



Edinburgh Tenants Federation 2017/2018 Annual Report



EDINBURGH TENANTS
FEDERATION



Introduction

This is the 2017-2018 Annual Report of Edinburgh Tenants Federation, Edinburgh's Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations.

ETF is the umbrella organisation of tenants' and residents' groups and our purpose is to represent tenants at a citywide policy level.

ETF aims to promote the improvement of the quality of life of residents and the housing conditions of all tenants of rented accommodation.



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Tenants' and residents' groups were members of ETF this year

ETF provides:

- A network for bringing local organisations together to work on issues of collective interests;
- Events for people to participate individually and through their groups in decision-making about their homes, locality and environment;
- Independent advice, information and learning opportunities for tenants;
- Development support to local tenants' and residents' groups to increase effectiveness.

Introduction



The year has been an exciting one for ETF. Here are some highlights.

We were delighted to scoop two top awards at the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) National Awards. ETF was crowned Tenant Participation Champion of the Year (Organisation) and our Outreach Worker Justine Bradd won Outstanding Officer of the year. This was an incredible achievement, of which we are most proud.

We changed our legal status this year, and became a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This is the culmination of many years of preparation. Charitable status brings us new opportunities as we begin to plan for the future and we are delighted that our member groups voted in favour of this.

Once again we led the way in developing human rights work in tenant participation in Scotland. Our housing rights in practice project with the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) and Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR) in Belfast continued to support residents in Leith to secure improvements to their housing conditions. We announced a successful partnership with the Baring Foundation to fund a part-time

Housing Rights Development Worker for a year. We are expanding using a human rights based approach with the Sheltered Housing Liaison Group. We have also had discussions with NHS Health Scotland, NHS Lothian and the Scottish Community Development Centre to strengthen partnerships and share our experiences and learning with others.

Tenants in Edinburgh played a significant role in highlighting the issue of rents. Members of the Rent Matters Working Group helped to develop the Council's rent consultation and worked hard to highlight the consultation through innovative methods.

ETF's Tenant Led Inspection team completed their inspection of the Council's approach to rent collection communication. The Council drafted an action plan on the back of the inspection, indicating how they intend to take forward the recommendations made by the inspectors.

Two tenants' groups were set up in different areas in Edinburgh and we continue to provide development support to Registered Tenant Organisations.

We continue to influence housing issues in Edinburgh from repairs, to multi-storey safety, to customer service, tenant participation and stair cleaning in our successful work with the City of Edinburgh Council.

We held a number of learning sessions on a range of topics from public speaking to consensus decision making.

We were delighted to recruit Craig Burns as a Communications Assistant to ETF through Community Jobs Scotland and Mari Lehva as a part-time Outreach Worker. Cath O'Shea joined ETF as a student intern, in a new partnership with Stirling University.

We hope you will enjoy reading the Annual Report and would welcome your feedback on the work we do. Thanks to everyone for your work and to the City of Edinburgh Council for funding us.

The Executive Committee of Edinburgh Tenants Federation

Highlights from July 2017



ETF representatives participated at the Equality and Human Rights Commission Conference in Wales and spoke about our housing rights work.

ETF representatives were part of a panel, organised by the University of Edinburgh which discussed *Dispossession*, a documentary about social housing.

Outcome one:

Tenants are taking part and influencing City of Edinburgh Council housing localities, related services citywide and are contributing to national housing policy

ETF's Executive Committee are continually working to increase tenant participation in Edinburgh and through a partnership approach with the City of Edinburgh Council, tenants take part in a range of ways.

Tenant Led Inspections

What a year it has been for ETF's Tenant Led Inspection (TLI) Team. The Inspectors completed their inspection on the City of Edinburgh Council's approach to rent collection communication. Recommendations included:

- Rent statements could be simplified so that tenants can understand them better;
- The Council should make it clearer to tenants that information / letters are available in Braille or another language;
- The Council should reword rent collection communication letters so they are less intimidating to tenants.



