what needs to be done, and who needs to do it. It may be useful to add the AGM as an item on the agenda for the meeting prior to the AGM, this will give you an opportunity to discuss and plan for this meeting.

Prepare a brief plan, sharing out the workload, which will ensure a smooth meeting that deals with AGM business quickly and efficiently. There is truth in the old maxim “if you fail to plan, plan to fail”!

## Code of Conduct

To ensure your group functions as well as it can it is advisable to put in place a set of ground rules to which all members of the association, particularly the committee, have to abide.

Although this is touched upon in the constitution, a formal Code of Conduct is usually a separate document. A template is attached see Appendix 5. There is also a guide from the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) which is available from the Neighbourhoods Team at SHP.

Such codes can operate on different levels of formality. You may wish to adopt some rules for meetings such as:

- No cross talking
- Listen to the speaker
- Stick to the agenda
- No abusive or racist language
- No personal comments

Or you may want to make them more formal along the lines of standing orders. Whatever route you choose it is important that you tailor them to suit your association and ensure that they cover the areas that are important to you.

Make sure that your members are aware of the clause in your constitution that refers to the Code of Conduct and the fact that any breach could lead to their expulsion from the association.

## Fundraising

Many groups wish to undertake fundraising to support the community activities that they organise and it can be a great way to involve local businesses, build links in the community and to raise the profile of your association in your estate or area. The organisation that you approach for funding will largely fall into one of two categories depending on how much money you are seeking.

1. Local businesses and agencies
2. Major/larger funding bodies and agencies

The most basic question to ask yourselves before embarking on a fundraising event is “Why do we need to raise money?” Closely followed by “How much do we need to raise?” In asking yourself why, remember to take into account the views of the membership and not just one or two people.

The answers to these questions will help you decide on the most appropriate way to approach the issue of raising funds.

Before you start trying to raise money for an event, undertake some basic research into very practical issues which may cause the whole idea to fail if not considered at the outset.

- Do you need any permission/or a licence for your event?
- If you do need a licence, contact the relevant body to gauge how likely you are to obtain the permission/licence.
- Does your constitution allow you to undertake this type of event/project?

If you are looking to support a small local event then businesses (large and small) would be the most appropriate source. If however, you are looking for longer term or ongoing funding for events or projects, then you will need to consider larger funding bodies, such as the National Lottery. The latter will require a much more detailed analysis of your proposals and you should be prepared to put in much more effort to obtain the required funding – of course if you are successful then the rewards are that much greater.

This chapter will look at raising funds from both sources and give you a few ideas to ensure that your applications are successful.

When you are seeking to raise funds from outside agencies or businesses, there are a number of important steps to follow:

- Plan what you need funding for.
- Show how you will use the funding.
- Choose appropriate funding bodies.
- Persuade them to fund your project.
- Write a letter or complete an application form.
- Know what to do if you are successful.

## **Fundraising from local businesses**

Local businesses and shops are more likely to give to people they know, so make use of all your local connections. If a member of your association is employed by a local business their recommendation will be valuable – do not be shy about using any connection you have.

Similarly, if you are approaching local shops, go in person, especially if they know you but do not forget to take a letter on your associations headed paper to back up your request.

Often businesses like to support organisations in their local area, although some will concentrate on national charities and have established donation programmes, so have a look through your local businesses telephone directory and pick out businesses in your area.

When you apply:

- Write on your association headed paper.
- Keep the letter to one side of A4 if possible, but make sure you specify what you want the money for and who will benefit.
- Ensure you credit the donors in any publicity you produce.
- Always say thank you afterwards and provide some information on how the event went (include any local press cuttings or photos of the day).

See appendix for a sample letter to write to local businesses. This can be adapted according to your needs.

## **Fundraising Applications**

Funding bodies will usually have a set of established criteria against which they will judge your application for funds so make sure you know what they are before you apply. For example, Marks and Spencer plc state that they will only fund applications for programmes concerned with improving employability – not much use for a Fun Day. Many bodies will not donate towards capital costs (i.e. building or equipment purchase).

They will expect you to be clear about why you need the money, how you will use it and how it matches their criteria.

If you are hoping to apply to an external funding body remember to plan ahead. There are often quite tight deadlines to be met and the funding application forms are often quite complex. You will need to have worked through your proposal carefully and be clear about your aims. You may need to start planning at least 6-9 months before you require the grant.

You should consider:

- What do we need the money for?

Funding bodies will normally only provide funds for specific projects rather than giving money for general running costs. Therefore you should look to produce a brief written outline of the project for potential donors. This is worth doing whatever the project and whatever type of fundraising the association pursues. The written outline should always flow from aims agreed with the member.

For example:

Your residents' association wishes to establish an after school club for children aged 8-15yrs on your estate, based in the associations' rooms. Education and social services have identified a number of improvements required to the facilities and you need funds to implement these. Parents will provide the supervision on a rotational basis but you also want to employ a paid worker to facilitate the club and ensure that there is an educational content to the service.

You may wish to consider:

- Staff wage costs.
- Building adaptation costs.
- Equipment purchase.
- External advice.
- Legal costs (employment law etc).
- What is permissible under the terms of the associations clubroom lease (licences/landlords permission etc)?
- Why is your project important?

Funding bodies are more likely to donate funds where there are clear aims and have a clear need that they wish to fulfil. For example, do not aim to set up an after school club if there are already sufficient numbers in the area. They will focus on outputs. They are interested in who will benefit from your project (the children) rather than the needs of your association.

To show this you can make use of:

- Census data or other statistics held by the council/health authority etc. to show the need exists.
- Any surveys that have been carried out in the area, which show that people will use the facilities you seek to provide.
- Most of all, explain how the project will have an impact on the lives of those who use it – not that “the kids need somewhere to go” but more about how it would improve their educational achievement, self-confidence, skills and employability etc.

### **How will we use the money to achieve our aims?**

You will need to demonstrate that you have the skills and ability in your association to make the project work. For example, have you done something like this before (or managed a project successfully), which will demonstrate that the money will achieve the projects aims? Donors want to be associated with success, so the more you can assure them that yours will succeed, the more likely you are to get the money.

It may help if you formulate a plan to show:

- How you will run the project (e.g. paid staff or volunteers, where will these be drawn from, who will manage them, who will attend, where from, advertising etc?).
- Why have you chosen the methods supplied? Have they worked elsewhere?
- Publicity – how will you advertise your project?
- What do you need to buy before running the project? How much will you need and what will it cost?
- Use of staff – who will do what? Detail what your volunteers/paid staff will be doing and what hours they will work.
- Where will you stage/hold your project/event? Have you covered issues around accessibility, insurance etc?
- Are you allowed to do this under the aims of your associations' constitution? This is often overlooked but can result in successful challenges from members.

## **Budgets**

When you apply for a grant you will almost certainly be asked about the cost of the project, so it is worth considering your possible income and budget position.

Do not just look at costs but consider potential income e.g. if you plan to sell refreshments include this income in the budget.

Be as accurate as possible. If you need to buy or hire equipment get quotes so you can justify your figures. Guessing or estimating may be inaccurate and may lead to applying for insufficient funds.

Do not underestimate what the project will cost. Funding bodies usually have a pretty accurate idea of costs. By putting down an unrealistically low figure it is going to make them think that you do not understand the full cost implications and will create a poor impression. You need to have enough funding to carry out the project the project. If you do not apply for enough then the project will not complete. Bodies may query the delay or failure to complete.

- Do not over estimate either. Do not go for the expensive option if there is a more practical option available.
- Remember to include all the hidden extras such as maintenance, insurance, travel etc.
- Are these costs for capital (one-off purchases) or revenue (on-going costs such as rent, salaries etc)?

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

For many this is the boring part after the excitement of developing and carrying out a project but it is, nonetheless, a very important part of the overall programme. You will also need to state on your application form how you will know if your project is successful – so think about monitoring the project in the planning stage.

Monitoring is simply the process by which you record information about the project – numbers attending, feedback from those attending etc.

Evaluating means looking at the information you need to collect in order to assess how well the aims of the project are met.

For example, you may have set up an adult literacy project and have monitored the numbers of attendees and possibly the exam results achieved at the end of the course. The evaluation would look at whether or not the attendees were from the group you had targeted and possibly the increase in employability of those who had attended. This could be undertaken by means of a survey or by talking to those who have attended the course.

### **Other information**

In order to establish that you are a competent association with a sufficient legal standing you will also be expected to provide most of the following:

- Details of your bank account.
- A copy of your constitution and your legal status (i.e. Limited Company, Industrial & Provident Society etc).
- A copy of your most recent accounts.
- Equal opportunities policy
- Risk assessment for the project (health and safety).
- Details of what you have achieved as an association so far and how long you have been operating.
- Membership numbers and details of volunteers (without giving personal information).
- Details of other funding received (it is a fact that attracting one source of funding often leads to other donations).
- Evidence of your competence both financial and managerial.

Looking at this checklist you may reasonably assume that you will not get funding if you are a new association aiming to run a major project unless you can show that individuals have skills and experience in previous associations or organisations.

### **Who will fund?**

There are far too many funding organisations to be listed and their aims and objectives vary. To find a suitable organisation, try the following websites:

- The Directory of Social Change: [www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk) (provides details of over 7,000 organisations nationally who provide funding for charitable and voluntary projects).
- Government Funding: [www.governmentfunding.org.uk](http://www.governmentfunding.org.uk) (contains details of all grants available from government departments).
- [www.access-funds.co.uk](http://www.access-funds.co.uk)
- Community Information Bureau: [www.cibfunding.org.uk](http://www.cibfunding.org.uk)
- [www.grantsnet.co.uk](http://www.grantsnet.co.uk)
- [www.institute-of-funding.org.uk](http://www.institute-of-funding.org.uk)

There are a host of organisations with funding but you must make sure you apply to the right group or groups. You can apply to more than one organisation for different parts of the project.

Many will want to see “matched funding” – this is where their contribution is matched by the residents’ associations’ own funds or resources. If you choose to approach more than one funding body, be careful that the project will meet the demands of all those you seek contributions from or there may be conflict within the project as to the aims and objectives.

### **Why will we get funding instead of others?**

Whilst there are thousands of funding organisations, there are similarly thousands of applications every year. What will make your application stand out from others?

You will need to show that you have the belief and confidence in your project to make it succeed. You need to have a detailed plan showing how you will make the project work and you may also need a fair bit of stamina to get through the process.

