# GET INVOLVED

Getting Started

# Tenants and Residents Associations: The Basics

**This section explains the purpose of tenants and residents TRAs and the functions they can perform.**

## What is a Tenants & Residents Association (TRA)?

A TRA is made up of residents living on an estate, block or street(s) who have formed an TRA to improve the area in which they live.

TRAs give residents a voice in how their area is managed by working with LBHF housing services. They find solutions to local problems and local service delivery.

## What are the Benefits of Establishing a TRA in Your Area?

Forming a TRA can bring many benefits to your local community.

TRAs:

- Enable residents to make their views known to the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham (LBHF) housing services and other service providers, giving you a say in how your neighbourhood is managed
- Work with housing services to find solutions to issues affecting your quality of life
- Provide information to your neighbourhood about local issues and concerns
- Make recommendations on how the Council spends its money in your community TRA
- Develop a good community spirit, helping residents to get to know each other better; gaining trust and working together to find solutions
- Provide residents with an opportunity to engage with service providers of community activities and support services
- Give residents an opportunity to meet new people, gain new skills and attend training sessions
- Work with other groups to start up and run social projects
- Provide residents with opportunities to apply for funding to improve their neighbourhood outside of normal planned works

## Examples of TRA Achievements

**Arthur Henderson and William Banfield TRA** – They have raised almost £500K over 5 years through applying for council and external funding. They have a community garden and are awaiting the completion of a new TRA hall.

**Philpot Square Residents TRA**- They held two very successful events in 2015 for the Summer Fun Day and Santa and Snow events which were visited by over 150 residents from the Fulham area.

**Lancaster Court Residents TRA** – They provided a very large Christmas event called Winter Wonderland with reindeer and fairground as part of their event, all funded by the TRA.

# Getting Started: Establishing your TRA

**This section explains the first steps that you will need to undertake to set up a TRA. It takes you through the process from start up until the TRA's opening meeting.**

## What to Know and Do Before You Begin

- TRAs represent an area defined in their constitution. There should not be more than one TRA in any defined area
- To check if there is a TRA already in your area or to ask for help to set up a TRA, contact your Community Engagement Officer. See Contact List section
- You will need to find out how much support there is for a TRA in your area and how many people are willing to help out. The first thing to do is to talk with your neighbours about setting up a TRA. As long as you have at least six neighbours over 18 years old, you have enough members to get started
- When you have a core group of members, you should communicate with as many of your neighbours as possible (in a way you are comfortable with), finding out what issues and concerns they have about living in the area and how they find the housing services they receive
- If other residents are enthusiastic about setting up a TRA then ask them if they will help you to door knock and ask questions that are important to them
- Tenants, Leaseholders and Private Tenants renting from LBHF Leaseholders can all become members of a TRA
- TRAs should elect at least three lead committee officers. These roles are Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. Some TRAs optionally elect a Vice-Chair
- You may elect an unlimited number of committee members. They should be listed on your registration paperwork
- The establishment of a new TRA is done by holding an Open Inaugural General Meeting that all households need to be invited to, with at least 14 days advance notice
- The election of the lead committee officers should be carried out at this Open Inaugural General Meeting and voting should be agreed by a show of hands, where a majority vote wins the position. Residents are allowed to nominate themselves for positions and each TRA member is allowed one vote per position. TRA members cannot vote for themselves
- Your meeting guest list should include your Local Housing Officer or Housing Manager. You could also invite your Community Engagement Officer, Ward Councillors, Neighbourhood Wardens and other relevant officers

## A Few Pointers

When setting up a TRA, there are a few points to keep in mind:

- Try to include as many residents as possible in making decisions and sharing tasks and responsibilities. One or two people cannot do the work that is needed to make your TRA successful. The more people involved, the easier it is to delegate task and the more your TRA can achieve
- Keep all residents informed about what the TRA is doing. You could provide newsletters, letters, have open meetings, and provide a way to contact the TRA, via an official TRA email address and perhaps a TRA phone number
- Understand that volunteering to work as a TRA member will mean attending meetings and committing some of your time
- Successful TRAs plan for the future. The Resident Involvement Team have a training programme to assist lead committee officers, those wishing to take on more responsibility in the future and members standing in for leads when they are ill or unavailable. See the section on Training and Support for more information

## Working in Partnership with the Council

The council are here to help; you can contact your Community Engagement Officer at any time. They will be able to advise you on:

