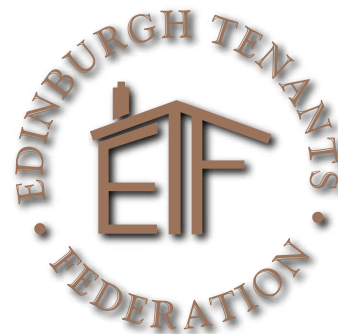




2007 Annual Report





WHO WE ARE

This is the annual report of Edinburgh Tenants Federation, Edinburgh's Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations.

The overall purpose of the Federation is to promote the improvement of the quality of life of residents and the housing conditions of all tenants of rented accommodation (local authority, co-operative, housing association and private sector) and in particular those at risk of exclusion for whatever reason.

We provide:

- Advice, information and training
- Development support for local tenants and residents groups
- Opportunities for people to participate, individually and through their groups, in decision-making about their homes and environment
- A mechanism for bringing local organisations together to work on issues of common concern.

We are an umbrella organisation of local groups and our purpose is to represent tenants at a citywide policy level. During 2005/06 we had 56 tenants' and residents' groups in membership. We also had 31 organisations and individuals as associate members.

We are recognised by the City of Edinburgh Council as the vehicle for consultation and participation work on citywide policies.

JULY
WORK STARTS ON THE EQUALITIES /IMPACT ASSESSMENT WHICH WILL ULTIMATELY GIVE US ALL AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK AT TENANT PARTICIPATION THROUGH FRESH EYES.

AUGUST
THE COUNCIL'S REPAIRS POLICY FINALLY GOES TO PRINT - THE CULMINATION OF TWO YEARS' HARD WORK ARGUING LINE BY LINE TO GET THE BEST DEAL FOR TENANTS. LITTLE DID WE KNOW WHAT WE WERE LETTING OURSELVES IN FOR WHEN WE STARTED - TO THINK SOMEONE THOUGHT WE COULD GET IT DONE AND DUSTED IN AN AFTERNOON!

CONVENOR'S REPORT

It is my privilege to introduce Edinburgh Tenants Federation's annual report, giving an outline of our activities over the past year.

In last year's report I wrote about the merger of the Council's Housing department into the new Services for Communities department and the upheaval that would cause. The changes are still ongoing and as a result a lot of our joint working has had to be put on hold. Many of the staff that we have worked with over many years have moved on to new roles. We are building relationships with the staff that are only now coming into post, but it means we are starting much of our work with the Council from scratch, with new faces at the table.

Some working relationships have continued despite the upheaval, particularly in terms of our multi-storey work, with the concierge service, and stair cleaning. We were offered the opportunity to overhaul the cleaning specifications and be part of the team awarding new contracts. This was a very intensive piece of work over a number of months and we had to work closely with the Council's stair cleaning team. Everyone concerned thought this was a good example of how tenants can be involved in all aspects of service design and delivery. It wouldn't be appropriate to work at that level all the time but it was a valuable experience and gives us another tool to add to the tenant participation toolbox.

While the Council continued to restructure itself, the Federation's Executive Committee spent time building on the internal reviews that were carried out last year. We worked hard to produce a new set of policies and procedures that comply with current legislation and good practice and stand us in good stead for the future. We worked together with a real sense of teamwork within the Committee. Having put last year's internal difficulties behind us we are now able to face new challenges positively.

We continued to provide opportunities for the Federation's membership to come together and share their experiences and ideas, with our quiz night and Burns supper being particularly successful examples of this. Our members tell us that they value this.

With a new government at Holyrood and new leadership for Edinburgh, we live in interesting times. We still have a job to do to persuade the politicians

that we desperately need more investment in Council housing but perhaps the changes in government will also mean a change in policy.

I'd like to thank the Executive Committee, the staff and all our members for their hard work over the past year. We have achieved a great deal, but there's much more we want to do in the coming year.

Betty Stevenson



SEPTEMBER
WORK STARTS ON REVIEWING OUR OWN INTERNAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES. THIS TOO WILL TURN OUT TO BE A MAMMOTH PIECE OF WORK.

OCTOBER
TENANTS CONFERENCE AT SURGEONS HALL. WE LOOKED AT COMMUNITY PLANNING AND HOW IT MIGHT IMPACT ON HOUSING AREA BOARDS - OR SHOULD THAT BE THE OTHER WAY ROUND? FANTASTIC VENUE AND WE HAD A CHANCE TO LOOK ROUND THE MUSEUMS AFTERWARDS - SOME PRETTY GRUESOME EXHIBITS.