You can achieve the funding you desire by practising what you want to say to each other. Take a critical view of the project – would you give money to it? If possible, talk to the funding body about your project before applying. A brief conversation may save the time and effort of making a full application if you do not meet their aims or their funds have been exhausted for the year. Equally, it might provide information which helps you target your application.

### **Applying**

- Do not send a standard letter – it is likely to be binned.
- Use headed paper and tailor your application to meet the aims of the funding body (two sides of A4 is sufficient).
- Do not use jargon or abbreviations – you may know what it means but the organisation may not.
- Keep it factual – back up any statements you make.
- Give contact details for someone in your association who can be contacted for further information.

Some funding bodies will tell you exactly what they want. If they do, then supply what they ask for – do not send everything you have. The body will have time to read through all your documents. If they do not request specific information then supply a brief statement of your project – this should include:

- The name of the project.
- Something about your association – who you are, what you are aiming to do etc.
- A brief summary of your aims and objectives.
- A description of the project – what it is, how you will run it, who it is aimed at and what benefits it will provide.
- Details of how you will monitor it to ensure you meet your stated aims.
- Who else is involved (other groups or funding bodies).

Also include:

- A budget summary.
- Your most recent accounts.
- A copy of your constitution.

Finally, if you are successful in getting funding, always write and say thank you, it is good manners and you might want to apply again in the future.

### **Monitoring**

If you are successful then you will need to start monitoring the project straight away, your Neighbourhood Manager can assist you with setting up an appropriate system if the funding organisation does not have a specific requirement.

## Getting People Involved

Sometimes it may be hard to find people to join your association – there are no easy remedies for this. However there are things that can be done to make it easier for people to be involved in all different ways.

Sutton's Resident Involvement Compact is a guide for residents wishing to become involved in improving housing and local neighbourhoods. The summary of the Compact sets out the different methods available for residents who wish to become involved a little more and is a good starting point for finding out more information.

### Success!

Nothing generates instant success, so small but realistic timeframes should be put in place. Set some aims and goals your association to achieve, these must be relevant and meaningful to the area.

Remember to always celebrate your success; you can do this by feeding back with articles in your associations' newsletter or via the Homefront magazine. Sutton Housing Partnership can also help to promote your success through the local and national media via a press release.

### Publicity

In order to keep people involved and aware of what you are doing you need to make sure regular newsletters or bulletins are delivered to all residents.

There are lots of basic software packages which will enable you to produce quite professional looking documents quickly and cheaply. The Neighbourhoods Team will be able to assist you in both the production and the design of newsletters. Use colour and try to establish a recognisable format and stick to it. You may also wish to develop a logo for your association that you can include on all letterheads and newsletters.

### Removing Barriers

A criticism that is often levelled at residents' associations is that they only represent one section of the community. This may be because they are seen as coming from only one community. By broadening the membership, particularly that of the committee, you can begin to overcome this barrier and become more inclusive. There are a number of steps you can take to ensure you are attracting members from all sections of the community:

- Hold your meetings at a time and place convenient to all residents
- If you can not find a convenient time consider holding alternate meetings at different times
- Accessibility- is your chosen meeting place accessible to all? This does not just concern physical disabilities and sensory impairment but also moral and religious concerns (pubs are not a good idea).

- Offer to accompany people to and from meetings – many people do not feel comfortable attending evening meetings after dark.
- Can you offer crèche facilities to encourage parents with small children to attend?
- Finally, advertise the facilities you are able to offer – if people are not aware they will not be able to use them.

Monitoring the ethnicity of your members is also a good start. A brief questionnaire distributed to all members when they renew their yearly membership should produce the information you need. Your Neighbourhood Manager will then be able to let you know if this matches the profile for the area you represent.

### **Personal Contact**

One of the most effective ways to involve people is through face to face contact. It is too easy to throw away or ignore a newsletter or leaflet put through the door. Face to face contact is harder to ignore and easier to establish communication with residents. It also enables you to:

- Canvas views more effectively.
- Explain issues in a more accessible way.
- Improve the community spirit on the estate.
- Make people feel that their views matter and that you are serious about wanting to get them involved.
- When calling on people always have information ready that you can leave with residents. A brief piece about the aims of the group, contact details and activities that you are involved in is appropriate.
- If you do not get a reply make a note and arrange to call back later.

If you plan to go from door to door to speak to people, please make sure that you take appropriate measures to protect your personal safety.

- Never go alone.
- Don't go into the flat/house of anyone you do not know (a good excuse is always the number of people you have to call on).
- Make sure someone knows where you are going and what time you will be back.

You should also make a note of anyone who appears to be hostile or have aggressive pets to share with others of your group who may canvass in the future.

### **Existing groups**

Are there any existing voluntary groups in your area that you can link into? What about play groups, lunch clubs etc? It may be worth speaking to those who attend the groups and find out who attends and give out information about your association.

The links you establish with these groups may also be useful in terms of local campaigning as you may share common concerns.

## **Keeping in touch**

Having established contact with others and signed them up as new members, remember to keep in touch. Make sure everyone gets invited to meetings. Do not restrict meetings to members as you may be able to sign up new people on the night (although make sure you know who is entitled to vote).

Maybe hold some social events to enable people to get to know each other informally. It's surprising how quickly bonds can be established, which can benefit your association.

Don't scare people off by giving them too much to do too soon. Give everyone (or as many people as possible) small tasks to do.

Most importantly, maintain personal contact. This is far more effective than issuing newsletters or calling meetings. Make sure you tell people what you have achieved and what you are trying to do. Many people join groups, such as residents' associations, because they want to achieve something, so try to assist with as far as possible.

## Campaigns

This is often a vital part of the work of residents' associations- campaigns to achieve change or improvement to your estates or neighbourhoods to benefit everyone's living environment.

There are a number of stages to any successful campaign which you should always keep in mind. Firstly, make sure that there is enough support from within the community. You'll need to make sure that your neighbours and other in the area support your proposed campaign.

Then decide what are the key areas of the campaign. It may help to write down exactly what the campaign is about once you have decided upon it.

The best way to decide upon what to campaign about and ensure there is enough support is through good communication. You may have knowledge of concerns or incidents in your community – your own home – do your neighbourhoods have similar views?

This can be established through regular meetings of your group and the wider community – perhaps a questionnaire in the area. Depending on the nature of the campaign you may also want to enlist the support of other groups, schools and local businesses.

### **Make your campaign SWEAT!**

- **S**pecific – make sure your campaign has clear aims
- **W**innable – choose targets you can achieve, impossible targets lead to disenchantment.
- **E**asy to understand – use plain English for you communications make it easy to follow.
- **A**greed democratically within your group, let everyone have their say
- **T**argeted at the right people – find out who has the power to address concerns and approach them.

To help plan your campaign you will need to assess the size of the problem. If, for example, you wish to tackle a concern about the maintenance of your estate, then ask who else is concerned. How widespread does the issue appear to be?

To find this out you could:

- Call a meeting
- Distribute leaflets
  
- Carry out a survey
- Organise a petition
- Call in some expert help
- Look at other sources of information such as libraries, community centres etc.

Remember, communication is a two way thing. Not only will you need information from other people but you must keep them informed of what you are doing and why you need their help.

There may be reasons for residents not becoming involved:

- They may be housebound
- Hearing or visual impairment
- Language difficulties
- May find it difficult to attend meetings

If you feel this may be the cause then plan to address the problems, but initially you will need to make contact to find out the difficulties (back to door knocking).

**A public meeting** is a good to judge levels of support but not very useful for gathering detailed information. It is particularly good later on if you want to demonstrate to someone else (e.g. the council etc.) how much support your campaign has.

**Door Knocking** enables you to get to know people and their concerns. However, always make sure you carry some form of identification or, initially only door knock on those properties where you are known. Remember to take a pen and paper.

**Leaflets**, if well produced, can give out information and publicise your campaign but will not give any detailed information. Make sure it looks good and use pictures if possible.

**Petitions** are useful to publicise a campaign and demonstrate change but on their own are not enough to achieve change.

**Surveys** are excellent ways to provide and receive information but may take a little longer. Therefore make sure that it is focused on what information you want to receive. Remember, someone is going to have to collate all the information received into a easily read and digested format.

**Expert advice** is great for receiving specialised information but they will not know everything. Your knowledge of the local situation is just as important. Although there are some groups which will provide expert advice free, you may have to pay money to receive it.

**Libraries etc.** are very useful places to research information and also have a range of other facilities, I.T., photocopying and room hire for meetings.

**Internet** is a useful tool to research information.

**Other Residents' Associations** can be valuable means of getting help, advice and assistance. The TPAS website has a discussion area open to all. ([www.tpas.org.uk](http://www.tpas.org.uk))

## **Organising your campaign**

To run a successful campaign you need to make it attractive, persuasive and factually accurate. A briefing sheet may be of use to everyone and can be distributed to councillors, officers etc., outlining your position. It should contain supporting facts and information to back your proposal.

Alongside the briefing sheet it is useful to draw up an action plan showing what needs to be done, who in your group will do what, by when and how. It can also be used to show concerns and how you are going to pursue them.

If you do produce a briefing sheet, do not make it too long. Two sides of A4 paper with at least 1.5 lines spacing and a minimum font size of 12 point is sufficient.

- Organise your information clearly and guide the reader with a series of headings
- It should set out your proposal/concern, what you would like to achieve and by what date. Make it specific.
- Keep sentences and paragraphs short
- Avoid jargon and technical terms
- Check your briefing sheet for accuracy – get someone else to read through the document.
- Do not be too detailed – the details can be provided at a later stage.
- Always include a contact name, number and address – if someone wants to support you need to know who to contact.

Make sure you send it to everyone who might be or become involved.

## **Pursuing your concerns**

When you submit your request/demand make sure you get a response indicating who will respond and by when. If you are told something will be done, ask what. With this information work out how you will take the matter forward and build it into your action plan. The response you receive will also affect your plans, so incorporate any new points.

If you were given a date for response and do not receive it, make sure you follow it up.

If the reply is unsatisfactory or you receive no response at all then you need to work out the best way forward. Do you move to a more senior person in the organisation? If your action so far has failed then you may need to re-evaluate what you have done. Look at the reasons for lack of response and address them. You may want to involve someone with specific expert knowledge at this point.