- The access and support that comes with being formally recognised by the Council, achieved by adopting the council's model constitution, or an agreed constitution which meets the council's recognition criteria
- Advantages of a Code of Conduct: to help to make sure everyone understands the acceptable behaviour in meetings
- Identifying and organising any training that the TRA may need to get started and run effectively
- To be registered with the council there are some forms that need to be completed. This is so that the Resident Involvement Team can know who to contact and how. Your Community Engagement Officer can assist you to complete these mandatory forms (see section Contact us)

## Planning a Meeting to Establish Your TRA

At your first meeting you need to know what estate(s) block(s) or street(s) your TRA will represent. You should discuss this with your Community Engagement Officer who will ensure that a TRA does not already operate in the area you want to represent and that residents are happy for you to do so.

## You also need to:

- Discuss problems raised when you canvassed resident's views and decide how you think these should be tackled
- Choose a date, time and venue to have a public meeting that will officially establish your TRA. The Resident Involvement team will support you to find a suitable venue for your meeting to take place
- Remember to choose a time and place that you think residents will be able to attend
- Agree an agenda for the official launch of the TRA and deliver the agenda to residents at least 14 days in advance of the meeting
- Invite your Community Engagement Officer and Housing Officer
- Discuss the lead committee roles that volunteers may want to stand for at your meeting to launch your TRA

## The Inaugural Meeting to Launch Your TRA

This meeting should be chaired by an Acting Chair, Community Engagement Officer or a Housing Officer until the election of the TRA committee.

- Have an attendance list that records the residents that attend. Ask permission to hold names and contact details in confidence for TRA purposes only
- Adopt the Resident Involvement team's code of conduct for meetings

- Decide on a name for the TRA
- Hold a democratic election of the TRA lead committee officers; Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and optionally a Vice-Chair
- Ask if anyone wants to become an additional committee member
- Agree on a main contact person, telephone number and email address for TRA correspondence
- Agree a date for the next meeting
- Try to agree the next agenda in advance of the next meeting
- Return registration forms to Resident Involvement team with 14 days of the meeting. Your contact details will also be held in confidence
- Minutes of the meeting should be taken and be available

## Opening a Bank Account

It is very important that the TRA's money is kept safe and that there is accountability for funds. A bank account helps to put safeguards in place and also assists with record keeping for the end of financial year audit. Also, if a TRA applies for any funding (including the annual resident TRA grant provided by the Council) the funds will need to be made payable to the TRA rather than an individual. A bank account should therefore be opened as soon as possible in the name of the TRA.

The account should not be a personal account but on the TRA's behalf. The TRA should be prepared to shop around for an account that does not have any charges. When looking for information on the internet, remember that most banks refer to community and voluntary organisations as 'clubs and societies'. Some recommended banks to approach for a TRA bank account are:

**Metro Bank Community Account for Clubs, Societies and Charities- 0345 08 08 508**

Locations: Fulham Retail Centre Unite 3, Fulham Broadway; 160-166 Kensington High Street; 137 Chiswick High Road

https://www.metrobankonline.co.uk/Commercial/Bank-Accounts/Community-Accounts-for-Clubs-Societies-and-Charities/

- No monthly charges
- Free Online/Telephone Banking
- No Overdraft facility
- Credit reference required when setting up account

**Lloyds Bank Treasurer's Account- 0800 056 0056**

Locations: 21-25 King Street, Hammersmith; 417 North End Road, Fulham

http://www.lloydsbank.com/business/retail-business/current-accounts/treasurers-account.asp?WT.ac=RBB_Accounts_Treasurer_FOM

- No monthly charges
- Free Online/Telephone Banking
- No Overdraft facility
- No Credit Reference
- Only for balances of up to £50,000
- Can change signatories on bank account by post.

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

- Proof of identity – e.g. driving licence, passport
- Proof of address – e.g. utilities bill, benefit book, bank statement.

The signatories should be people with good credit ratings. Make sure that you tell the bank that you are a non-profit-making organisation. If you do not make it clear, the TRA will be treated as a small business and you will pay additional charges for services that the TRA does not need such as an overdrafts. The TRA may, however, be charged for going overdrawn, stopping cheques, or requesting extra statements.

There should be at least three authorised signatories on the bank account of which no two signatories should be close family members or live in the same house. Two signatories should be required to sign cheques.

## Housing Representatives Forum

Housing Representatives Forum (HRF) meetings are held seven times a year in the month when a Borough Housing Forum is not taking place, with each meeting lasting approximately two hours.

