

## Rules for Residents Associations and Community Groups

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*In order for Ealing Homes to recognise your group you will need to have a constitution, an equal opportunities statement and a code of conduct. There are also other rules that will help you to run your group.*

### What is a constitution?

The constitution is a document that sets out the rules for running the group. It is necessary in order to:

- Ensure the group's aims are clear and agreed by members
- Clarify responsibility and ensure accountability
- Provide formal mechanisms for making decisions and resolving disputes

The constitution provides a reference for these issues, but cannot solve them on its own.

See FACTSHEET 3 for a model constitution that can be adapted to your own group's needs.

### Other rules

'Other rules' covers the day-to-day working of the group and can be adapted as circumstances change.

The constitution can only be changed at an AGM. It is good practice that changes to the equal opportunities statement, code of conduct and financial regulations are made at AGMs.

Standing orders relate to the workings of the committee and they can be changed at a committee meeting. Your group is not required to have any standing orders but they can help with the smooth running of your meetings.

### Equal opportunities statement

It is important that everybody on your estate feels able to join your group. If your group wants to be the official voice of the estate, it should try to make sure its works represent the views and needs of the community. Your group should actively encourage everyone to get involved. It may help to arrange meetings at different times of the day to attract mothers or workers, to provide translators at meetings and to hold fun days to attract younger people.

As part of the constitution, Ealing Homes will expect the group to adopt an equal opportunities statement and stick to it in all its work. The statement sets out what is expected of the group and the group must work to it in all its activities.

The Strategic Involvement Team (SIT) can advise you on how to include the community and to help groups with this sometimes difficult subject.

See FACTSHEET 4 for a model equal opportunities statement that can be adapted to your own group's needs.

### Code of conduct

The code of conduct states how the group and the committee members should behave when acting as representatives of the group.

- How members behave within the group.
- Personal interest.
- How members behave with other residents.

- How members behave with outside bodies.
- The procedure of the code of conduct is broken.

See FACTSHEET 5 for a model code of conduct that can be adapted to your own group's needs.

### **Rules for handling money**

Many groups worry about dealing with the money they raise. As a group you will be responsible and accountable for the funds you receive. To ensure that everyone knows how the group manages money, it is a good idea to adopt a policy on handling money.

This is a set of rules on how the group deals with its money, the bank account, petty cash, receipts, assets, gifts in kind etc. See FACTSHEET 6 for model rules for handling money that can be adapted to your own group's needs.