If however, you were successful and someone has agreed to take action, then make sure they do. Ask to be kept up to date on the progress of the action. If writing a letter fails then telephone or make an appointment to see the person. If you are unhappy with the lack of response then you may want to use the complaints procedure.

All large organisations have a complaints procedure in place. Generally, the Customer Care Team will be able to assist with complaints in the first instance. If you are not satisfied with the complaint procedure (having followed each step) then there are further independent agencies such as the Ombudsman or industry watchdogs which you can approach.

Remember campaigns can take time. Most campaigns do not achieve overnight success or change. Even relatively small matters can take time due to the legal requirements they have to abide by, particularly where there is any financial cost involved.

## Running Events

For many associations running an event can provide valuable financial support and/or an informal way to meet a wider range of residents. However, in order to get them right, achieve what you want to achieve and, most importantly, for everyone to remain safe, you need to follow certain steps.

### The 5 Ws checklist

Whatever type of event you are planning to hold this checklist holds true. The answers may differ depending on the type of event but you still need to answer these five questions:

1. **Why** do you want to hold the event?
2. **Who** is doing it? Who are your partners in the event? Who are you seeking to influence (if anyone)? Who is going to come? Who is going to do the work?
3. **What** kind of event do you want to run? Outdoor? Indoor? Meeting?
4. **Where** do you want to do it (venue/site)?
5. **When** do you want to do it? Is time critical? Is time critical? Is there an external agenda driving the event? Is it weather dependent? Have you got the time? Do you have the funds? What's it going to cost and where is this money going to come from?

### Key planning stages

Whatever event you aim to run, planning is vital to its success.

For an event such as a fete or fun day you will probably need to start planning 4-6 months in advance of the day. Before you start anything however, check your constitution. Does the event you want to hold fit in with the aims of your association? Or does it impose restrictions on the type of thing you can do? You must abide by what your constitution says, even if it means you cannot hold the type of event you want.

#### Stage 1

- Set up a project group to organise the event and identify roles and responsibilities.
- Agree what you want to do. Prepare an outline plan and draft budget.
- Agree rough estimates of the time commitment required from each member.
- Agree rough timeline and proposed date for the event.
- Look to identify people who can be called upon to help the group.

#### Stage 2

- Work out a detailed timeline for the event showing the sequence of events and tasks to be completed.
- Prepare a venue checklist – what you require from the venue.
- Check out possible sites for the event (this may be limited by the necessity of having it locally).
- Finalise date.
- If you want anyone to speak at the event or open it, check their availability and agree the topic with them.

- Check with emergency services – you may need to notify them, (better still if it's a fun day or similar, invite them along).
- Draft publicity flyers and posters.
- Decide how you are going to publicise the event.
- Decide on the equipment that is required and research possible suppliers.
- Will people need a ticket to attend? How will these be distributed or sold?
- Do you need any type of licence insurance or permission?
- Are there any by-laws you need to comply with? (E.g. something prohibiting the use of your location for this type of event).

### **Stage 3**

- Work out stalls and seek volunteers to run them.
- Prepare letters for volunteers detailing what will be required of them.
- Will you offer a crèche facility (check with social services for rules governing this)?
- Catering facilities – will there be any? If so check with environmental services for any regulations that will apply.
- Is seating required?
- Access arrangements – will everyone who wants to attend be able to?
- Signage. Are signs required for stalls etc?
- First Aid. Will there be a first aid kit and a trained first aider present?
- In an emergency, how will people be able to get out? Are volunteers aware of emergency exits?
- Toilet facilities, where are they?
- Prepare a risk assessment and health and safety checklist for the event.

### **Stage 4**

- Prepare any press release advertising the event.
- Book a photographer (for events organised by RA's, Sutton Housing Partnership may be able to provide a photographer for publication in Homefront).
- Prepare a schedule of what needs to be done on the day (ensure you have a second copy).
- Brief all volunteers (in writing) with what they need to do.
- Confirm details of the event with police, Sutton Housing Partnership, LBS etc.
- Ensure appropriate licences are in place.
- If you have a speaker, ensure you have a copy of their speech and check its content.

### **Stage 5 (on the day)**

- Get there early.
- Take duplicates of all lists, signs etc.
- Run through the event with the volunteers to make sure everyone knows what they are doing.
- Make sure first aid is addressed and everyone is aware of emergency procedures.
- Storage of cash. Do you have somewhere safe?
- Photography. Get permission from any adult before taking their picture at the event. Particularly ensure that you get the permission of any parent or guardian if you wish to take pictures of children.

### **Stage 6 (after the event)**

- Run through the day with the organising committee.
- What went right?
- What could be improved upon?
- Write down all the feedback for next time.

### **Considerations**

Licences – there are many types of licence that may be required but the most common ones are:

- **Public Entertainment Licence** – available from the council, this licence is required if you are planning to hold an event of any kind where there will be dancing, music, film/theatre or sporting event.
- **Alcohol Licence** – under the Licensing Act 2003 responsibility for issuing licences for alcohol is now the responsibility of the council and there have been changes to the way in which applications for small occasional events are dealt with. The ‘Occasional Use Licence’ has been replaced with the ‘Temporary Event Notice’. Further advice on this subject can be obtained from the environmental services division of the council.
- **Film/Theatre** – Details can be found on the council’s website regarding licence requirements for film or theatre events (telephone 020 8770 5070) [www.sutton.gov.uk](http://www.sutton.gov.uk)
- **Music** – You will need to obtain a licence from the Performing Rights Society (telephone 0800 068 4828). [www.prs.co.uk](http://www.prs.co.uk)
- **Gambling/Gaming** – You will need to consider these laws if you are planning to hold a raffle or lottery (a raffle is considered to be a type of lottery, a game of chance in which buying a ticket qualifies you for a chance of winning a prize). For either, you must check if you need to register it.

## Insurance

It is good practice for all Residents' Associations to consider having insurance; some do not take out cover. This is mainly due to the cost associated with buying a policy. Always check with Sutton Housing Partnership before you consider whether insurance is needed for your event or associations activity. The Neighbourhoods Team can help advise and liaise with the Council's insurance department on the type and level of insurance the association may require.

Before committing to a policy, be clear on the type of cover required and the amount. Always read the small print. There are several types of insurance policy on the market; employers' liability, public liability, professional liability, buildings insurance. Unless you are an insurance broker you may not fully understand the cover your association requires. Taking out an insurance policy cover the association over the unlikely event of someone taking legal action if they feel negligence has taken place i.e. child falls at a fun day, someone trips over boxes on the floor in the hall. A claim can be made against the association.

Where an accredited residents association occupies a building owned by the council under a leased, the council will insure the building, therefore the public liability insurance for the activity will be covered by the council.

Shop around for before purchasing your insurance, always consider the pros and cons to the policy you are reviewing and obtain a second opinion if possible.

Consider the following points:

- What is the risk covered in the policy
- Does the quotation cover everything?
- Is there broker fees?
- What are the premiums?
- Are there any conditions e.g. separate insurance required for activities such as bouncy castle
- Check if you have adequate cover still
- Confirm risks are the same
- Renew the policy on time

## Clubrooms

### Clubrooms/community centres

A clubroom is one of the most important assets your association has and it is essential to keep it well maintained.

It provides a meeting place for your association and can, for larger venues, provide an invaluable resource, which can bring the community together. However, managing larger community rooms can be very time consuming so try to get members involved in the day-to-day running and upkeep of your clubroom.

The key to managing a clubroom successfully, as with many other things, is good planning. If you have a large venue and want to use it for a wide range of community events then you may wish to consider writing a business plan (see chapter on business plans). This can save a lot of time and trouble in the long run.

### Leases

Residents' associations may decide to take out a lease for a clubroom as they cannot legally hold an interest in land or property. The lease agreement (and there must be one), should be signed by a designated individual. This may require an amendment/addition to your constitution to include a paragraph allowing for the appointment of trustees<sup>2</sup> to enter into a lease agreement on behalf of the association. In return, Sutton Housing Partnership will prepare a standard lease agreement and will also indemnify all trustees against incurring any cost to themselves on behalf of the association.

The lease will require the association to maintain the interior decorations but Sutton Housing Partnership will carry out all repairs to the structure and external decorations. The issue of internal repairs will be dealt with on an individual basis depending on the use of the room. Essentially, if it is a meeting place for the association Sutton Housing Partnership will carry out internal repairs, if however, it is being used for social events (hiring for parties etc) then the association is usually expected to meet the cost of internal repairs.

The lease will also state what the premises can and cannot be used for and will state any restrictions, such as opening times.

As long as the building is used mainly for community purposes then the rent charged will be a peppercorn rent. Make sure you read the lease carefully and understand it before signing it.

### Insurance

The previous chapter explains what insurance cover Sutton Housing Partnership provides for residents' associations.

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<sup>2</sup> The word trustee is a legal term that refers to a member of a trust, which can be set up for a variety of purposes and is entrusted with the administration of property on behalf of others. With respect to most private trusts, the trustee holds legal title to the trust property, is the representative of the trust and has the capacity to sue and be sued on behalf of the trust (Wikipedia – <http://en.wikipedia.org>)

Looking specifically at those associations with larger clubrooms, research has shown that the major problem faced is that of raising sufficient income to maintain the building and keep it in a good state of decoration and repair. The main income source for many is that received from hiring the hall for social functions. Many associations are keen to let the rooms for wedding receptions and private parties but please be sure what this entails.

You will need to have in place appropriate insurance and letting agreements.

Questions to ask yourself could be:

- Do you require any form of licence?
- Who is going to arrange to lock up the hall at the end of the night?
- What will you do if people refuse to leave the premises? Put in place rules regarding opening times and use of the building as well as what you will do if others breach these rules.
- Who pays for any damage caused?
- Who cleans up?
- Will the noise levels be too loud?
- Will the event cause a disturbance to neighbouring properties?
- How will parking be accommodated?
- Catering/bar arrangements?

How you address these issues may be the key as to how successful you are in providing a resource for the whole community.

### **Managing the building**

This is dependent on the size of the clubroom and activities taking place. Generally, larger clubrooms will be managed by the residents' associations committee. However, a well used clubroom may require more time and staff, so you may wish to develop a sub-committee specifically for this role or you may want to develop a structure with more independence (e.g. a separate committee to run and maintain the hall).