Membership is drawn from the TRAs, Sheltered Housing Forum and the Chairs of Housing Improvement groups. Every TRA should send one representative from their lead committee officers to each meeting. It is agreed by the Officers and Administration of the Forum that the recommendations will form an integral part of the decision-making process.

The role of the Housing Representatives Forum is to:

- Act as the central representative body for residents
- Co-ordinate the work of the groups and ensure that residents' views are reflected in all aspects of housing services across the Housing Department
- Make recommendations on all matters relating to the delivery of housing services

TRA representatives and other forum representatives are expected to fulfil the ongoing commitment to send representatives to this meeting.

# TRA Constitution

**This section sets out the role of a constitution in TRA governance as well as the necessary criteria to include in your constitution to be recognised by the council.**

## Constitution

The constitution is a document that defines the rules for running the TRA. It helps to:

- Clarify the agreed aims of the TRA
- Outline the area that the TRA covers
- Define responsibility and ensure accountability
- Ensure the TRA is inclusive and open to all residents in the defined area
- Provide a mechanism for making decisions and resolving disputes
- Outline financial responsibilities
- Explain how a TRA would be dissolved, should the need arise

The constitution should be discussed and agreed at a TRA meeting and should be signed by the current lead committee officers. LBHF offer TRAs a model constitution; you may create your own constitution but to be recognised by the Council, it must meet all of the LBHF's essential criteria provided in this section.

## TRA Constitution Key Criteria

1. The aims and objectives of the TRA shall be:
    a. To represent and to promote the interests of all residents living in our area.
    b. To seek to improve conditions for the residents of the area.
    c. To work in partnership with the council and other agencies to achieve our aims.
    d. To represent the interests of residents in consultation with the local authority and other bodies.
    e. The TRA shall be non-party political and non-sectarian.
2. Have a membership that is clearly open to all residents and reflects the community in the area that is covered.
3. Hold at least 4 committee meetings and 4 open meetings per year one of which can include the annual general meeting (AGM). Minutes should be taken at all of these meetings.
4. Hold an AGM with at least 14 days' notice to all members.
5. The quorum for (i) committee meetings will be a minimum of 4 members and (ii) AGM and general meetings will be a minimum of 6.
6. Hold annual elections for committee members and ensure that the council is notified of the date of this Annual General Meeting and then sent a copy of the minutes after the meeting and informed of any committee member changes.

7. The TRA will be run by a management committee elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee will be made up of officers, including a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Ordinary members. It could also include a Vice chair. This committee will be responsible for the proper handling of finance and present audited financial records at the Annual General Meeting, and supply a copy to the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.
8. Provide an Annual Report at the Annual General Meeting on how the group has met its objectives and present a copy of the audited annual accounts for the last twelve month period.
9. The committee will provide an update to the residents of the area twice per year on their work and how it will positively encourage participation from sections of the community. This could be in the form of a newsletter. TRAs can request assistance from the area housing teams to print flyers and newsletters.
10. The Committee should ensure that members behave courteously and should challenge offensive or disruptive behaviour from members.
11. If the General Meeting decides at any time by a simple majority that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the TRA, the officers shall call a meeting of all members, giving at least 14 days' notice in writing and stating the terms of the dissolution resolution to be proposed at the meeting.
12. A resolution to dissolve the TRA shall be agreed by a majority of those present and voting. All outstanding bills will be paid and the balance of any grants and funds held by the TRA will be held in trust by the council for future TRAs.

# TRA Committee Member: Roles and Responsibilities

**This section details the duties of all Committee members.**

## Committee Responsibilities

Your Committee is required to be elected annually.

The Committee's role is to make sure your TRA is run properly and is responsive to your residents.

### Your Committee should:

- Ensure efficient running of the group
- Hold a minimum of 4 general meetings, one of which can be the AGM
- Discuss local issues and make decisions based on voting at meetings
- Represent the views of its members and local residents

## The Role and Conduct of a Committee Member

Committee members are the vital backbone of a TRA and their role is to:

- Have a positive attitude and good team spirit
- Contribute to discussions and make positive suggestions
- Ensure differences of opinion do not cloud the work of the TRA
- Respect confidentiality and not discuss the private affairs of either the committee or residents
- Support the Committee's democratic decisions, even when it is not the outcome they wanted
- Ask neighbours for their views on important issues and feed these views back at a committee meeting
- Attend meetings and report back if they have carried out previously agreed actions or attended events or meetings
- Help to organise events and activities
- Help to distribute leaflets and information relating to TRA activities
- If able, volunteer when a task needs doing
- Be responsible for keeping the constitution and other policies and governance arrangements up-to-date and where appropriate, remind others of the conditions in the constitution