OUR WORK

Housing and Regeneration

The Executive Committee has met with the Head of Housing and Regeneration to re-establish a working relationship that focuses initially on the repairs service and the council's plans for the five housing regeneration areas. We have also met with other members of the new Senior Management Team as they have come into post in order to establish firm relationships from an early stage.

Community Planning and Neighbourhood Partnerships

The Federation was heavily involved in work aimed at reviewing the progress of Housing Area Boards and making recommendations about their future. Members of most of the Area Boards want them to continue. Some members want to see integration into Neighbourhood planning structures while others want them to maintain their autonomy to concentrate on tenants' concerns whilst also being represented within neighbourhood partnerships.

The Federation has supported area board members this year by organising get-togethers where they can exchange ideas and experiences. Our work culminated in helping to organise a tenants' conference at Surgeons Hall in October 2006. From this conference it was clear that the overwhelming recommendation from tenants was for Housing Area Boards to remain whilst seeking their own future relationship with the neighbourhood partnerships within whose neighbourhoods each area board operates.

The lengthy consultation on the future of Housing Area Boards, delayed by a parallel consultation on the establishment of neighbourhood partnerships, is still ongoing. The arrangements for the establishment of neighbourhood partnerships were endorsed by the Council in March 2007. At the same meeting the Council agreed that the future of each Housing Area Board and their relationship with the neighbourhood partnerships should be the subject of a joint discussion between the boards and their respective neighbourhood partnerships. Consequently, for tenant representatives the uncertainty over the future of the Housing Area Boards continues. They worked hard over the last year to determine the direction of this latest development in tenant participation, only to find that they still do not know whether there will be boards, what their purpose will be, how they will relate

to neighbourhood partnerships and whether they will be supported by the Federation. This layer of tenant participation remains open to influence. There are some changes in the pipeline as boundary changes to the Council's service delivery areas mean that it makes sense that area boards reorganise themselves to fit within the new areas. This means the break-up of some existing boards and major changes to all with the new Neighbourhood Managers empowered to facilitate this transition or to help the area boards build their own relationships with the new neighbourhood partnerships.

Membership

Membership renewals take place in late spring each year, ahead of the Federation's AGM in June. At the time of writing this annual report we have 56 full members and 31 associate members.

In July 2006 all member groups received a revised and updated Resource Pack containing useful contact details and information aimed at helping groups work more effectively. For the first time this included contact details for organisations able to give practical support to new tenants, following requests for this kind of information earlier in the year.

One of the Federation's key priorities is to help and support tenants' and residents' groups and to help establish new groups when asked. This year we have worked with 21 of our member groups, either by helping them get established, offering advice, attending meetings or providing practical support, for instance producing leaflets and filling in grant applications.

Another priority has been to find ways of enabling as many groups as possible to acquire computers in order to help them with their work and to help them access information and resources via the internet. We were offered six computers and assorted peripherals which have been distributed to groups across the city. The demand for help like this still outstrips supply but we will continue to work on this.

Outreach Work

Our new Outreach Worker, Marc Headley, took up post in February. Following a year of intermittent support, we are once again able to provide consistent

dedicated support to the North Sighthill Residents Association. This has enabled them to take on the responsibility of representing the residents' interests within the local Steering Group which is overseeing the demolition and re-housing in their area, and to develop their relationship with the council and other agency representatives. It has also enabled them to take steps to increase the size of the committee and to become more representative. In addition, Marc will support the resident associations in the five housing regeneration areas work together and he will be available to respond to requests for assistance across the city either to set up new groups or assist those in need of support.

Stair Cleaning

The Council's stair cleaning service has been a bone of contention for many tenants since the service was introduced. There were many complaints about missed cleans or an unsatisfactory service compounded by a confusing cleaning rota.

When the Federation was invited to join a working group looking at redesigning the stair cleaning service and awarding new contracts for the service beginning in April 2007, we welcomed the chance. Working alongside council officers we had the opportunity to examine and rewrite the specifications prior to the tendering process beginning. We consulted with tenants and residents receiving the service before simplifying the specifications, so that tenants know what to expect and so that there is less scope for confusion.

We were given the opportunity to be fully involved in the process to award new contracts, including shortlisting and interviewing applicants and helping make the final decisions as to which companies to award contracts to. We were involved in briefing the successful contractors prior to the new service being launched. The new service went live at the beginning of April and while there have been some teething problems we have worked with the stair cleaning team to resolve issues as quickly as possible.