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Recommendations made by
TLIs this year

The Council produced an action plan indicating how they intend to take forward the recommendations made by the Inspectors. This was discussed and agreed with the inspectors.



ETF's TLI team meet with Council staff to
finalise the action plan.

High Flats Group

As a result of the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in London in June 2017, fire safety in high rise flats became a very prominent issue. ETF held several High Flats meetings where senior Council staff and Fire Scotland gave an update on fire safety measures.

Raising awareness of asbestos in high rise flats in Edinburgh has also been an issue for tenants. The High Flats Group held a meeting to discuss the steps the Council was taking to address asbestos in high rise flats.

Members of the ETF High Flats Group met with Liz Lowe from Tower Blocks UK to discuss issues affecting tenants living in high rise flats in Scotland and England.



A meeting of the ETF High Flats Group.

Highlights from August 2017

ETF representatives took part in an event at the Scottish Parliament, organised by TPAS Scotland, to find out about the process of engaging with the Scottish Parliament.



Rent Matters Working Group

ETF continued to support tenants in the Rent Matters Working Group (RMWG). Tenants worked closely with Council officers to finalise the consultation process for the rent consultation. This covered a range of activities, including stalls at area housing offices, posters, postcards and online activities.

The group is in the process of making arrangements for the 2018/19 Council rent consultation.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Scrutiny Group

The HRA Scrutiny Group is developing well. Tenants in the group looked at areas of income and expenditure in the Council's Housing Revenue Account through a programme of learning sessions to build up their knowledge of housing finance.

The group took part in a mock scrutiny exercise examining the Council's process of letting homes in preparation for a scrutiny exercise which will take place later in the year.

Highlights from October 2017



Tenant representatives on the Council's Rent Matters Working Group took part in the Council's Rent Consultation.



ETF was successful in getting funding and recruiting Craig Burns, Communications Assistant through Community Jobs Scotland.

Senior Managers' Meeting

Representatives of ETF continued to meet with Senior Managers of the City of Edinburgh Council to influence a number of housing issues including:

- Tenant representation in the Edinburgh 2050 consultation;
- CEC Tenants' Conference;
- Tenant Participation Strategy development;
- The City Deal. What's in it for tenants?
- Locality working;
- Customer service improvements.

These meetings present an opportunity for ongoing dialogue with senior officers about key issues for tenants.

Repairs Monitoring

The ETF Repairs Group brings together City of Edinburgh Council tenants to influence repairs issues. The group held a meeting which focused on Repairs Direct and the Council's Contact Centre, including:

- Tenants shadowing inspectors and meeting other tenants;
- Using customer satisfaction surveys to change and shape the service.

ETF representatives met regularly with Housing Property staff throughout the year and continued to monitor the Council's Responsive Repairs Budget and the performance targets for Housing Property as well as tenant satisfaction levels.

Meetings with CEC Administration

ETF held bi-monthly meetings with the Convenor and Vice Convenor of the City of Edinburgh Council's Housing and Economy Committee. The purpose of these meetings are for ETF representatives to bring up strategic housing related issues of concern and ensure there is joint

working between ETF and the Council. Issues that have been discussed at meetings include:

- Rent pressure zones in Edinburgh;
- Homelessness statistics in Edinburgh and the administration's plan to tackle homelessness;
- Pressing CEC to write to Westminster to write off Edinburgh's housing debt;
- Affordability of Council rents.

Highlights from November 2017



ETF's Outreach Worker Justine Bradd won Tenant Participation Champion of the Year (Outstanding Officer) at the Tenant Participatory Advisory Service (TPAS) Awards.



ETF won Tenant Participation Champion of the Year (Outstanding Organisation) at the TPAS Awards.



Mari Lehva started working at ETF as a Part Time Outreach Worker.