# TRA Lead Committee Member: Chair - Role and Responsibilities

**This section details the role and responsibilities of the Chair and advice about how to perform the role.**

The Chair is seen as the leader of the group. They are the spokesperson for decisions that are made and campaigns that are being run. The Chair should:

- Chair meetings
- Set the meeting agenda and guide committee members through the agenda at the meeting
- Ensure that the meeting is kept on the right track
- Summarise the main decisions
- Ensure that any actions agreed are carried out by members in between meetings
- Ensure that the TRA adheres to the terms as stated in the constitution
- Deal with conflicts and bad behaviour at meetings, using a Code of Conduct as an aid
- Ensure that there are satisfactory procedures in place for the effective running of the TRA
- Ensure the TRA is registered with the council
- Be a signatory for the TRA bank account
- Lead on developing the Annual Business and Activities Plan (in conjunction with the other committee members)

Developing Further

## Holding an effective meeting

As the Chair of the TRA, one of your main responsibilities will be to ensure that on the day, TRA meetings are successful.

## Keep the meeting running to time

A meeting which sticks to the allotted time is more likely to keep people's attention and will ensure all agenda items are given the time they deserve.

To make sure the meeting runs to time, it helps if the Chair has an idea beforehand of how much time to give to each agenda item. These timeslots can be added to the agenda. The Chair must then be strict in concluding discussions when they reach their allotted time. Topics which are not fully covered in their timeslot can be deferred to the next meeting.

## Make sure the Agenda is followed to and those who speak stay on topic

Off-topic discussions can either cause a meeting to overrun, or it can distract from the topic at hand and affect a TRA's ability to reach a satisfactory conclusion and agree actions above. The Chair will need to be strict in reminding those going off-topic of the purpose/remit of the agenda item.

## Encourage everyone to have a chance to speak

Gathering the views of as many TRA members as possible will allow the TRA to make decisions that more accurately reflect the interests of the community it represents. Some people are naturally more vocal and outspoken than others but quieter members may still have just as many opinions to share. If they do not get their say, they may be discouraged from attending a future meeting.

To hear all views, it will be important for the chair to actively monitor who is speaking in the room. Lines such as 'before we move on, would anybody else like to have their say?' can encourage discussion from quieter members. Likewise more vocal members may need to be cut short at times in order to give others a chance to speak.

## Sum up discussions

Helping to summarise the conversation and resulting actions at the end of each agenda item or major point of discussion can help the group to follow what has been going on and can help the Secretary to ensure everything essential has been minuted.

## Ensure that all in attendance are acting in a respectful manner

Disrespectful behaviour, whether it is irate shouting, interrupting, separate conversations, phones ringing etc. can all serve to distract from the agenda item. Disrespectful behaviour can be intimidating or seen as rude and disrespectful which may discourage people from coming to subsequent meetings.

A Code of Conduct should be distributed and employed by the TRA to enforce a standard that members should comply to. It is the chair's job to enforce the Code of Conduct at meetings. Those who act out of line should be reminded of the code of conduct and asked to correct their behaviour. Those who refuse to correct their behaviour should be asked to leave the meeting.

## Check that actions are followed up between meetings

Delivering on actions agreed at previous meetings will increase the trust of the community and help the TRA meet its purpose.

The Chair should ensure that, by the time the next meeting comes around, the other committee members and officers have completed their actions.

# TRA Lead Committee Officer: Treasurer- Role and Responsibilities

**This section details the role and responsibilities of the Treasurer and advice about how to perform the role.**

The Treasurer is responsible for:

- The financial dealings of the TRA including keeping accurate records of income and expenditure such as hall hire, paying bills, recording committee member expenses, opening an TRA bank account, and maintaining a record of TRA bank account reconciliations
- Recording all the money the TRA receives and spends in an account book
- Being a signatory for the TRA bank account. There should be at least three authorised signatories on the bank account of which no two signatories should be close family members or live in the same house. Two signatories should be required to sign cheques
- Assisting an audit produced by LBHF's contracted auditors by providing access to relevant cash books and documentation
- Taking the audited accounts to the AGM for members for sign off
- Providing the committee with regular reports of the TRA's finances throughout the year
- Overseeing any fundraising initiatives and applications for funding from outside bodies

Your Community Engagement Officer can assist you in opening a TRA account with a bank or building society.