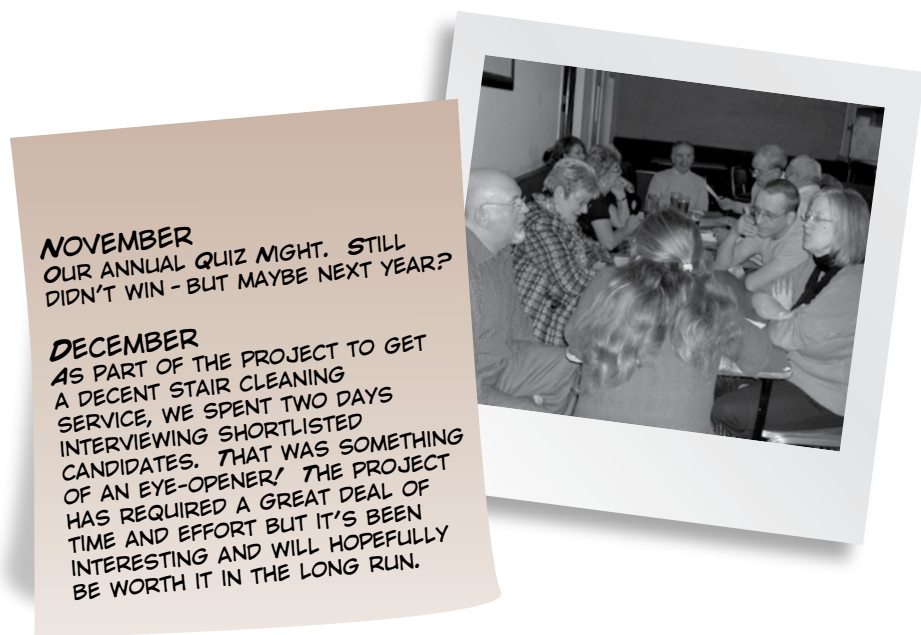
Throughout the project we ensured that there was ongoing communication with tenants and devised better mechanisms to enable them to play an active part in monitoring the new service. All feedback received is being recorded and the contractors' performance is being monitored regularly.

We continue to be involved in monitoring the contracts, though we hope that in time this will be something that Housing Area Boards take more control over. We hope that our involvement in this work will help ensure that we get a properly delivered service.

Tenant Participation

Over the past eighteen months Community Planning and Neighbourhood Partnerships have been the Council's 'buzzwords'. While everyone was trying to get to grips with how these concepts might work in practice (including changing every boundary at every level throughout the city), the Federation has also been busy supporting tenants in trying to establish where tenant participation and, more specifically, the Housing Area Boards, will fit into the new arrangements.

We continued to contribute to the deliberations of the Tenant Participation



Strategy Project Working Group that was charged with determining where the Housing Area Boards would fit within the new arrangements. We worked with the Council to organise the tenants' conference at Surgeons Hall in October. We were involved in writing the post-conference report that was distributed to attendees in November.

Since the winter the Federation has been involved in helping to put together the Council's new Tenant Participation Strategy which will replace the existing Strategy which comes to an end this summer. Having helped to draft a headline strategy over the winter, we then helped to organise and facilitate a consultation event for Registered Tenants Organisations at the Thistle Hotel at the end of March. This event invited RTOs to help put together the new Strategy's implementation plan, and we worked with the Council to ensure all the suggestions received were included in the plan. A launch event will be organised after the summer.

Repairs

We have been lobbying for the reinstatement of the Repairs Review Group, which is a group where tenant representatives, Edinburgh Building Services and Housing Management staff sit down regularly to discuss strategic issues affecting the repairs service. This group has not met since April 2006. None of the officers who used to be involved with this group remain in post. We felt it was important not to take our eye off the ball in terms of repairs, so we have spent most of the year lobbying for these meetings to be prioritised once more. We are now in the process of setting up a new group with council officers that will take a strategic overview of the repairs service.

In September we were able to sign off the final draft of the tenants' version of the Repairs Policy, which was the culmination of over two years' work, while in October we organised a one-off Repairs Forum to look at the capital improvements programme - specifically kitchens and bathrooms.

Housing Strategy and Investment

Following an initial meeting in December 2006, we are now meeting with Housing Development on a monthly basis. The purpose of these meetings

is to inform and consult with ETF on the Council's long-term investment strategy, delivery of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, and the approach being adopted to demolition and rebuilding in the five housing regeneration areas.