Customer Service

Throughout the year, ETF representatives have held a number of meetings with Senior Managers within the Council on ways to improve the services that Council tenants receive. As a result of ongoing discussions between ETF and the Council, a number of actions are being taken to improve customer services to Council tenants including:

- An action plan for improvement has been agreed for repairs reporting;
- An out of hours repairs service is being tested;
- The different ways tenants can ask Council staff to do something for them are being improved;
- Key service guides are being developed for staff working in reception in the localities;
- Ongoing Customer Care training is being introduced for all housing staff.

In addition, the Council is also working with tenants on how they can improve services on an ongoing basis, such as,

- Regular focus groups – for example repairs complaints and stair cleaning;
- Tenant satisfaction surveys;
- Estate walkabouts to check local areas and see what needs to be done;
- Meetings with local resident groups;
- Tenant Led Inspections.

Continued discussions will take place between ETF representatives and Council staff on ways to improve the services that Council tenants receive.

National Housing Issues

Throughout the year, ETF kept a close eye on what is happening on the National scene. Some of the highlights this year included:

- Responding to a number of national consultations:
 - ◇ Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland;
 - ◇ Proposed Social Housing (Automatic Fire Suppression Systems) (Scotland) Bill;
 - ◇ Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness;
 - ◇ Shaping Social Security in Scotland;
 - ◇ Human Rights and the Scottish Parliament.
- Meeting with Andy Wightman, MSP to discuss housing issues in Edinburgh; particularly regarding affordable rents, the supply of affordable housing, the need for rent controls in private sector rents and the housing rights in practice project;
- ETF representatives joining with tenants from across Scotland in a visit to the Scottish Parliament, to find out more about the process of engaging with the Scottish Parliament;
- ETF representatives met with the Scottish Government's Tenant Priorities Team about how tenants can effectively scrutinise Housing Revenue Accounts;
- ETF is proud to continue to be a member of the International Association for Community Development and a supporter of the International Union of Tenants.

Stair Cleaning

Stair cleaning continues to be a major issue for ETF. ETF representatives on the Stair Cleaning Project Board monitor the quality of service tenants receive from the stair cleaning contractors. ETF has carried out 'spot checks' in stairs and taken photographs to highlight these issues.

The City of Edinburgh Council arranged a series of focus groups with tenants who receive the service. ETF representatives worked with the Council to suggest possible solutions to the various challenges that were highlighted in the focus groups. This will form part of an action plan towards improving the stair cleaning service.

Highlights from December 2017



ETF's Housing Rights Project was highlighted as a good practice model for Scotland at the Scottish Human Rights Commission's National Participation event in Glasgow.



ETF tenant representatives and staff took part in Sleep in the Park.

Outcome two:

Tenants' and residents' organisations are stronger, more effective, and are influencing City of Edinburgh Council housing localities and neighbourhood services.

Housing Rights in Practice

It's been a busy year developing a human rights based approach in tenant participation. These are some highlights:

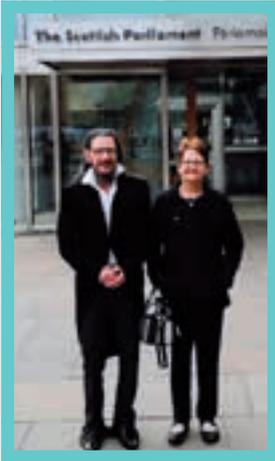
- We were successful in gaining a grant from the Baring Foundation to fund a part-time Housing Rights Development Worker, with the aim of expanding our housing rights work in partnership with the SHRC and PPR;
- Improvement works continued in Persevere and Citadel Courts and West Cromwell Street in Leith including the installation of new kitchens, new bathrooms, heating, windows and doors. External works in West Cromwell started and are due for completion in autumn 2018.
- Key to this success has been regular project board meetings with Council officers which has allowed tenants to monitor the works taking place and receive monthly updates;
- A second round of surveys to tenants took place in late spring 2018, the results will be published later in the year.

The pace of the work has been phenomenal and while it has been difficult at times it has definitely been worth it, with tenants reporting anecdotally “This has changed my life.”