## Developing Further

### Tips on handling money

- There should be at least three authorised signatories on the bank account of which no two signatories should be close family members or live in the same house. Two signatories should be required to sign cheques
- Blank cheques should never be signed
- All invoices should be marked 'paid' and have the cheque number, date and initials of the person signing the cheque. The person who makes out the cheque must complete the cheque stub at the same time, with the date, amount, payee and brief description. Cheque stubs must always be kept in a safe place
- All accounts, including the chequebook and petty cash book, should be kept up to date and made available for inspection at each committee meeting
- Records of accounts should be kept for at least three years

## Petty cash

- TRAs should keep a small float. This should be kept in a safe and secure place
- Petty cash should only be used for small items and expenses. Anything of higher value items should be paid with a cheque
- Petty cash payments should be made on petty cash vouchers accompanied by a detailed explanation and receipt
- All receipts should be stapled to the completed petty cash voucher and kept in the petty cash box together with the cash balance and float
- All monies drawn for petty cash purposes should be authorised by the Treasurer

## Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation record is used to provide an on-going picture of bank account and petty cash activity. It also forms the link between one financial year and another in terms of bank account and petty cash balances carried forward.

- All cash payments that an TRA receives should be banked. A receipt should be issued for all cash that is received. A further copy of this receipt should be retained by the TRA
- A record of all payments into and withdrawals from the bank account should be kept with the date, amount, payee and description and type of income or transaction
- Bank reconciliations should be performed as frequently as bank statements are received. Reconciliations should also be documented and retained
- A record of all petty cash box reconciliations should be kept with the date and amount of funds that have been added to petty cash

Annual accounts that are presented to the AGM are produced using the income, expenditure and reconciliation logs.

## Paying in cash/cheques

- A record of all payments into the bank account should be kept with the date, amount, payee and description and type of income or transaction. The bank paying in book could be used for this purpose
- A receipt should be issued for all items of cash received
- All cash received should be banked via paying in book or slip

## Payments

- All payments over £50 should have the prior consent of the committee
- Payments should only be made if supported by a proper invoice/receipt
- Committee members should inform the Chair of any conflict of interest or uncertainty

## Reports

- A simple report on income and expenditure should be produced annually and presented at the AGM
- At each AGM the account books, petty cash books and receipts should be made available for inspection if required by members

## Assets

- An inventory of assets should be recorded and a backup made and stored separately
- An inventory of assets should be presented at the AGM. Any changes from year to year should be made in a report to the AGM. The report should include location, condition and any explanation of change
- The police can be asked to infrared tag your assets for free

# TRA Lead Committee Officer: Secretary - Role and Responsibilities

**This section details the role and responsibilities of the Secretary and advice about how to perform the role.**

The Secretary assists the Chair by:

- Ensuring that meetings take place. The Secretary should organise the meeting and venue; notify committee members and invite local residents. The Area Housing Office and Resident Involvement team are able to assist with designing and printing flyers and posters.
- Setting the agenda with the Chair or other committee members
- Taking minutes of meetings
- Responsibility for distributing the agenda along with the minutes of the previous meeting
- Receiving post for the TRA and making the committee aware of any letters so that they can be acted on appropriately
- Inviting guests and council officers
- Recording a list of residents who attend a specific meeting
- Keeping records of all correspondence, agendas, minutes and other documentation
- Sending a copy of the meeting minutes to your Housing Officer and Community Engagement Officer
- Keeping an up-to-date list of all committee members
- Ensuring the TRA is registered with the council
- Being a signatory for the TRA bank account

## Developing Further

### Have a way for the local community to contact the TRA

Setting agenda items which are of interest to the local community is the best way to increase attendance/membership and reflect the interests of the community you represent.

One of the most effective ways is to set up an email account for your TRA. This should not be your personal email address but one set up exclusively for TRA correspondence and named appropriately, e.g. 'ExampleTRA@gmail.com'. This will look more professional and avoid unnecessary spam in your personal inbox. When your TRA contact email is advertised LBHF will also advertise your TRA's contact details on the TRA section of the Council website. Emails can be auto forwarded from the TRA email address to your personal email address to avoid having to check multiple email addresses. Your Community Engagement Officer can support you to set up an email address.

## Ensure the Agenda isn't too long

People generally lose interest if a meeting drags on too long and agenda items may not be given the attention they deserve. It's best to prioritize the most important agenda items within this time period and defer other agenda items to subsequent meetings.

