



Tenant & Resident Association Partnership Agreement

This Partnership Agreement is between (*insert associations name*) and Halton Housing Trust.

The purpose of the agreement is to establish a framework in which we can work together to promote the interests of everybody living on (*insert area*) estate. The agreement sets out each partner's rights and responsibilities.

The association promises to make every effort to represent the aspirations and needs of everyone in the area represented by giving members the opportunity to put their views forward and by keeping members informed about the group's activities. Remaining mindful at all times that the association:

- Is representing the community whilst taking into account the diverse needs of the community as a whole
- Should try to reflect and understand the views of the community, whilst demonstrating that it is representative of the community it serves in terms of age, disability, ethnic origin, gender, religion and sexual orientation.
- Needs to adhere and enforce the Association's Code of Conduct
- Needs to adhere and enforce the Association's Equality & Diversity Statement
- Are expected to abide by the responsibilities contained in this agreement

In return, Halton Housing Trust will offer the association the practical support and resources listed in this agreement.

The agreement:

- Is for three years from (*insert date*)
- Formally recognises (*insert associations name*) as representing (*insert area*).
- Is not intended to create a binding contract between the parties but forms the basis of our co-operative working relationship.

Gives the association the right to:

- be consulted by Halton Housing Trust about issues affecting the area represented
- payment of a Annual Tenant & Resident Association Grant (subject to meeting the required criteria)
- an opportunity to bid for a Development Grant
- free public liability insurance for events through the Trust's insurers

The Assistant Director Housing Services is responsible for customer involvement and for ensuring that the Trust meets its commitments within this agreement. The Customer Involvement Manger is employed to assist the association to promote its activities and achieve its objectives for the area that it represents. The Customer Forum will monitor the progress and delivery of the agreement annually.

On behalf of (*insert association's name*)

Signed:

Dated:

On behalf of Halton Housing Trust

Signed:

Dated:

1. TENANT & RESIDENT ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBILITIES

(*Insert association's name*) promise to be democratic, representative and accountable to our members by:

- Having a written constitution that is not more than 3 years old.
- Familiarising ourselves with the constitution to ensure that the associations aims and objectives are met.
- Holding regular meetings as set out in our constitution
- Keeping a record of our meetings and financial records, which any member of the association can see on request by providing reasonable notice
- Holding an annual general meeting of the association to elect our officers and committee in accordance with our constitution
- Publishing an annual report informing our members about the past years activities
- Keeping our members informed about our activities by publishing at least 2 newsletters a year and delivering a copy to every household
- Informing all of our members how they can contact the tenant and resident association and who their committee members are
- Making determined effort to involve all sections of the community within the area that we represent.

2. ENDING THE AGREEMENT

The Tenant and Resident Association may end the agreement at any time.

The Assistant Director Housing Services may seek the Trust's permission to end this agreement at anytime if the Association:

- Fails to meet the standards set out above
- Expressly allows the use of foul, abusive or offensive language in their meetings
- Engages in any form of racial, sexual or other form of harassment
- Affiliates to a political party or shows support for a political party or election candidate. This does not restrict individuals exercising political support.

3. SUPPORT FROM Halton Housing Trust

The Trust will make every effort to provide (*insert associations name*) with the practical support and resources it can to help the association to meet its commitments in this agreement and to achieve its objectives. This includes:

3.1. Support from staff

The Area Managers will:

- Keep in regular contact with the association's officers to tell them about any issues or changes affecting their area
- Ensure that a member of staff is available to attend association meetings when invited, provided that reasonable notice is given. Staff will not attend the associations meetings unless invited to do so. Where the association has given advance notice of a specific issue to be covered, staff will ensure that they are in a position to respond / provide information
- Inform the association in writing about any Area Office staff changes or changes in local working arrangements
- Provide a public notice board in the Area Office where associations can display information about their activities
- Ensure that estate walkabouts are carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with current policy
- Ensure that ideas from association are considered and feed into the Customer Forum

The Customer Involvement Manager will:

- Give the association practical help to get more people involved in its activities and to work effectively
- Offer advice on the proper conduct of meetings, constitutions, roles of elected officers, and the management of the association's financial affairs
- Offer the association advice on the different ways of achieving their objectives
- Help to produce newsletters and other publicity materials and obtain translations if necessary
- Help produce questionnaires, analyse results and develop action plans
- Help members of the committee to identify their training needs and find ways of meeting these
- Help the association to complete their grant applications to the Trust and advise on its proper use
- Identify resources available to assist the association to achieve its objectives

3.2. Help to involve currently under-represented sections of the community

All of the support outlined in this agreement is intended to help associations to involve everyone in the area represented. We recognise however that this can be difficult and that some additional help is

sometimes needed. The Customer Involvement Manager will arrange for this additional help where necessary, when advised by the association.

Examples of additional support include:

- Identifying the reasons why some people are not involved
- Assisting with surveys
- Arranging special transport
- Advising on applying for a Development Grant and other grants
- Arranging for interpreters
- Helping to get ideas from young people

3.3. Financial support

There are three types of grant that tenant and resident associations can apply for from Halton Housing Trust:

- Starter Grant
- Annual Grant
- Development Grant.

The Trust can also provide free public liability insurance for events organised by Associations, signed up to this partnership agreement. Written notice including details of the activities must be provided in writing to the Customer Involvement Manager at least four weeks prior to the date of the event. Confirmation of cover will be confirmed within seven days of receipt of the written notice.

3.4. Promotion of association's activities

The association is entitled to up to 15 sides of A4 photocopying a year for every household that they represent. This photocopying can be accessed through the Area Office or the Customer Involvement Manager.

The Area Housing Manager will provide a public notice board in the Area Housing Office where the association can display information about their activities.

3.5. Where an association is struggling to keep going

Where an association is struggling to keep going the Customer Involvement Manager will help the committee officers to:

- Put an action plan together for reviving the group
- Canvass the area to identify anyone who may want to become more actively involved in the association
- Organise a special public meeting for the election of new officers, if necessary

3.6. Training

There are several ways in which tenant representatives can get training. These include:

- Access to Halton Housing Trust training materials and training courses
- Halton Voluntary Action (HVA)
- Courses run by Halton Borough Council
- Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) courses
- Training provided by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS)

The Customer Involvement Manager will help committee members to identify their training needs and appropriate ways of meeting these needs.

3.7. Loan of equipment

The Trust maintains a central equipment library for use by tenant and resident associations. If the association wishes to borrow any equipment from the library they should contact the Customer Involvement Manager giving at least 5 days notice. The Customer Involvement Manager will arrange for the delivery and return of the equipment provided the items requested are available. A list of the equipment available is available from the Customer Involvement Manager.