Whatever you choose to do, the basic need to involve the wider community in the management of the hall is very important (user groups, general meetings etc). In order to ensure that you meet the needs of the community you will need to carry out some research into what is required. Develop services to meet these requirements and then market them to the community. The benefit of doing this properly is that you are likely to pull in more volunteers to help with the running of the centre.

## Networking

What is networking?

- “The action or process of making use of a network of people for the exchange of information, etc., or for professional or other advantage.” (OED)<sup>3</sup>
- “Networking consists of exchanging information and establishing personal connections. People network in many different settings: on the telephone, in hallways, in company lunchrooms, at professional conferences, at trade shows, company meetings, classrooms, lounges, elevators, aeroplanes, trains, busses, hotel lobbies, and waiting rooms. Some networking is carefully planned and some just happens. Networking is friendly, low-key and essential in our complex society.” (Wikipedia)<sup>4</sup>

As you will note from the definitions above, networking is something which can be informal but is a good method of establishing contacts and sharing information and getting support.

Sutton Housing Partnership encourages networking both within the borough and with groups outside the London Borough of Sutton. Within the Borough the Area Panels are a good means of finding out from other associations how they have overcome problems/dealt with issues, which are similar to those you might be experiencing.

Outside of the borough, training courses and conferences are as important for their networking value and the ability to see how other boroughs and landlords approach various issues as they are for the formal sessions.

One of the rules for networking is “greet each new acquaintance with an openness to learn more about that person, a willingness to help, and an offer to stay in touch”. This approach is equally applicable to every form of networking, whether in business or social contexts, and whether the encounter takes place in person or online.

Questions, questions, questions is the secret to gathering knowledge and only open questions will do i.e. questions that start with who, what, why, when, how, where and which. Networking is about knowledge.

Networking is about opening and gathering information. From the information gathered you will be able to contribute more within Sutton, and benefit from new ideas and working practices.

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<sup>3</sup> OED – Oxford English Dictionary

<sup>4</sup> Wikipedia (online encyclopaedia) <http://www.wikipedia.org>

## **Jargon**

To someone new to representing their community jargon can often seem unintelligible and even confusing. It is often used in documents and reports, so this chapter aims to explain the most common terms. It is by no means exhaustive but covers the main terms used at Sutton Housing Partnership.

### **ABC**

Acceptable Behaviour Contract is an undertaking (usually) signed by young persons, the council and the police to correct behaviour which is seen as anti-social. They are not legally binding unlike an Anti Social Behaviour Order

### **AGM**

Annual General Meeting held to approve the Residents' Associations accounts and elect committee members.

### **ALMO**

Arms Length Management Organisation - an organisation set up by the council to manage its housing and estates.

### **ASBO**

Anti Social Behaviour Order - An injunction order given to perpetrators of serious forms of anti-social behaviour. Although a civil order, any breach is a criminal offence and may result in imprisonment of the offender.

### **Audit Commission**

The independent public body responsible for ensuring the public money is spent efficiently, economically and effectively. Carries out periodic inspections of the housing service of all local authorities and RSLs.

### **Benchmarking**

Comparing our services with those of other landlords.

### **Best Value**

"Best Value is a duty requiring councils to review all the services which they provide for local people, including housing and improve them by the best means available. The aim of Best Value is to bring about continuous improvement in local services." (Department of Communities and Local Government definition).

### **BME**

Black and Minority Ethnic - racial and ethnic groups.

### **Code of Conduct**

A set of principals and expectations for members of a particular group to adhere to.

### **Cost Benefit Analysis**

Measurement of whether involvement methods are effective and value for money.

**Credit Union**

Community savings and loan cooperatives owned and controlled by their members. They are not for profit institutions who offer low cost flexible financial products to members.

**DCLG**

Department of Communities and Local Government responsible for housing issues.

**Decent Homes Standard**

A central government standard for modern homes.

**HAG**

Housing Advisory Group is a cross party group of Councillors looking at Housing Policy and the performance of housing in the borough.

**HRA subsidy**

The Housing Revenue Account subsidy is the amount of funding Central government sets the council to spend on its council properties from the income generated from tenants rent.

**Impact Assessments**

These assessments measure the impact of an activity or policy/procedure and the difference resident involvement has made.

**LBS**

London Borough of Sutton or “the Council”.

**Local Area Agreements**

These are three year plans developed by local councils and their partners. The LAA set out the priorities to improve the quality of life for local people.

**Local Committees**

Sutton Council operates six local committees focusing on areas where people live. These committees also have the power to decide how £2m of public realm money should be spent on specific projects in each area.

**MENCAP Pathway**

Mencap is a UK charity for people with learning disabilities and their families.

**Mystery Shopping**

A process where services are tested by residents.

**PCT**

The Sutton Primary Care Trust has control over local health care.

**RAs**

Residents Associations – groups of residents who meet and have a formal structure.

### **Resident Involvement Compact Monitoring and Review Group**

A group who monitor and review the Compact on a quarterly basis.

### **Resident Involvement Staff**

Sutton Housing Partnership officers whose main responsibility of their job is resident involvement.

### **Residents**

Council tenants and leaseholders and those owner occupiers with a legal relationship with the Council through a section 16 agreement.

### **Right to Manage Act**

The Housing (Right to Manage) Regulations 1994 allow Residents' Organisations to set up Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) to take on the responsibility for the management of their estates.

### **RSL**

Registered Social Landlords

### **Safer Sutton Partnership**

A local partnership between the council and the police.

### **SCVS**

Sutton Centre for Volunteer Services promotes, develops and supports the voluntary and community sector in Sutton

### **SFTRA**

Sutton Federation of Tenants and Residents Association is the main representative tenants group in Sutton.

### **SHP**

Sutton Housing Partnership.

### **SHP Board**

The board consists of 12 members in total and comprises of 4 residents of which 1 is a leaseholder, 4 local authority nominees and 4 independent members. The board ensures that SHP meets all legal requirements, manages risk and strategic direction, monitors the organisation's performance and receives feedback on service delivery.

### **SLA**

Sutton Leaseholders Association is an independent organisation run by volunteer leaseholders. They provide residents with an opportunity to discuss issues with Sutton Housing Partnership and input their views on the way services are delivered.

### **SMARA**

Sutton Multi-Agency Refugee Alliance

### **SREC**

Sutton Race Equality Council is a membership organisation that supports and provides services for black and minority ethnic groups in the borough.

**Sure Start**

Sure Start is a government programme which aims to improve the health and emotional development of young children.

**Sutton and Merton Mediation Services**

Mediation is a process by which a neutral third party (the mediator) gets involved to help resolve a dispute.

**Sutton Partnership**

The Partnership brings together many local groups and businesses to boost economic growth and improve residents overall quality of life.

**Sutton's Minority Ethnic Forum**

To enable minority ethnic residents in Sutton to come together to discuss issues of mutual concern, celebrate diversity and network with each other.

**SWOT Analysis**

A part of the business planning process, which looks at the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to your group.

**Tenant Participation Compact**

An agreement between the Landlord (the Council) its ALMO (Sutton Housing Partnership) and its residents

**TOR**

Terms of Reference are a document that describes the purpose and responsibility of a group

**TPAS**

The Tenant Participation Advisory Service is an agency that works with residents to help them get involved with their landlord.

**Under-Represented Groups**

Survey evidence suggests that young people, older people, the unemployed, disabled people and those from black and other minority ethnic communities are underrepresented as volunteers in mainstream organisations.

## Newsletters

The production of a newsletter for your association is an important means of keeping your members and other estate residents informed of what's happening and what your association has been doing.

This section is broken down into three parts, all of which are important in producing a newsletter:

- Production planning
- Content
- Design

### Production Planning

It's often useful to give responsibility for the production of the newsletter to one person. Although the whole committee should be involved in issues such as design and content approval.

There are a range of computer packages that makes it quicker and easier to produce a newsletter. However, you should set deadlines for articles which are to be included in the newsletter.

In their keynote on producing newsletters TPAS have suggested the following plan:

#### 1. Collecting the information.

Keep a file for articles, ideas/suggestions that you might want to use in the newsletter.

- Set regular times for publishing – a minimum of 2 per year is required by Sutton Housing Partnership to fulfil the criteria for yearly grant funding
- Set deadlines for contributions, which allow enough time to put them together and meet your publication deadlines.
- Brief contributors.

#### 2. Designing and writing the text.

If the layout is to be done by someone not directly involved in the group, then you must give them clear instructions and you will need to agree the timescales and deadlines.

- A small editorial group can help the person preparing the text by agreeing the basic layout and checking the text before printing.

#### 3. Printing.

Check the printing can be done on time.

- If the printing is done by someone else make sure that you also have a clear agreement about costs, supply of materials (e.g. paper) and delivery.

#### 4. Distributing.

The more people prepared to distribute the better.

- If you need the newsletter out by a certain date e.g. in time for members to receive notices of an AGM, make sure your distributors know.

- Check with your readers and distributors from time to time to make sure everyone is getting a copy when they should.

If you ask other people for an article or two then they should be properly briefed as to the subject, length of article and the deadline for submission.

TPAS have produced a generic briefing sheet which can be found on their website at [www.tpas.org.uk](http://www.tpas.org.uk) under the information and resources section or you can request a copy from the Neighbourhoods Team on 0800 195 5222 or [customerinvolvement@suttonhousingpartnership.org.uk](mailto:customerinvolvement@suttonhousingpartnership.org.uk)

## **Content**

The most important thing, whatever the actual content, is to get your facts right. If you are responsible for a story make sure you get the names, dates, times and quotes right.

If you're making a statement of opinion then try to back it up with a reason for the opinion. For example, if something was successful or unsuccessful state why or provide an explanation.

Whilst articles about people are interesting, try not to emphasise the role of specific individuals in a large event unless there is a good reason to.

Think of other things that can grab peoples attention; quizzes, recipes and gardening tips are often valued by readers. But be careful where you get this information from, as previously published material is subject to copyright (i.e. it belongs to the author). Personal or family recipes can be a good way to involve those from different communities and can have wider interest. Do you have any residents who have wide experiences that would be of interest to others? Small personal histories can be a good way to bring the community together and be used as a tool to involve people.

## **Design**

The basic rule is to keep the design clear and simple. A design that uses too many fonts, pictures and colours can look messy and obscure the main message or information. Have a look at other newsletters and magazines, this will help you work out what you like and dislike, then use similar formats and ideas for your newsletter.

If your group has a logo, this should be placed prominently on the front page to create an identity for the newsletter.

