

# Constitution for Tenant & Resident Groups (TRGs) registered with Northwards Housing.



Name of the group: \_\_\_\_\_

Boundaries of the area covered by the group (include a map and street names or the area covered). 50 is the minimum number of properties in order for the TRG to be recognised by Northwards Housing, of which 50% must be Northwards Housing stock.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Aims

1. To work for the rights of tenants and residents within the group's boundaries and to represent them in matters relating to housing, the environment, anti social behaviour and other issues of concern.
2. To further good relations with Northwards Housing and other service providers and agencies in the area.
3. To provide tenants and residents with information and to encourage inclusiveness and a community spirit in the area.

## Equality and Diversity Aims:

1. To ensure that everyone is given the opportunity to be involved fully and equally within the community, and work against discrimination and harassment of people irrespective of their political belief, nationality, ethnicity, gender, religion/belief, sexual orientation, age or ability .
2. To actively promote and support the principles of equality and diversity

## Membership

1. Membership is open to Northwards tenants and all residents within the group's boundaries, irrespective of their political belief, nationality, ethnicity, gender, religion/belief, sexual orientation, age or ability.
2. In order for the TRG to be fully representative of the community, it will actively work towards encouraging representation from all sections of the community that it serves.

## Conduct

This Constitution should be read in conjunction with "The Standards for Tenant and Resident Groups" and the "Code of Conduct for Tenant and Resident Groups"

1. All committee members must read, agree and sign The Code of Conduct. Committee members shall endeavour to carry out their duties in a positive and constructive way.
2. Any Committee member behaving in an unreasonable manner or in a manner likely to bring the group into disrepute may be expelled from the committee by a majority vote of the Tenants' Committee.
3. Committee members should conduct themselves in accordance with the principles of Northwards Single Equality Policy.

## The Committee

1. The Committee shall have a minimum of 6 elected members and will manage the work of the group.
2. The Committee shall have an identified Chair, Treasurer and Secretary (officers).
3. New members can be elected if vacancies arise at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). They may serve as a temporary replacement until the AGM.
4. Any Committee member selected to stand as a candidate in local government elections must resign from the Committee.
5. Councillors cannot be Committee members of the group.
6. At the group's discretion, individuals living outside the boundaries of the group may become a co-opted member for the purposes of supporting and advising the group but will have no voting rights and will not count towards the quorum at meetings.
7. No more than 1/3 of the committee shall be members of the same family.
8. If casual vacancies arise in the places held for Committee members the TRG will seek to appoint a temporary replacement to serve until the next AGM.

## Meetings, Agendas and Minutes.

For Committee, Public and AGMs the group should provide an agenda in advance of the meeting.

The nominated minute taker of the TRG (normally the secretary) should take minutes of Committee, Public and AGMs. These should be made available to Northwards Housing on request.

## Decision Making

Decisions shall be reached by consensus, but where a minority view is held by one or more members of the TRG this shall be formally recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting

## Declaration of Interest

Committee members must declare an interest in a matter where appropriate and may be directed by the Chair to withdraw from a part of the meeting where:

- the TRG is discussing a matter which specifically affects a committee member, a relative or an organisation with which they are involved
- and/or
- has direct financial implications for the committee member, a relative or an organisation with which they are involved

## Committee Meetings

1. The Committee shall meet at least 4 times per year.
2. Each member shall have one vote (the Chair will not vote, but in the event of a tie the Chair shall have the deciding vote).
3. The minimum number of people for a Committee meeting to be valid (a quorum) shall be four committee members.
4. All Committee meetings and decisions will be recorded in writing at meetings (minutes).
5. Meeting minutes are to be distributed to all committee members and officers who attended the meeting.

## Public Meetings

1. Public meetings shall be held at least twice a year (the AGM can be counted as one of these).
2. The quorum for public meetings shall be a minimum of eight members, four of whom must be committee members. If fewer attend, a new meeting must be called.
3. An Extraordinary Meeting may be called at any time, at the request of the Committee or eight of the general membership. Extra-ordinary meetings are called to address exceptional circumstance such as alterations to the constitution, resignation of officers, alterations to group boundaries, etc. Further clarity can be sought from Northwards Housing.
4. Minutes from the meeting should be distributed to everyone who attended and also be made available on request to members living within the boundaries and Northwards.

## Annual General Meetings

1. The AGM shall be held once a year, the first shall be held 12 months from the date of the launch of the group. A maximum of eight weeks extension is allowed for exceptional circumstances.
2. The AGM shall be held to report the group's activities, publish audited accounts and elect new Committee members and Officers.
3. Notice of the AGM inviting the general membership of the group must be given two weeks before the meeting.

4. Minutes from the meeting should be distributed to everyone who attended and also be made available on request to members living within the boundaries and Northwards.
5. The Resident Involvement Officer will oversee the AGM and the election of officers to the committee.
6. Voting at the AGM shall be a simple majority on a show of hands or ballot (as the meeting may decide). Only tenants and residents who live in the area are eligible for full membership of the TRG and are entitled to vote at the AGM.
7. In the case of equality of votes, the Chair will have the Casting Vote.



## Finance

1. The Committee shall have a bank account in the name of the group.
2. All cheques must be signed by two out of a possible three signatories.
3. All spending must be approved by the Committee, and shall be used to achieve the aims of the group.
4. The Treasurer must keep account of the finances.
5. The Treasurer will undertake appropriate Book keeping training and updates provided by Northwards Housing as required.
6. The Accounts shall be kept up to date and shall be independently assessed by an accountant annually, and presented to the AGM.
7. The Accounts shall be made available for inspection by any member of the group who requests to see them, within 28 days. The request for the inspection must be made in writing to the Treasurer.
8. Married, common law partners, or members of the same family cannot be co-signatories

## Training

1. The Committee will undertake appropriate Training and updates provided by Northwards Housing as required.
2. The importance of training is recognised and accepted for the overall development of the group. Such training would include any which is relevant to the remit of the TRG, including training to improve skills and understanding of TRG issues relevant to the improvement of the quality of life in the area.

## Amendments to the constitution

Overall amendments can be made by Northwards Housing in consultation with tenants and residents.

For amendments in relation to a specific TRG these can be made at the AGM if two weeks notice of the changes are given. If there is a proposal to extend or reduce the boundaries publicity should be sent to those in the area under consideration for inclusion/exclusion in/from the group two weeks prior to the change being implemented.

If an AGM is not due, then an Extraordinary public meeting should be called, with two weeks notice.



**Publicity/Information**

- 1. The committee will keep its members informed of activities via newsletters, leaflets, public meetings, etc.
- 2. No publicity can be distributed in the group's name without committee approval.

**Dissolution**

- 1. The group may only be dissolved at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose and advertised 14 days before the meeting.
- 2. The proposal to dissolve the group shall take effect only if agreed by two thirds of the members present at the meeting.
- 3. In the event of the group being dissolved, the group's Accounts must be returned to Northwards Housing for a final audit. Furthermore, all assets derived from Northwards Housing shall be returned, or may be donated to a similar organisation if approval is given.
- 4. Money and assets provided as a result of fundraising by the group shall be used for the specific purpose identified at the time that the funds were raised or shall be donated in accordance with the wishes of members canvassed at the Special General Meeting.

**Approval**

This constitution was adopted by members of the group on:  
\_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

**Signed (Officers):**

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer: \_\_\_\_\_