## Set the date of the meetings and book a venue

Without a date or a venue, the meeting cannot go ahead. If you have a hall, or room licensed from the council then that will likely be your meeting place. If you do not have a hall, or room, approach your Community Engagement Officer who will find a suitable venue for your TRA to meet.

## Ensure the meeting is advertised

Advertising the meetings of the TRA with sufficient notice will allow the TRA to grow and give residents the opportunity to set aside time to attend.

Leaflets or letters through people's doors, posters in the communal areas/entrances of your estate and noticeboards can all help. The Local Housing Office for your area can help with designing and printing flyers, posters and communication materials.

## Invite all necessary guests

For some agenda items, having guests such as Councillors, Council Officers, contractors and community groups can be invaluable to discussion and information. Officers are generally very willing to attend subject, to availability and notice, so invite them when it is useful to do so.

## Taking the minutes

A record of the meeting allows discussion to be recorded, actions planned not to be forgotten, and serves as a notice of important upcoming dates and events.

Minute taking can be daunting. Minute taking should not be verbatim, but a note of the meeting. Actions, suggestions and items agreed are the most important followed, by a general overview of what has been discussed at each agenda item.

## Ensure minutes are made available promptly after meeting

The minutes are a reflection of the meeting. Getting them out early will remind people of actions they must follow up and important dates for their calendar. Once the minutes are done, your Housing Officer can help with printing.

## Respond to any correspondence through the TRA email address

Responding promptly will inspire confidence in your TRA throughout the local community. It will also allow you to form better relationships with other organisations. Setting aside a brief amount of time each day/couple of days/week to check and respond to correspondence could be an effective mechanism also.

## Keep a record of all important documents

This includes all minutes, agendas, reports, promotional material. The Treasurer will likely keep a record of all the financial things. The committee will turn to you for any important documentation and if you can provide it, it will improve your standing as well as the credibility of the TRA and the TRA's ability to achieve its aims and duties. Keep backups.

# TRA Registration and Funding

**This section states the requirements a TRA needs to be formally recognised by the council.**

TRA registration with the Council offers a number of benefits:

- An annual grant towards the costs of running your TRA
- A working relationship that allows clear channels of communication and cooperation with LBHF Housing Services Officers
- Support from the Resident Involvement team in terms of training and support

In return the Council ask that the TRA:

- Complete the New TRA pack or Existing TRA pack as provided
- Providing the Resident Involvement team with up to date contact details of lead committee officers
- Agree to the Model Constitution or one which meets the LBHF's TRA constitution criteria. It will need to be signed by the committee and re-signed when the membership of the committee changes
- Provide audited accounts that have been signed off by the TRA at the AGM

If your TRA manages a hall or room then you also need to:

- Provide the Resident Involvement team with proof of purchase of Public Liability Insurance to value of at least £5,000,000. For more information see section Managing a Hall or Room
- Provide contact details of the TRA keyholder

## Annual TRA Grant

TRAs that are registered with the Council are entitled to receive an annual grant towards their running costs.

### Funding basis of approved grants:

- The minimum grant of £400 is paid to TRAs that represent an area covering up to 285 properties
- TRAs with more than 285 properties are entitled to a larger grant calculated at a rate of £1.40 for each additional properties

### Grant funds can be used for:

- Revenue costs such as gas, electricity, or insurance for the TRA hall
- Stationery and other administrative items such as postage
- Equipment costs (filing cabinet, kettle, etc.)
- Publicity and printing
- Organising social events

The grant will be paid annually on the condition that the TRA is up to date with their LBHF registration

To obtain the relevant forms you need to register and to gain support in completing these – please contact your Community Engagement Officer, see the Contact Us section.

## Potential LBHF Fast Track Small Grants

The Council also has a Small Grants budget. This is to deliver small projects, e.g. a mother and toddlers group, or an older people's lunch club. Once your TRA is established and you have enough volunteers you may want to provide this type of activity.

For more information, please contact:

**Community Investment Team**

Email: cit@lbhf.gov.uk

Tel: 020 8753 2482

## Sobus- Advice on Potential Grants

Sobus is the umbrella organisation for the voluntary & community sector organisation in Hammersmith & Fulham. They can also advise you on funding applications from grant providers if you want to develop a project, or projects in your area.

For more information, please contact:

**Sobus**

Email: info@sobus.org.uk

Tel: 020 7952 1230

# Training and Support

**This section details what LBHF can provide to assist you in the running of your TRA.**

## Empowering Committees

The Resident Involvement Team can convene or help in co-ordinating a variety of courses to enable residents to effectively run a TRA and contribute to improving the delivery of services to the residents in the area.