Make your headlines as big as possible to grab the readers attention and use columns for the articles, as using the full width of the paper can create a dense block of text which is difficult to read.

Other tips:

- Try and avoid using fancy fonts as they can often be difficult to read (especially for people with visual impairment).

- Put some text in boxes to make them stand out.
- Ration your use of pictures; make them relevant to the story. Black and white photos with strong contrasts tend to work best particularly if you are photocopying them.

Tips for designing newsletter can be found on the following websites:

- TPAS ([www.tpas.org.uk](http://www.tpas.org.uk))
- The Resource Centre ([www.resourcecentre.org.uk](http://www.resourcecentre.org.uk))
- Voluntary Arts Network ([www.voluntaryarts.org](http://www.voluntaryarts.org))

## **Equal Opportunities**

Equality means ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate, contribute to and benefit from the activities undertaken by residents' associations. Associations must involve all parts of the community and enable everyone to participate fully.

Diversity means recognising and valuing individual differences so that our communities are better places for everyone. Embracing and celebrating diversity helps create an environment where everyone feels valued.

It is important to remember that equality is not about treating everyone the same but making sure that differences are recognised and taken into account. Equal opportunities are not about special treatment but about ensuring everyone has the same opportunity to take part.

It is also possible that discrimination can occur quite unintentionally and the adoption of an equal opportunities policy gives everyone the chance to think about the practical things you can do to ensure that your group is open to all.

Equality legislation aims to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunities across the following groups:

- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Disability
- Age
- Sexual orientation and gender status
- Religion and belief

### **Equality and diversity policy**

All residents' associations have a constitution and Sutton Housing Partnership requires all to adopt an Equality and Diversity Policy and implement it in everything they do. A draft policy can be found in the appendix and Sutton Housing Partnership can support and guide your association in implementing the policy via some specific activities.

An Equality and Diversity Policy sets out the plans for ensuring the association is genuinely inclusive and complies with the law. Set aside time to discuss how prejudice and discrimination might affect members of the local community. Some people find it very hard to accept that their views are prejudiced. Try to agree a policy for the group containing steps you plan to take to promote equality and diversity. Record your commitment in an Equality and Diversity Policy.

## Business Plans

### **What is a business plan?**

A business plan is a document drawn up by an organisation to state what its aims and objectives are, what it is setting out to achieve and how it aims to achieve them. It is often described like planning a journey. If you don't know where you are going, how will you know how to get there or whether you've arrived?

### **Are business plans appropriate for residents' associations?**

Yes, if you want to address the needs of your community to any real effect. A business plan does not have to be a long, detailed statement and it is not something only commercial business needs to undertake. Most voluntary organisations have them and use them effectively. They are particularly useful if your association plans to make an application for funding.

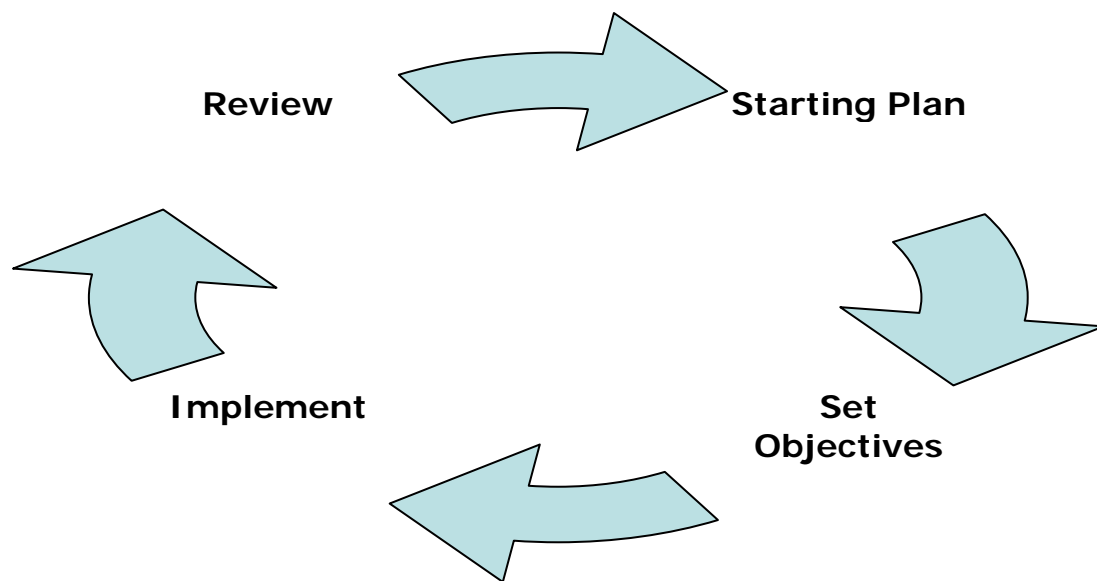
In order to draw one up, your group will need to decide what its overall aims and objectives are, and what you hope to achieve as a residents' association. For example, you may have formed to increase the social nature of the community by organising outings and other events. You may have wanted to become more involved in how your estate/block is managed or try and improve transport or other services in the area. Whatever the reason, it makes sense to set down what it is you want to achieve and then work out how you intend to achieve it.

There may be some costs involved in your plan and you should try and estimate what these will be and how you will meet them. Do you need to get sponsorship or raise funds?

Generally, you should write a plan of all your aims for your community and how you intend to implement them. It helps because everyone involved in your group will then know what you are trying to achieve and how. It will minimise misunderstandings and help develop the association as a group working towards defined objectives. This will be more effective than holding meetings because it is a routine and will be expected. It ensures that you remain focussed and will assist you in achieving more for the community.

Once you have established a plan it's important to review it periodically to ensure that it still represents the objectives of the association. Business plans are fluid and they should be adapted to take into account new ideas and situations that may arise. Just because your association started out to do one thing does not mean that it cannot change direction, as long as this is properly discussed and agreed.

The whole process is cyclical.



Depending on how thoroughly you wish to go into the business planning process (and for most associations it probably will not be very extensive) you can move on to looking at the Strengths and Weaknesses of your group through a process known as SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis.

This can be a useful exercise as it encourages you to look at your group critically and assess, firstly, strengths then weaknesses, then Opportunities and, and finally, Threats.

This process will assist in setting targets and how you aim to achieve them. In simple terms, you should utilise your strengths, address any weaknesses, exploit the opportunities and counter any threats. It allows you to plan effectively.

Objects/targets should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed).

This seems to be common sense but many groups forget the principle and set targets that are vague, cannot be measured, to see if they are achievable, are unrealistic in that they are beyond the capabilities of the group, and are open ended. Don't fall into that trap.

Finally, utilise the KISS principle 'Keep It Short and Simple'.

Business plans need to be used to have any meaning. A short and simple targeted document has more chance of being referred to and used by the group than a long in depth document. If you do not use the business plan regularly to assess how your association is doing then you will have failed to write a good plan.

## Negotiation Skills

This chapter looks at how best to achieve a mutual agreement that is equally pleasing to both negotiating parties.

This approach aims to avoid a confrontational situation and provide one where both parties can gain from the decisions made and the agreements reached. This approach can alter the course of communication between the parties involved.

Negotiation is about working to reach a position where both parties are happy with the agreement reached. This is particularly important if there is a long term relationship between the negotiating parties (e.g. your association and the council).

What you will be saying is:

‘We want to win and we want you to win too’.

What you need to establish are the underlying needs of both parties. Make this an early part of the discussion and you may find that your needs are complementary rather than conflicting. Even when needs do conflict, by approaching the negotiation in this manner, both sides can feel quite differently about the outcome.

Therefore, before you start negotiating it is important to work out what it is that you are seeking and the desired outcome. Set the limits as to how much you are prepared to concede and do not go beyond this limit. Such clarity will be useful in the negotiation process. Similarly, you need to try to work out what it is that the other side are looking for and what you think they will agree to. Preparation is the key.

Listening is a key skill in the negotiation process. Listen to what the other party has to say and their reasons for adopting this position. Try to understand their position. It may not be one you agree with but understanding the pressures and constraints faced by the other parties can help you to work out a strategy to address these issues.

However, there are times in a negotiation when there is an apparent stalemate. Neither side seems to be able to offer anything else, yet both are short of their desired result. In these circumstances, it can be useful to start examining the positives. You should seek to ask open-ended questions (those to which they cannot answer yes or no).

There are some examples below:

### Explore and clarify details:

- It's too expensive → Compared to what?
- I want the best → What would be best for you?

### Find options:

- You can't do that → What would happen if we did?
- S/He would never → How can we find ways for it to happen?
- They always → When don't they?

### Redirect and move to the positive:

- It will never work → What would it take to make it work?
- I won't. → What would make you willing?
- It's a failure → How could it work?
- It's disastrous → What would make it better?
- S/He is useless → What is s/he doing that is unacceptable?
- It's impossible → What would make it possible?

### Go back to legitimate needs and concerns:

- You fool (insults)! → How can we sort this out?
- How dare you say that → What do you dislike about it?
- It should be done my way → What makes that the best option?

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## Negotiation Tips

- **Always be prepared to walk away.** If you enter a negotiation in a position where you **must** achieve a certain result you will be at a disadvantage. You are stronger if you can afford not to achieve a result from the negotiation. However, if you need to achieve something, what is the 'bottom line'?
- **Be prepared.** Do your homework before hand. The more you know about your subject, the background of the other party, their needs and your own position, the better outcome you are likely to achieve.
- **Listen.** By listening to what the other parties are saying you can learn a lot to enhance your own position. This does not necessarily conflict with win/win approach as you may learn what the other party needs to achieve in order to satisfy them. However, you may not be happy with this.
- **Satisfaction (of others).** Try to help the other parties to achieve satisfaction, where possible. This will help your future negotiations with them and be beneficial to you in the longer term.
- **Aim high.** Start with high aims and expectations, make sure they are realistic. Be optimistic, a high starting point will not harm the process and discussions. You will always have the ability to reduce your demands to a predetermined level which you are happy with.