We had to lobby councillors to protect tenants' right to return to any new homes for social rent that are built in these areas in the future. The Council was proposing to abolish the right to return. Instead, because of our intervention, tenants leaving the regeneration areas will now get first call on any new social rented housing that is built there in future, even though this could be some years away.

We have facilitated the coming together on a regular basis of representatives from the housing regeneration areas. The purpose is to share experiences and lessons as preparations are made in the run up to demolition in an effort to develop consistency and best practice in the joint management of the demolition process. In addition, the group wrote to the Communities Minister pressing the case for investment in the housing regeneration areas so that the original plan of involving the existing community in planning and building the new community could be retained. This was done in the context of the overall housing crisis in Edinburgh and the need for major investment in building affordable rented homes.

JANUARY
OUR BURNS SUPPER! THIS TIME WITH LIVE MUSIC THAT CREATED A BUZZ. A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL.

FEBRUARY
WE RECRUITED A NEW OUTREACH WORKER, MARC HEADLEY.

Elections

The Federation invited the political parties to write about their social housing policies in Tenants Voice, timed to go out in April in order to be fresh in people's minds before the election. Four parties took up the invitation.

In March we organised a hustings meeting at Augustine's Church and publicised it widely. Over 60 people turned up to hear and to question politicians from all parties. The meeting was chaired by Graham Stewart of Talk 107FM and the feedback we had from the audience was very positive.

New ways to involve, consult & communicate with members

Written communication continues to be the most used method of communication with our members. During the year we published four editions of Tenants Voice and twelve issues of Federation Matters. We are slowly making improved use of email communication.

During the year the Executive Committee set up a sub-group to deal with information and publicity. Its first priority has been to launch a website though its plans had to be put on hold while we were organising the hustings meeting in March.

We are exploring the possibility of introducing Tenant Led Inspections as a means of involving more of our members in our work. An initial meeting has been set up to learn more about this from tenant inspectors from West Lothian.

Equalities

We were involved in the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment meeting looking at the Tenant Participation Strategy with representatives from a range of equalities groups.

One of the Executive Committee's working groups drafted a new Equalities policy for the Federation, to bring our policy in line with recent legislation. This was endorsed by the membership at the Federation Meeting in May.

We continue to work with a very small core group of young tenants making a film giving a young person's guide to getting a home in Edinburgh. The project continues to fall behind schedule because we can only work at the

pace that the participants agree to, and personal circumstances have made it difficult for some of the group to participate over the past couple of months. The film is very nearly finished and we look forward to being able to show it soon. However, the problems faced over the past few months have further highlighted the problems involved in sustaining such a small core group and we will need to look at whether it's viable to continue this work once the film is complete.

Reviews 2006 - 07

The Federation's internal policies and procedures have been reviewed over the course of the past year and, in several cases, new policies have been drafted. These were brought to the May 2007 Federation Meeting for endorsement or for information. Ratification will be sought at the Annual General Meeting.

This work forms part of a larger review of the constitution that is ongoing. Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council is helping to review the constitution and any proposed constitutional changes will be submitted for decision by the membership at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.

MARCH
PUTTING THE POLITICIANS ON THE SPOT AT OUR HUSTINGS MEETING, IT WAS GOOD TO SEE THAT EVERY PARTY SENT SOMEONE TO PUT THEIR CASE ABOUT HOUSING, SHAME WE HAD MORE QUESTIONS THAN THEY HAD TIME OR ANSWERS FOR.

APRIL
WHILST THE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FIVE HOUSING REGENERATION AREAS WAIT FOR A RESPONSE TO THEIR REQUEST FOR INVESTMENT IN REGENERATION, THEY REAFFIRMED THEIR COMMITMENT TO PURSUE THEIR CASE WITH THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION.



MEMBERS' VIEWS

In January the Federation sent out surveys to all member groups and individuals who attended Federation events over the past year in order to measure opinions of the work we have done and to gather ideas for future priorities. We are grateful to those groups and individuals that took the time to respond. The feedback we received was positive, but we would always welcome more responses. The results of our survey work were presented at the Federation Meeting in May and will be used to measure our performance against the Council's Service Level Agreement and to shape the Federation's work plan that will be presented for approval at the Annual General Meeting in June.

