



## A Guide to Setting up and Running a Resident Association



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## Introduction - A Guide to Setting up and Running a Resident Association

This guide is an introduction to forming Residents Associations. We are committed to improving our services. To help us achieve this, we need to know that residents' expectations are being met and maintained. Increasing communication between residents and Network Homes helps us to understand how residents feel about the services we provide and how we can improve them. Creating or joining a Resident Association is a great way to achieve this and an opportunity to get to know your local community.



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## Why start a Resident Association?

- To share ideas for community initiatives or raise concerns that impact the community or more widely.
- To give your community a greater voice and build a sense of community.
- To keep residents informed of what's happening in your neighbourhood.

## What is a Resident Association?

A Residents Association (RA) is a group of residents who come together to represent the shared interests of those who live in a local area or community. Anyone can join, members may be tenants, leaseholders and shared owners.

The Residents Association must be acknowledged by two thirds of the community in order to be recognised and work effectively.

## What is a Committee?

The Committee runs the RA on behalf of the members. The members of the RA are the residents in the defined neighbourhood. The committee will organise general meetings and the AGMs and will carry out any decisions made at these meetings.

Within the Committee, there are also four elected Officer roles. These members can be known as the Executive Committee.

- **Chair:** elected to provide leadership, plan, call and chair meetings, and ensure that the committee works well together. A Chair should ensure that the RA keeps to its aims.
- **Vice Chair:** supports the Chair in the above duties on a day to day basis, or when not available.
- **Secretary:** responsible for administration and communication. They set the agenda with the Chair, take minutes of meetings, distribute previous minutes and occasionally write letters on behalf of the RA. Members of the RA can assist the Secretary with their allocated tasks.
- **Treasurer:** oversees the management of any money collected. They pay bills and keep accurate records of money received and spent. The Treasurer works with the Committee to carry out financial planning for the year.

## What is a Constitution?

A constitution is a list of rules which set out the aims of your group and how your group will work towards those aims. To be formally recognised and funded by Network Homes, we'd ask you to sign up to Network Homes' sample constitution. By having a constitution, you are also able to apply for community funding from other organisations. [You can find the constitution here.](#)



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If there are any additional clauses you wish to add or any alterations that you want to discuss, please email the Resident Engagement Team at [Get.Involved@networkhomes.org.uk](mailto:Get.Involved@networkhomes.org.uk).

## How can Network Homes help?

As a collection of individuals who choose the goals and actions of the Resident Association, we are unable to be involved in the day to day business of the RA. However, we can support you in some ways:

### Funding

A bank account should be set up by the Treasurer of the association and must have minimum 2 signatories. Having a bank account is essential for the RA to receive funding. We are able to write a supporting statement letter to your bank if requested.

Every RA will receive a start-up fund of £250. The minimum amount of funding you will receive each year after this is £2 x (1/2 Total Number of homes per scheme). For example, a scheme with 100 homes will receive £2 x 50 members as minimum funding.

Where the RA's membership register contains more than the above, we will provide further funding at £2 per additional member. There is a maximum of 2 members per household. For example, a scheme with 100 homes and 70 registered members will receive £2 x 70 members.

We will provide you with funding once we receive a signed copy of a constitution. Once you have held your first Annual General Meeting, we will review the minutes and membership list and release the membership fund accordingly.

Funding will be paid into the RAs bank account, please pay particular attention to documents when establishing your RA bank account to confirm that this is an unincorporated association, therefore you are not required to pay tax.

If you wish to seek extra funds to support your annual budget. You could think about having an annual membership fee that residents pay to subsidise the payments we give you. You can also apply for grants and funding from external organisations and your local authority or you could hold a fundraiser!

### Training

You may wish to undertake training to build your skills, such as:

- Minute-taking
- Chairing skills
- Treasurer skills

We can provide training through TPAS, who are specialists in tenant engagement experience. Contact them via their website [www.tpas.org.uk](http://www.tpas.org.uk), by calling 0161 868 3500 or by emailing [info@tpas.org.uk](mailto:info@tpas.org.uk)



We can look into providing some in-house training, if this is something you would like please contact the Resident Engagement Team at [Get.involved@networkhomes.org.uk](mailto:Get.involved@networkhomes.org.uk)

### Practical Support

The Resident Engagement team can advise you on how to promote the association to your neighbours and local community.

### Accountability

Network Homes' officers can attend your meetings if you have a specific issue you want them to attend to.

### Where do I start?

#### Step 1: Find out if there are people in your community that are interested in forming an RA.

Gather views by:

- informal discussion, as you meet in communal areas / the local shop or café, etc.
- door knocking, this provides a more targeted approach and is useful for both street properties and estates
- put a sign up in the communal areas using a designated email address for residents so they can contact you.
- Post on existing forums, such as neighbourhood Whatsapp or Facebook Groups.

#### Step 2: arrange an initial meeting, this could be either online or face-to-face.

Make sure that everyone knows about the meeting. We can provide a template to create a simple letter or leaflet to let people know about the date, time and place of the meeting.

Make sure that the leaflet mentions the issues that concern people the most in your area and that these will be discussed at the meeting. Please ensure to consider cultural differences when planning your meeting and make provision for people with disabilities.

#### Step 3: Hold the first meeting to talk about the issues everyone is concerned about.

After your first meeting you will know if residents want to set up a RA. If you do decide to set up a RA, there are a few things that you need to do.

At the next few meetings, you will all need to:

- Choose a name for your group
- Elect committee members including a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer
- Agree on the constitution for the group
- Set up a bank account for the Resident Association, with two signatories from two separate households.

It may take a couple of months or longer for your group to get organised. Don't worry if it takes a long time. Don't rush to launch your RA before you're ready!



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## Meetings

Meetings can be held in-person or virtually via several different easy-to-use and free platforms, such as Skype, Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

### What is a Quorum?

The quorum is the minimum number of members required at any meeting to make the proceedings of that meeting valid.

No General Meeting or Annual General Meeting should take place if less than one third of members, or, less than 6 members are present at the meeting (whichever is the less). This may vary according to each Residents Association depending on its size of membership

### Annual General Meetings

These will be held once a year to:

- Receive an annual report from the Executive Committee
- Present annual accounts to members
- Elect the Executive Committee
- Consider any resolutions put forward by members
- Vote on any amendments to the constitution

All members will be given 14 days written notice of the meeting to encourage high attendance.

### General Meetings

Each year the Association will hold at least four General Meetings (including the AGM) which can be open to the general membership.

All members of the Association shall receive 7 days' notice of General Meetings. No General Meeting or Annual General Meeting should take place if less than one third of members, or, less than 6 members are present at the meeting (whichever is the less). This may vary according to each Residents Association depending on its size of membership.

### Special General Meetings

A Special General Meeting must be called by the Executive Committee if requested by at least five members or ten per cent of the membership, whichever is the most, at least 28 days before the date on which those members request the meeting to be held. The Secretary must send to each member written notice of a Special General Meeting 14 days in advance of the meeting.

## Other ways to be involved

Setting up or joining an RA is just one way to be involved with us. We have a variety of ways to get involved tailored to your lifestyle and availability. If you feel that an RA is too much commitment, you may wish to start a Residents Group which offers more flexibility. To find out more, [please click here](#).



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