- **Be assertive (not aggressive) in your statements.** Do not take things at face value. Challenge assumptions and statements from the other parties. Use statements as in 'I don't feel comfortable with that' rather than 'You shouldn't do that'. Throughout the process look after your interests whilst respecting the interests of the other parties.
- **Build trust.** Honour your commitments, tell the truth in negotiations and respect any confidences.
- **Let the other side go first.** Wherever possible, try to avoid going first in negotiations. Let the other party set out what it is that they are prepared to offer. You may find it much better than you expected and you can respond accordingly by revising your opening position.
- **Don't give too much away.** Never concede something without getting something in return.
- **Keep notes and summarise.** Take notes during the process and frequently summarise the current position. This will prevent misunderstandings from occurring and prevent convenient 'forgetfulness'. Where appropriate try to get an undertaking confirmed in writing.

**Useful websites:**

- Conflict Resolution Network ([www.crnhq.org](http://www.crnhq.org))
- Businessballs ([www.businessballs.com](http://www.businessballs.com))

## Presentations

### Planning and preparation

The key to making a successful presentation lies in the planning and preparation of it. The worst type of presentation is that which is rushed, poorly thought out and poorly put together. Take your time over each stage and thoroughly check and review each piece of the presentation. Take the process step-by-step and in doing so you will become more confident in your presentation and therefore be more effective.

Practice really does make perfect with presentations, so take every opportunity to practice what you plan to say. If possible get a friend to listen to your delivery and give some constructive criticism.

### Planning

- What is the presentation about?
- What are the objects you hope to achieve with it?
- What knowledge do you hope to impart or what question are you seeking to answer (or have answered)?
- How long will you have?
- Will you be using any I.T. equipment and software to aid you presentation, e.g. Microsoft PowerPoint

If you are unclear on any of the points above, check with the person who has asked you to do the presentation. Do not assume that anything is automatically understood.

### Structure

Once you are clear about what you are planning to present, prepare a clear structure:

- What is the context of the presentation?
- Who will be the audience; do they all have the same level of understanding?
- Where is it being held; large room or small etc?
- What are the seating arrangements; will everyone be able to hear you? Think about the need for a Hearing Loop.

All of these issues will affect how you carry out the presentation and help you structure your presentation clearly.

**Introduction:** Start with the introduction and give a general overview of who you are and what you are going to be talking about. Keep it brief and, if using a slide, only use one. Remember that when introducing the presentation, save the details for the presentation itself.

**Main body of the presentation:** Think about the points you wish to make. If using slides keep it to one point per slide and think about how you can illustrate the point you are making with a good example. Do not just read from the slide, make the point and talk about it from your notes. If you need to give more detail, use handouts.

**Handouts:** If you are using them try to give them out at the start of the presentation. This will also give listeners a chance to make notes on them if they wish. If you give them out during the presentation it may interrupt the flow and can cause delays.

**Structure:** There are two schools of thought about how to structure a presentation. It can be either:

- **Linear** – This structure has each point leading to the next one (A to B to C). This is probably the best option for shorter presentations as it allows you to move through issues in sequence.
- **Segmented** – If you have to make a long, in-depth presentation then you may wish to consider breaking it down into self-contained segments. This enables you to deal with issues arising from each part and move on without leaving increasingly long strands of an argument floating around.

At the end of the presentation draw the main points together in your conclusion. Do not use more than one slide for this as it will weaken the impact.

How long is your presentation going to last? Is it a brief 5-10 minute presentation for a residents group or a longer one (up to an hour) as part of a conference presentation?

Tips on longer presentations can be found at:

[www.perl.plover/yak/presentation/samples/notes](http://www.perl.plover/yak/presentation/samples/notes)

**Using slides:** One of the most common ways of conducting a presentation is by using a computer package, such as Microsoft PowerPoint. Below are some tips for creating interesting slide presentations:

- Do not try and put too much information on a slide
- If possible, use pictures (a picture paints a thousand words)
- Keep slide titles short
- Keep information on slides relevant
- Do not use too many colours. Some colour is interesting, too much distracts from the content
- Check for spellings and for other errors on slides
- If using a picture of someone, place it on the slide so that it looks at the text, it reinforces what the audience should be looking at.

In short presentations get to the point, illustrate the point you are making and move to the conclusions. You do not need many slides for this so make them interesting and not too fussy.

### **Giving the presentation**

Arrive early and test all equipment. Carry spares of everything that has the possibility of going wrong (your presentation, batteries, etc). You must always remember to:

- Face the audience
- Use correct grammar

- Make eye contact with the audience
- Do not use slang or swear
- Smile
- Sound enthusiastic
- Vary the pitch of your voice
- Do not use unfamiliar jargon
- Do not talk too quietly
- Do not talk too quickly
- Do not talk down to the audience (i.e. do not appear patronising).

Some other issues to consider are to dress comfortably and appropriately for the occasion. For example, in addressing a meeting of business people your dress should be more formal.

A sense of humour can be useful but do not overdo it. Self-deprecating remarks work best as the most innocuous of jokes can offend some people. Try to make any humour relevant to the issue you're discussing and do not feel you have to be funny. If you do not feel comfortable with it then do not do it.

Speak slowly. Vary the pace and remember to pause and take a breath. This will allow the audience to catch up with any notes they are making and make the occasion a little more enjoyable for them as well.

If you want to draw attention to the slides, stop moving. If you're speaking and want the attention on you again then move again.

Have a glass of water to hand (especially if you intend to speak for a long time).

Make sure you know your subject and can address any other issues that arise during the presentation. It is suggested that you know ten times more than you put in your presentation.

Do not panic if you dry up. Take a breath, smile at the audience and re-gather your thoughts.

If you stutter or stumble over your words, do not apologise. Just pause and smile then continue.

You may also be expected to take some questions from the audience in which case make sure you have heard the question clearly (you can repeat it back) and then answer the question asked.

Finally, probably the most important thing is to keep to your allotted time, especially if there is a break scheduled just after you finish. The audience always wants to get to the break no matter who's talking, so, if necessary, skip some slides and finish on your last one (for some reason skipping slides 15-19 and ending on 20 is seen as more acceptable than just skipping 16-20).

Don't forget to enjoy yourself. Your audience wants you to do well and wants to hear what you have to say.

## Compacts

### What are they?

You may have heard of Resident Involvement Compacts, but are not sure what they are all about. They are part of the Government's longer term agenda to improve local services, increase local democracy, and strengthen and sustain local communities.

The Government want council residents to have a proper say in how their homes are managed and have a real choice in the extent and nature of their involvement. The Government states that resident empowerment leads to better decision making that properly reflects local needs and that in turn leads to sustainable communities and higher levels of satisfaction for residents.

A National Framework<sup>5</sup> incorporating core standards as a 'toolkit' was introduced to help councils and their residents develop, implement and monitor their local Compacts. This national framework was designed not to be prescriptive but to allow residents and authorities to develop Compacts in keeping with local needs.

Compacts are tools designed to:

- Help ensure councils become more efficient, transparent and accountable so that people know who exactly will be actively involved in helping councils reach those decisions;
- Implement Best Value by enabling tenants to make an informed view on their housing services, be involved in planning them, improving them, monitoring and reporting on performance, and identifying weaknesses and taking remedial action;
- Help tenants to identify issues of concern and ways of improving their quality of life as part of a wider strategy to tackle poor neighbourhoods.

(TPAS Information Sheet)<sup>6</sup>

### Borough-wide Compacts

Within the National Framework for Tenant Participation Compacts there are core standards with which borough-wide resident participation Compacts are expected to conform. These standards are a framework of minimum standards expected to be contained in the Compact. It is very important that the Compact reflects the needs of residents in Sutton, giving all the opportunity to get involved if they wish. Residents are only able to make this choice if they are aware of the opportunities to participate and the benefits that participating will bring. Sutton Housing Partnership therefore feels it is extremely important to raise awareness of the benefits of participation to all residents and ensure that it brings tangible benefits.

<sup>5</sup> The National Framework for Tenant Participation Compacts – DCLG (2005)

<sup>6</sup> TPAS Information Sheet 'Compacts', [www.tpas.org.uk](http://www.tpas.org.uk)

### **Local or estate based Compacts**

Many residents may see themselves more as members of their community than as residents of Sutton Housing Partnership. Therefore, local Compacts have been developed to deal with issues of particular interest to residents of a locality or estate. Local Compacts in some areas of Sutton go beyond housing to other matters that affect tenants' lives such as planning, the environment and crime. In some areas this has meant the input of different council services and also the police.

Local Compacts should aim to include as many of the core standards of borough-wide Compacts as is necessary and these will include standards that resident groups must meet, in terms of accountability to the area or community, as well as Sutton Housing Partnership.

### **Issue Based Compacts**

Issue Based Compacts aim to address specific services or issues which are not confined to a locality but are more narrowly focussed than the borough-wide Compact. Particular service areas such as Sheltered Housing may be addressed using this type of Compact, or particular groups of people such as young people and black and minority ethnic (BME) groups may benefit from a Compact addressing the particular services provided for them.

Issue Based Compacts should also aim to include as many of the core standards of borough-wide Compacts as is deemed necessary and again there may be additional standards that will need to be defined and negotiated.

### **What next?**

Compacts are designed to be an evolving process. As residents become aware of the opportunities, the likely benefits and outcomes of participation, they should further define their role and become more involved in all stages of the decision making process including setting the policy agenda.

Compacts set the minimum standards that residents can expect and their local council is constantly seeking new and innovative ways to meet residents' wishes to become involved in housing services at the level they wish.

Generally, Compacts are more successful on a local basis, meeting the needs of residents locally and addressing issues other than just housing.

### **Reviewing Compacts**

Compact reviews need to be timetabled at the outset to provide an opportunity to all parties involved to look again at how effectively their Compacts and procedures are improving resident involvement.

For more information on Compacts see the TPAS website ([www.tpas.org.uk](http://www.tpas.org.uk)).

### **Sutton's Resident Involvement Compact**

Sutton's resident involvement compact "Improving Housing Together" was last reviewed and reproduced in March 2009.

Sutton's compact is an agreement between residents including the Sutton Federation of Tenant and Resident Associations, the Sutton Leaseholders' Association, Sutton Housing Partnership and the London Borough of Sutton. The Compact sets out how residents can be involved in improving housing and local neighbourhoods.

## Managing Your Homes

...the next step?

### **What is tenant management?**

Tenant Management is a form of participation in which the tenants in an area take on the responsibility for day-to-day management and repairs. The council still owns the property and residents keep their secure tenancies or existing leases.

### **The right to manage**

The legislation to give this right was included in the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 and came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1994. It gives a legal framework for resident organisations that wish to manage their homes by setting up a Tenant (or Resident) Management Organisation (TMO or RMO). This is known as the 'Right to Manage'.