Activities

The activities that have been most well-attended in the past year have been social events and Federation Meetings. The Quiz Night and the Burns Supper (which was part of a Federation Meeting) were the activities that were most enjoyed. It is clear that opportunities to socialize and network with other tenants' groups are particularly welcomed by our members.

Meetings

Overall our members are satisfied with the frequency and length of meetings held by the Federation. Additionally they told us that they like having outside speakers at meetings and would welcome meetings with a cross-section of Edinburgh's social landlords. Anti-social behaviour and the future of social housing were seen as key subjects for discussion at future meetings.

Information

Our members are generally satisfied with the information received from the Federation. They consider Tenants Voice and Federation Matters to be the most helpful or informative materials they receive though there is a suggestion that the Federation explores providing information by text messages and on video or DVD.

Services

Our members told us that in the past year the Federation has provided advice when they needed it, has been there to listen when they needed to sound out ideas, and has been able to refer them to people better able to help when necessary.

Room for Improvement

Our members gave us a number of areas in which they would like to see the Federation improve, and a number of priorities for the coming year.

They would very much like the Federation to acquire new, accessible premises to enable it to provide additional resources such as a drop-in information service and on-site training and meeting facilities. They would also like to see more meetings set up where tenants can meet informally with their housing providers.

Conclusions from the surveys

Comments expressed by member groups were, on the whole, more positive than last year, suggesting that there is recognition that the internal troubles the Federation struggled with are now behind us. Overall, however, members and individual tenants expressed satisfaction with our work and this was best summed up by one group that said "We would just like you to continue as you are."

Finances

The Federation is funded by the City of Edinburgh Council via a Service Level Agreement. The first agreement ended in March 2007 but a new, three year, agreement was negotiated to replace it and this was in place from April 2007. We have a commitment from the Council to help try and find suitable accommodation in one of their buildings, and this is being pursued.

Our new Service Level Agreement allows us to employ an Outreach Worker on a permanent basis, rather than as previously on short-term contracts.

MAY
A NEW PARLIAMENT; A NEW COUNCIL.
WHAT WILL THE FUTURE HOLD AND
HOW CAN WE INFLUENCE IT?

JUNE
OUR AGM AND A PARTY TO SAY
THANK YOU TO OUR HARDWORKING
VOLUNTEERS AT THE END OF
ANOTHER BUSY YEAR

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2007

	2007 £	2006 £
Income		
Edinburgh council service agreement	177,350	192,927
Bank interest	2,979	2,052
Other Income	7,000	4,020
	<u>187,329</u>	<u>198,999</u>
Less: Expenditure		
Wages	85,152	103,880
Employer's NI	6,475	8,076
Pension - employer's contributions	9,922	12,296
Staff travel and subsistence	398	450
Staff recruitment and training	2,890	547
Payroll processing costs	360	429
Rent	6,650	6,650
Rates	416	425
Water rates	482	513
Insurance	972	889
Electricity	1,458	1,608
Repairs and equipment	918	1,120
Cleaning	1,816	1,518
Stationery	2,126	3,192
Postage	3,424	2,699
Telephone and fax	1,779	1,629
Photocopier	382	382
Photocopying	1,545	1,408
Audit and accountancy	2,033	2,190
External training and conferences	8,786	7,620
Travel and subsistence	9,047	10,784
Room Hire and Catering	865	1,962
Printing	5,042	2,313
Computer software	1,545	1,189
Journals	425	374
Membership	443	424
Childcare - individual	400	470
Depreciation	1,469	1,437
Miscellaneous	879	629
Your Place Your Say travel	179	150
Your Place Your Say catering	16	773
Your Place Your Say gifts	-	1,718
Your Place Your Say misc.	130	1,498
	<u>158,424</u>	<u>181,242</u>
Surplus before Taxation	28,905	17,757
Taxation	(566)	-
Surplus for the year	<u>28,339</u>	<u>17,757</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2007

	2007 £	2006 £
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	<u>3,419</u>	<u>2,940</u>
Current assets		
Debtors	754	1,254
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>63,087</u>	<u>33,431</u>
	<u>63,841</u>	<u>34,685</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	5,548	4,252
Net current assets	<u>58,293</u>	<u>30,433</u>
Net assets	<u>61,712</u>	<u>33,373</u>
Represented by:		
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds - unrestricted	<u>61,712</u>	<u>33,373</u>
Net funds	<u>61,712</u>	<u>33,373</u>

In our opinion

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Federation's affairs as at 31 March 2007 and of its surplus for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Federation's Constitution.