These include:

- Running effective meetings.
- Chairing of meetings.
- Negotiating skills.
- Managing TRA budgets and grant applications.
- TRA roles and responsibilities.
- Introduction to LBHF Housing Services, including resident involvement structures and Council processes.
- Representing the community.
- Minute taking.
- Access to other funding opportunities.
- Partnership working to provide social activities or projects.

For further information on when and where these training events will take place please contact the Resident Involvement & Governance Officer (see section Contact Us).

## Childcare/Carer's allowance

Named elected TRA committee members can claim childcare for resident training via our resident expenses policy. TRAs could also consider how to fund committee members who need childcare to attend local TRA meetings. The child-minder or carer should be registered.

## Attendance of Council Officers at Meetings

Council Officers are often very happy to attend TRA meetings. Please give the officers plenty of notice to ensure their availability. Your primary support will be your Community Engagement Officer and your Local Housing team.

## Printing

Any meeting papers, leaflets or posters can be printed free of charge. Please ask your local Housing Officer for assistance. LBHF will not reimburse printing costs. Printing jobs and printing materials should be requested in advance.

## Response Times

LBHF Housing Services Officers pledge to acknowledge any correspondence within 48 hours or as soon as possible when a staff member is sick or on annual leave. All responses to any query will be provided within 10 working days.

# Managing a Hall or Room

**This section explains the roles and responsibilities of a TRA managing a hall or room.**

Many TRAs have the opportunity to run a community hall or room in their area. To do so, the TRA will have to sign a Hall or room Licence Agreement. To obtain the Licence – two TRA committee members are required to sign our Tenants & Residents TRA Hall & Room Licence, in the presence of a witness, at an agreed date.

Along with this agreement come rules and responsibilities which the TRA will need to follow, primarily to ensure the hall or room is safe, does not fall into disrepair and is used for the benefit of the community.

Despite this responsibility, the benefits of managing a hall or room are very worthwhile. These include:

- A potential steady revenue stream for the TRA
- The ability to host local community events
- A convenient meeting space

For any support regarding managing a hall or room please contact the Community Facilities Officer (see Contact Us section on back of booklet)

## Developing Further

The rules and responsibilities that a TRA must comply with when managing a hall or room primarily fall under the following categories:

- Hall Management
- Health & Safety(H&S)
- Insurance

### Hall Management

**Management Responsibilities of the TRA/ Keyholder:**

1. **General Management**
    a. LBHF will retain a set of keys in addition to the TRA. The locks are not to be changed without written consent from the Resident Involvement Team. These keys are kept in a safe & secure place to be used in an emergency as directed in the Hall Licence
    b. As stated in the Hall License, the hall cannot be used outside of permitted hours of 8am to 11pm. It is imperative that no persons or groups are allowed to occupy the hall outside these times and the keyholder(s) should ensure that the building is locked outside permitted hours to protect against unwanted use and alarms should be enabled, where fitted
    c. The hall should be locked when no committee members or groups are using the facilities for security purposes
    d. Utilities bills should be paid promptly

e. The premises should be left in a clean and tidy state. Litter should not be left in and around the premises and rubbish should be routinely disposed of or recycled

f. The premises have a maximum capacity which should not be exceeded under any circumstances

g. Allow access for routine maintenance and repairs

**2. Hiring out your hall**

There is a template Hall Hire Agreement separately developed for you to give to external parties.

a. The TRA should ensure that users and hirers of the hall do not allow the noise level of their functions to cause inconvenience for the occupiers of nearby properties

b. The TRA should not allow any hiring to take place where the person hiring the premises is under the age of 18 or will not be on the premises for the entire duration of the activity

c. All hirers of the hall should be informed of the emergency evacuation procedures for premises and should be made familiar with what firefighting equipment is available

d. Gambling laws must be adhered to

## Health & Safety (H&S)

### TRA Health and Safety Responsibilities

**1. Movement around the building**

a. Ensure that corridors are clear of clutter

b. Ensure floors are clean to minimise slip and trip risks

c. Ensure all rooms and corridors have sufficient lighting to allow safe access and exits:

i. Replace any light bulbs that are safe to do so. Do not replace any bulbs which require moving installations or require residents to climb high ladders

ii. Report any other lights or light switches to the Council

d. Equipment should be plugged in and arranged in such a way that leads and cables do not trail