### **Who does it apply to?**

The Right to Manage applies to all tenants and leaseholders (as long as the block or estate is not too small). To start the process, a properly constituted residents' association with a membership of at least 20% of the estate must first be set up. Any residents' organisation with a constitution which demonstrated that it is representative and accountable can exercise the 'Right to Manage' (If you are already an accredited residents' association you will meet the criteria). This right only applies to tenants and leaseholders of Sutton Housing Partnership.

It can take two to three years to set up a Resident Management Organisation (RMO), from the initial idea to taking over responsibility for managing the area. During this time the residents' group will have to make a lot of decisions and get involved in a wide range of activities. If you are interested in finding out more about the Right to Manage you can contact the Neighbourhoods Team.

## **Appendix**

Appendix 1 – Constitution and Membership

Appendix 2 – Banking

Appendix 3 – Finance Reports

Appendix 4 – AGM Accounts

Appendix 5 – Code of Conduct

Appendix 6 – Sample Letter

Appendix 7 – Campaign Proposals

Appendix 8 – Newsletter Contributions

Appendix 9 – Equal Opportunities Policy

Translations

## Appendix I – Model Constitution

The name of the association is: \_\_\_\_\_  
It will represent the residents' of \_\_\_\_\_ Estate/Block

### Aims

The aims of the association are to:

- Promote membership of all people eligible to join the association
- Promote equal opportunities within the community
- Improve the housing and other services in the area of the association
- Be non-party political
- Promote social, welfare, recreational and training activities for the benefit of members of the association
- Represent the view of the majority of members affected by issues relating to their local environment
- Build a partnership and improve communication between landlord and the membership
- Provide regular information to all members
- Regularly consult all members
- Monitor the association; it's work, finances and membership.

### Equal Opportunities

The association shall uphold equal opportunities and work for good relations among the community, specifically prohibiting any conduct which discriminates or harasses on the grounds of race, gender, age, sexuality, disability or religion.

### Membership

- Membership is open, irrespective of race, colour, ethnic or national origins, nationality, gender, marital status, age, sexuality, religion, disability, political or religious belief, to all persons 16 years or over living in the area of the association (including all tenants, leaseholders and section 16 freeholders). As far as possible, the membership should reflect the local population.
- A record of all members in the current year shall be kept by the Secretary of the association. Every member shall sign an annual written consent to become a member.
- Any membership fee will be determined by the Annual General Meeting. All payments will be recorded in an appropriate manner and a receipt given.

### Ending Membership

- Membership will end when a member moves away from the area
- In the event of a breach of the associations' Code of Conduct, membership can be suspended or ended by a two thirds majority vote of the committee
- A suspended membership has the entitlement to be reviewed at the next Annual General Meeting

### Annual General Meeting

The association will hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) once each calendar year, and not more than 15 months will pass between the date of one AGM and the next.

The AGM will:

- Receive an annual report from the committee
- Present audited accounts to members
- Appoint an independent auditor
- Elect the committee
- Agree the annual rate of subscription, where applicable
- Consider any resolutions put forward by members
- Vote on any amendments to the constitution
- All members shall be given 21 days written notice of the AGM
- Any proposed changes to the constitution or nominations to the committee be notified and sent to the Secretary in writing at least 14 days before the AGM
- The agenda, minutes of the last AGM, details of nominations to the committee and any resolutions to be considered (which includes any proposed changes to the constitution) must be sent to all members at least 7 days prior to the AGM or available on request prior to the meeting

### **General Meetings**

Each year the association shall hold at least four general meetings (including the AGM) which shall be open to the general membership.

- All members of the association shall receive 14 days notice of Annual/General Meetings
- The General Meetings shall be minuted
- The quorum for all General Meetings shall be five members or 10% of the membership, whichever is the smaller

### **Special General Meetings**

A Special General Meeting may be called by the committee and must be called by the committee if requested by at least 5 members or 10% of the membership, whichever is greater, at least 14 days before the date on which those members request the meeting to be held.

The Secretary must send to each member written notice of the meeting 7 days in advance of the meeting.

### **Voting**

- Each member shall have one vote on any resolution put before an AGM, General Meeting or Special General Meeting
- All voting that takes place at an AGM, Special General meeting, general Meeting and Committee Meetings, shall be counted and included in the minutes.

### **Minutes**

- All formal meetings such as Committee Meetings, Special General Meetings and Annual General Meetings must be minuted and the minutes formally approved by the next meeting of the Committee or General Meeting
- All minutes shall be available for inspection by members of the association.

### **The Committee**

- Any member over the age of 16 shall be entitled to stand for election to the committee
- The committee shall stand down at each Annual General Meeting and may be re-elected
- All members shall be given not less than 7 days notice of each Committee Meeting, at which any member of the association shall be entitled to attend (but not to vote).
- The committee may from time to time as necessary create any sub-committees and/or working parties on a permanent or temporary basis. The members of any such sub-committee or working party shall be determined by the committee and shall include at least one committee member. Any such sub-committees or working parties shall report and make recommendations to the committee for decision-making
- The committee shall monitor the work, finances and membership of the association
- The committee shall report to each General Meeting on the work done by the committee since the last General Meeting.

### **Officers of the Committee**

- The association shall have a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer
- The Chairperson shall chair General Meetings and Committee Meetings. The duties of the Officers shall be defined in the Standing Orders of the association
- The Officers shall report to each Committee Meeting and General Meeting on their work
- There shall be no more than two committee members from the same household.

### **Co-optees**

The committee may co-opt members onto the committee in order to assist to fill vacancies that occur during the year to ensure appropriate representation of all people in the community.

### **Finance**

The Treasurer shall open a bank or building society account in the name of the association and keep records of the associations' income and expenditure. The treasurer shall report the balance in the account to the committee at each Committee Meeting.

The Committee shall appoint three authorised signatories for cheques. All cheques shall be signed by at least two of the signatories. The signatories should be from different households and not related to each other.

The associations' accounts shall be kept up to date and annual accounts for each year shall be independently audited and shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting.

The accounts of the association shall be available for inspection by any member of the association who requests to see them, within 14 days. The request for inspection must be made in writing to the Treasurer. The accounts shall be made available to an

officer of Sutton Housing Partnership, upon written request, within 48 hours or such other time as is deemed reasonable by both parties.

The Treasurer is authorised to pay from petty cash, travel and other expenses to representatives of the association undertaking the associations' work providing that each payment is supported by a receipt, ticket or voucher. Each such payment of petty cash shall be signed by the receiver. The Treasurer shall provide a list of petty cash payments to Committee, at each Committee Meeting.

If the association is in receipt of a Residents' Association Grant from Sutton Housing Partnership, it will comply with the requirements set out in the 'Grant Application Form' for the relevant year.

Any other assets raised by the association shall be used for the benefit of the whole estate/community or for charitable donations.

### **Information**

- The association shall provide information to all its members on things that effect the association and its members
- Every member of the association shall be given a copy of the constitution when they join. Members shall be given copies of any changes to the constitution
- Minutes of all General Meetings and Committee Meetings shall be available from the Secretary for all members.

### **Dissolution of the Association**

- The association can only be dissolved by a Special General Meeting called specifically to consider a motion to dissolve the association
- All members shall be given 21 days written notice of such a meeting, which shall contain the wording of the resolution
- The association can only be dissolved if two-thirds of members present at a Special General Meeting vote for a motion to 'dissolve the association'.
- The Special General Meeting shall decide on disposal of assets, funds and equipment
- Any assets which have been donated or loaned by the Sutton Housing Partnership should be returned.
- In the event that there are no committee members able or willing to call a Special General Meeting – Sutton Housing Partnership will take steps to dissolve the association.

## Appendix 2 – Bank Reconciliation

Month of \_\_\_\_\_

### Bank Balance

Actual Balance at the beginning of the month: \_\_\_\_\_ £  
Total money paid into the bank for the month: \_\_\_\_\_ £  
Total money paid out of the bank for the month: \_\_\_\_\_ £  
Actual Balance at the end of the month: \_\_\_\_\_ £

### Agreement of Bank Balance to Bank Statements:

Balance shown on the bank statement at the end of the month \_\_\_\_\_ £

Money paid into the bank not yet shown on bank statement:

Date	Received From	Amount

Money paid out of the bank not yet shown on bank statement:

Date	Cheque No.	Paid to	Amount

Actual balance at end of the month: \_\_\_\_\_ £

### Appendix 3 – Monthly Finance Report to Committee

Balance of funds held by Residents' Association at the end of \_\_\_\_\_

At the end of, \_\_\_\_\_ we had £ \_\_\_\_\_

Since then we have received \_\_\_\_\_ £ \_\_\_\_\_

And spent \_\_\_\_\_ £ \_\_\_\_\_

**So our current total is** \_\_\_\_\_ £ \_\_\_\_\_

The balance of our bank account is \_\_\_\_\_ £ \_\_\_\_\_

The amount of petty cash we have is \_\_\_\_\_ £ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Balance** \_\_\_\_\_ £ \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 4 – Sample Accounts to the AGM

### Residents' Association Income & Expenditure Account 09/10

	£	£
Grants receivable	547.00	
Add Interest Received	2.57	
Membership Fees	32.00	
Jumble Sale	355.00	
	<b>936.57</b>	
<b>Less: Expenditure</b>		
Newsletters		110.00
Postage		25.43
Stationary		62.00
Travel		24.00
Refreshments		55.00
Fun Day		357.00
Other		2.79
		<b>636.22</b>
Surplus for 2009/2010	300.35	
Add surplus from 2008/2009	120.98	
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>421.33</b>	

## Residents' Association Balance Sheet

31<sup>st</sup> March 2009

Current Assets	£
Cash at bank and in hand	457.33
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year*	36.00
Net Assets	421.33
Accumulated surplus	421.33

**Approved on behalf of the Residents' Association**

**(Secretary)** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Chair)** \_\_\_\_\_

June 2009

\*Invoices approved for payment but funds still in account

## **Appendix 5 – Code of Conduct**

### **Code of Conduct – Residents’ Association**

This Code of Conduct explains how members of \*\*\*\*\* residents’ association are expected to carry out their duties whilst representing the association. All members agree to abide the Code of Conduct laid out below. Any breaches of the code will result in the suspension of membership until such time as the matter can be heard, in full, by a General Meeting of the association.