PKF (UK) LLP
Registered Auditors
Edinburgh, UK

Members Members 2006/07

Althorn Residents Association
Belgrave Place Residents Association
Birnies Court Tenants Association
Broomhouse Tenants & Residents Association
Cables Wynd Residents Association
Calders High Rise Neighbourhood Council
Clovenstone Neighbourhood Council
Coillesdene House Association of Residents and Tenants
Craigmillar Castle Regeneration Group
Craigmillar/Peffermill Courts Tenant Group
Craigour Drive & Green Residents & Owners Association
Crewe Excluded Residents
Drylaw Telford Action Group
Dumbiedykes Residents Association
Dumbryden Neighbourhood Council
East Pilton Crewe Tenants Residents Group
Edinburgh Community Representatives Network
Firrhill Drive Tenants and Residents Association
Fort House Residents Association
Glenashton Community Association
Gracemount Courts & Cottages Residents Association
Gracemount Tenants Association
Granton Medway Action Group
Greenview Neighbourhood Council
Hailesland Park Neighbourhood Council
Hailesland/Walkers Neighbourhood Council
Hamilton & Cannon Wynd Residents Association

Hawkhill/Nisbet Court Tenants Association
High School Yards Tenants Association
Hyvot & Moredun Park Residents Association
Inch Community Association
Maidencraig Court Residents Association
Meadowfield, Lady Nairne, Paisley Tenants & Residents Association
Moira Park Tenants Association
Muirhouse Hi-Rise Action Group
Muirhouse Low Rise Tenants Association
New Pleasance Residents Association
Nichollfield Tenants and Residents Association
Niddrie Marischal Neighbourhood Association
North Bughtlin Tenants Association
North Sighthill Residents Association
Oxgangs Central Residents Association
Oxgangs Hi Rise Tenants Association
Prestonfield Tenants & Residents Association
Primrose and Burns Street Residents Association
Ratho Station Residents Association
Redbraes Residents Association
Restalrig House & Lochend House Residents Association
Saughton Mains Residents Association
Saunders Street Tenants & Residents Association
Southhouse and Burdiehouse Residents Organisation
Southhouse Tenants and Residents (STAR)
TARGET (Tenants Association Restalrig Getting Everyone Together)
Tenants in Pilton
The Top Blocks Residents Association
Westfield Court Residents Association

Associate Members 2006/07

Rob Allan
David Jacobsen
Chris Lees
Agnes Marr
Susan McDonald
Isabel McKay
Evelyn Muir
Valerie Murray
Glynis Rintoul
Dott Smith
Walter Spence
David Wallace
Mary Wheeler
Adam McNinch : Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association
Bill Fraser : Community Empowerment Project
David Walker : Craigmillar Capacity Building Project
Susan Carr : Craigmillar Neighbourhood Alliance
Harry Woodward : Dunedin Canmore Housing Association Ltd.
Nina Giles : Edinburgh & Lothians Racial Equality Council
Lindsay McCue : Edinburgh Shelter Housing Aid Centre
Frances Scougall : Health in Mind Supported Accommodation Project
Pam Clark : Link Housing Association
Carolyn Hughes : Manor Estates Housing Association
Brenda Tonner : Muirhouse Housing Association
Roy Douglas : Muirhouse Millennium Centre
Beth McGovern : Piershill Community Flat
Ian Stewart : Pilton Partnership
Pat Elsmie : Saheliya
Maureen Storrier : South Edinburgh Community Development Initiative
Leah Marchbank : Tenants Steering Group
Trella Javanainen : Warmburgh Advice Team

Executive Committee

Tina Beattie
North Bughtlin Tenants Association

Kenny Boorman (resigned February 2007)
TARGET

John Davidson (resigned May 2007)
Muirhouse Low Rise Tenants Association

Maureen Jarvis
Oxgangs Central Residents Association

George McKie
Gracemount Tenants Association

Margaret Meechan
Althorn Residents Association

Sheila Rutherford-McCallum
Ratho Station Residents Association

Betty Stevenson
Birnies Court Tenants Association

Harry Sunderland
North Bughtlin Tenants Association

Lynne Tait
Southhouse and Burdiehouse Residents Organisation

David Thomson (co-opted November 2006)
Redbraes Residents Association

Gitta Wilson resigned (February 2007)
Greenview Neighbourhood Council

Staff

Development Co-ordinator:	Raymond Pringle
Development Worker:	Nikki Thomson
Office Manager:	Mary Cockburn
Outreach Worker:	Marc Headley



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