e. When permanent fixtures (shelving, cupboards, notice boards, and signage) fall out of good condition, report it to the Council. Do not make any alterations to permanent fixtures without Council approval

f. When carpets or flooring fall out of good condition, report it to the council

g. When windows or door windows are damaged, report it to the council

h. No equipment/bulk should be stored in gas/electricity intake areas

**2. Electrical Equipment and Services**

a. Allow access so that any fixed electrical installations should be inspected and tested by a qualified electrician before use

b. Any portable or fixed electrical equipment (cooker or vacuum cleaner etc.) should be visually checked, and where necessary tested at suitable intervals by an electrician, to ensure that they are safe to use. Any damaged electrical equipment should be replaced

c. The council is responsible for annual PAT testing

3. **Gas Equipment and Services**
    a. Arrange and allow access for annual examinations of gas appliances (boiler, cooker, water heater etc.) by a qualified Gas Safe Engineer
4. **Asbestos**
    a. Report any Asbestos to the council
5. **Fire**
    a. Complete checks detailed in log book including:
    i. Weekly testing of fire alarm/smoke/heat detector, where fitted
    ii. Have an evacuation plan which has been tested
    iii. Regular checks to ensure that escape routes and fire exit doors are unobstructed
    iv. Checking combustible substances or waste are listed and stored safely
    v. Firefighting equipment is visually checked to ensure it is in good condition, where provided.
    vi. Checking that any automatic doors work as intended when the fire alarm is sounding and allow unrestricted access
6. **Responsibility**
    a. Ensure all users and hirers of the hall have the relevant H&S information, i.e. knowledge of nearest fire exits and meeting place in case of fire. Any other H&S ground rules can be covered at the start of the session or given to hall hirers before the session
    b. Keep testing inspection documentation for all equipment
    c. Hirers bringing in equipment should provide the TRA with all relevant Health & Safety documentation, including public liability insurance if necessary

## Insurance

Public Liability Insurance protects you if clients or members of the public suffer personal injury or property damage because of your TRA. A TRA member tripping and falling over something at one your meetings would be a common example and could result in a compensation claim.

You may choose your insurance supplier but the Public Liability Insurance must cover claims of up to £5,000,000.

Every TRA managing a hall is required to purchase Public Liability Insurance. If the TRA is managing a room in a council building it may be covered by the council's insurance.

A number of companies provide insurance specifically for voluntary groups. Further information can be found on the Volunteering England website (www.volunteering.org.uk). Here are some recommended insurance providers:

**Endsleigh Insurance;**

http://www.endsleigh-business.co.uk/Tailored/Pages/community-groups.aspx

01242 866906

**Or; Zurich Municipal**

PO Box 4384, Dunstable, LU6 9GT

community@zurichmunicipal.com

0845 602 3896

If you would like any further help with choosing the level of insurance cover then please contact the Community Facilities Officer on 0208 753 6652.

## TRA Hall Hire Agreement

Once your Licence has been issued we can provide you with our Hall and Room Hire Policy document.

This outlines proposed rental charges and deposits to be levied, and provides a Memorandum of Understanding between the TRA and Hirers. It is an aid and guide; you may come up with your own Hall Hire Agreement.

## The Hall Licence And Policy Forms You Need

To obtain the relevant Licence and Policy documents you need, please contact our Resident Involvement and Governance Officer see section Contact Us section.

# Appendices List

**This section list all other document relevant to TRAs that are included in this info pack.**

## Registering with the Housing & Regeneration Department

Appendix 1 Registration Form

Appendix 2 Model Constitution

## Running association meetings

Appendix 3 Meeting Flyer & Poster template

Appendix 4 Agenda template

Appendix 5 Minutes template

## Communicating with residents

Appendix 6 Newsletter template

Appendix 7 Chair's/Treasurer's/Secretary's report

## Handling money & record keeping

Appendix 8 Income & Expenditure Logs

Appendix 9 Petty Cash Log & Payment Receipt templates

Appendix 10 Bank Reconciliation template

Appendix 11 TRA Business Plan

Appendix 12 Hall Bookings Log

Appendix 13 Hall Hire Agreement

## Funding

Appendix 14 Advice on Applying for External Funding

Appendix 15 Grant Application Procedure & Form

## Other

Appendix 16 TRA Contact List

Appendix 17 Map of the Borough and Registered TRA Table

Appendix 18 Committee Member Handover Checklist

Appendix 19 Resident Involvement Structure