### **Confidentiality**

The business of the association may involve members in dealing with issues that are sensitive. Members must exercise discretion and care in performing their duties and responsibilities. If confidential information is provided, it may only be used for the business of the meeting and it must not be passed on to anyone outside of that meeting. Such information will not in any case include any personal information about individuals, except at the individual’s written request.

### **Conduct at Meetings**

Members will at all times observe points detailed below while attending or taking part in any meeting.

- To be courteous to each other and support and assist other members in seeking the best possible solution to problems being discussed
- To allow each other the opportunity to speak and comment
- To follow the guidance of the Chairperson conducting the meeting
- To remember that you are representing the views of the community and are accountable to the association
- To remember that the purpose of any meeting is to benefit the residents generally and not specific individuals
- To bear in mind the rights of individual residents and the duties of Sutton Housing Partnership employees when proposing solutions to problems
- Not to speak or write on behalf of the association without the prior agreement of the members. Any correspondence sent on behalf of the association should be made available to any members that request it
- To operate within the rules laid down in the constitution.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Members:

- Must not expect favourable treatment from Sutton Housing Partnership or London Borough of Sutton Officers or from the association itself, nor should they be treated any less favourably: e.g. reporting a repair or allocation of a property
- Must use the agreed procedures for reporting a repair or pursuing any other matter relating to their own property, or on behalf of another individual resident. When dealing with Sutton Housing Partnership Officers, members must make clear whether they are acting as an individual resident or in their capacity as a representative of the association.

- Must disclose any personal, financial or material interest in any matter being considered by the association, e.g. if a member or members' relation work for a repairs contractor.

## Appendix 6 – Sample Letter

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Fun Day for the \*\*\*\*\* Estate**

I am writing to ask for your support for our Fun Day which we are holding for the first time this year to help bring all sections of our community together.

Our Fun Day will cater for all ages and tastes and will involve all sections of our community in activities such as face painting, bouncy castle, rides, dancing, music, and much more. There will also be stalls and a car boot sale.

We are working with the local primary school, church and mosque to provide the entertainment with dancing displays from the children.

The Fun Day would not happen without the energy and enthusiasm of the local people who organise it. Unfortunately, the Fun Day costs a considerable amount to stage. We need to raise approximately £\*\*\*\*\*, to cover the cost of the event which includes, publicity, insurance and equipment hire.

The Fun Day could not be held without the support of the residents' association, local businesses and individuals who have contributed to the event. I am writing to ask if you would be able to make a donation towards the Fun Day (state money or prizes). Your contribution will be very much appreciated, and acknowledged in our publicity and the Fun Day programme.

If you would like to talk more about the Fun Day and how you could help, please feel free to give me a ring on \*\*\*\*\*.

Yours sincerely,

## Appendix 7 – Campaign Proposals

### \*\*\*\*\* Estate Residents' Association Traffic Calming Campaign

#### Briefing Sheet January 2009

##### The Estate

The \*\*\*\*\* Estate is eight streets of houses and two blocks of low rise sheltered housing; approximately 700 dwellings in all. Housing on the estate is a mixture of council rented and owner-occupier /leasehold.

The area which includes the estate has a higher proportion of children in the population (22.4%) than in the borough as a whole (16.3%). (Figures from the 2001 census).

Five hundred children under 16 live on the estate. 100 of these live in \*\*\* road and \*\*\*\* Close, the two busiest roads in the area. (BETA Survey, November 2005).

Although census figures show a relatively high level of car ownership in the local area, our own survey has revealed that on the estate itself, most households (55%) do not have access to a car. (BETA Survey, November 2005).

##### Traffic and Traffic Calming

The estate is bordered on two sides by major roads, which are busy throughout the day.

Several of the residential streets are regularly used as rat runs by the commuter traffic and by commercial vehicles travelling to and from the nearby industrial estate.

Our survey showed that 80% of children aged eight to twelve who live on the estate are not allowed to play outside on their own, mainly because of concern about traffic levels. By contrast, 75% of adults recalled playing out at that age. (BETA Survey, November 2005).

Of those households that do have access to a car, 70% drive children to and from school. There is a noticeable increase in traffic levels on the estate at the time of the school run. This makes walking or cycling to school more dangerous.

In other areas of the borough, where traffic calming measures have been introduced, residents report a clear reduction in the use of residential streets as rat runs, and a general feeling of increased freedom and safety for pedestrians, especially children. (Correspondance with Hanover Community Association, 2008).

##### Our Proposals:

The \*\*\*\*\* Residents' Association Traffic Calming Campaign calls on the borough to:

- Work with local schools to develop safer routes to school for children who walk or cycle, and to encourage parents not to increase traffic levels by driving their children to and from school.

- Work with the Residents' Association to draw up a joint plan for traffic calming measures which will alleviate the main problems caused by traffic in the area. Such measures could include road entry treatments, speed humps, lower speed limits and additional pedestrian crossings on the roads surrounding the estate.
- Consult fully with residents of the estate and take their views into account in the final development of the traffic calming plan by January 2010.

**How to find out more**

To find out more information, for a copy of our survey results, or to support the campaign, contact:

(Address)

## Appendix 8 – Newsletter Contributions

### Contributors' Brief

Thank you for agreeing to provide something for our newsletter. Here is some information which you may find useful.

<b>Deadline for contributions</b>	
<b>Publication Date</b>	
<b>How to contact the editor</b>	Name: Address: Phone: Email:
<b>Format for text</b>	
<b>Format for photographs and illustrations</b>	

### Guidance Notes

- Our newsletter is produced for the benefit of our members and its content aims to reflect the diverse cultures and priorities of our community. Please bear this in mind when preparing your information. The committee will not accept information, illustrations, or cartoons that do not meet the requirements of our Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Complete text is very welcome but if you prefer, you can simply give us any information which we can then use to prepare the text ourselves. Whichever you choose, please make sure that it gives answers, in the order given, to all the following:
  1. What
  2. Who
  3. Where
  4. When
  5. Why
  6. How
- Always use Plain English and avoid jargon
- Try and keep your sentences and paragraphs short
- Please give us full contact details which we can publish.

If you have any queries or problems meeting the deadline, please contact the editor immediately.

Thank you

## **Appendix 9 – Equal Opportunities Policy**

### **\*\*\*\*\* Residents' Association Equal Opportunities Policy**

We aim to make our neighbourhood a better place for everyone who lives here. That means we need to listen to what people are saying in our neighbourhood.

When we work with Sutton Housing Partnership or the Council or any other agency to improve things, we want to make sure we are speaking for everyone.

This is why we strive to make everyone feel welcome and safe in our Residents Association.

The Association will make active efforts to make sure everybody who wants to can get involved by:

- Publicising all meetings
- Making sure publicity is put where people can see or hear it
- Choosing meeting places carefully so as many people as possible can attend in a comfortable and safe environment
- Helping people to access support to attend meetings, such as help with childcare, transport, carer and advocacy costs
- Engaging and working with local minority groups
- Offering to provide community language interpreters for meetings
- Challenging any behaviour or language that may upset or insult people and create an unwelcoming atmosphere
- Ensure guests and SHP staff are treating equitably and fairly
- Monitor who is participating in the Association's activities and at least once every year review progress in implementing this policy.

In addition to this all members of the committee will attend a training session on the importance of equality of opportunity.

If you, or someone you know, need a translation of any part of this document please tick the box for the language required and complete the form below.  
Telephone 0800 195 5552 for more information.

Nëse ju ose dikush që njihni ka nevojë për një përkthim të ndonjë pjese të këtij dokumenti, ju lutemi shënoni me v kutinë për gjuhën e kërkuar dhe plotësoni formularin e mëposhtëm. Për më tepër informacion telefononi numrin 0800 195 5552.

Albanian

إذا احتجت أنت أو أي شخص غيرك ترجمة لأي جزء من هذه الوثيقة فالرجاء ضع علامة في صندوق اللغة التي تريدها وأكمل النموذج أدناه. اتصل مع رقم: 0800 195 5552 للمزيد من المعلومات.

Arabic

যদি আপনি, অথবা আপনি জানেন এমন কেউ এ ডকুমেন্টটির যে কোন অংশের অনুবাদ চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে যে ভাষায় অনুবাদ প্রয়োজন সে বাজ্রে টিক চিহ্ন দিন এবং নীচের ফরমটি পূরণ করুন। বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য 0800 195 5552 নাম্বারে টেলিফোন করুন

Bengali

જો તમને અથવા તમારી જાણમાં કોઈ હોય તેમને આ પત્રિકાના કોઈપણ ભાગને ભાષાંતર કરાવવાની જરૂર હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને તમારી ભાષા પર ટીક કરી આ ફોર્મ ભરીને તેને પાછું મોકલો. વધુ માહિતી માટે તમે 0800 195 5552 પર સંપર્ક કરી શકો છો.

Gujarati

Hadii aad adiga amaba qof aad taqaanid uu u baahan yahay turjumid lagu sameeyo qeyb ka mid ah dukumiintigan fadllan sax sanduuqa luqada loo baahan yahay buuxina foomka hoos ku lifaaqan. Si aad u hesho wixii macluumaad dheeraad ah taleefoon u soo dir lambarka 0800 195 5552.

Somali

如果您本人或者您所认识的人当中有人需要这份文件的任何部分的译文，请在所需的语言选择框中打勾并填妥以下表格。欲知详情请拨打电话 0800 195 5552.

Chinese

اگر آپ کو یا آپ کے کسی جاننے والے کو اس دستاویز کے کسی بھی حصے کے ترجمے کی ضرورت ہے تو براہ کرم مطلوبہ زبان کے لئے خانے پر بک کاشٹان لگائیے اور نیچے دیئے گئے فارم کو مکمل کیجئے۔ مزید معلومات کے لئے 0800 195 5552 پر فون کیجئے۔

Urdu

Many publications can be downloaded directly from our website: [www.suttonhousingpartnership.org.uk](http://www.suttonhousingpartnership.org.uk). Click on the 'accessibility' button to visit our website designed for those with a visual impairment. Otherwise if you need any of the information in this document in large print, braille or audiotape please tick the box and complete the form.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Telephone no .....

Please return to:  
**Sutton Housing Partnership Limited**  
**Sutton Gate**  
**1 Carshalton Road**  
**Sutton**  
**Surrey SM1 4LE**