- There has been interest in how the project is progressing from the Scottish Parliament's Equality and Human Rights Committee (E&HRiC) who visited Leith to see first-hand the work of the project. ETF's Housing Rights Development Worker and a West Cromwell, Persevere and Citadel Court (WPCRA) committee member attended a round table discussion at the E&HRiC in April 2018, which included an opportunity to share their experience of using this approach and recommend that it should be embedded into the work of the Scottish Parliament;
- A visit from Virginia Bras Gomez, Chair of the United Nations Committee for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, highlighted

the significance of our work in advancing housing rights;

- Links have been established with the University of Stirling which will see ETF tenants and staff deliver input about a housing rights based approach to their Housing Studies course.



Members of WPCRA outside the Scottish Parliament.



Meeting with Virginia Bras Gomez, Chair of the United Nations Committee for Economic and Social Rights.

Sheltered Housing Liaison Group (SHLG)

The group has had mixed fortunes this year. In the summer of 2017, a number of officers who had worked very closely with the group were reassigned due to the Council Transformation process. The group struggled to set up meetings and to have a clear focus of their remit. Fast forward to January 2018 and a successful review day took place. At this session, tenants identified several issues and it was agreed that the sheltered housing liaison group would use a human rights based approach to tackle these. The process started with a learning session about the Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination and Equality, Empowerment and Legality (PANEL principles), followed by planning for a survey and training about participatory research methods, with the

fieldwork of the survey taking place in late spring. Once the results have been collated, the group will be able to look at issues through a human rights lens and present a report to the Council in late 2018. The PANEL principles will be embedded in the work of the group.



The SHLG.

Highlights from January 2018



ETF held a Federation Meeting where members approved ETF's plans to become a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

ETF's work with tenants' groups



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Local groups ETF worked with this year

It has been a very successful year for ETF in their work with local groups. Here are some of the highlights:

- Carnegie Court Residents Action Group (CRAG) held their inaugural meeting;
- Moredun Multis and Marionettes Residents Association was launched at a fun day event.



ETF staff provided intensive development support to the following groups:

- Laichfield Community Association;
- Gateside Tenants and Residents Association;
- Moredun 4 Multis Residents Association;
- Top Blocks Residents Association;
- Craighour Drive & Green Residents & Owners Association Green;
- West Cromwell Persevere and Citadel Court Residents Association;
- Willowbrae and Duddingston Residents Association.

ETF is in the process of starting up tenants' and residents' groups in the following areas:

- Gordon Street and Manderson Street;
- Granton Crescent Sheltered Housing;
- Bedford Court and Street.

Highlights from February 2018



ETF representatives took a deputation to a full meeting of the Council.

Outcome three:

Tenants are increasingly aware of Edinburgh Tenants Federation, have wide opportunities for tenant participation and are aware of good practice in tenant participation.

Community Leadership Training

The Social Enterprise Academy, in partnership with ETF, organised a Re-Connect day for participants who completed the innovative Community Leadership Programme last year to explore their leadership strengths and values, and to reflect on their success a year on.



Housing Roadshow

ETF and the Council held a Housing Roadshow in the Drumbrae Hub, which was very well attended. The aims of the Housing Roadshow were for Council tenants to:

- Find out more about the City of Edinburgh Council housing services;
- Get advice on rent and tell us what they need;
- Join the Tenants' Panel to help keep improving housing services;
- Raise awareness of ETF and local Registered Tenant Organisations.

Previous Housing Roadshows have proven to be very successful and ETF and the Council will be holding more roadshows throughout the year.

Highlights from March 2018



ETF set up a digital drop in at Laichfield with People Know How.



Cath O'Shea started her internship with ETF.

Outcome four:

Good organisation, governance and member participation are making Edinburgh Tenants Federation stronger and more effective.

Developing ETF as an organisation

A key focus this year for the Federation's Executive Committee (EC) has been organisational development. Here is an overview of what was achieved during the year:

- ETF's membership voted in favour of ETF becoming a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and our application to OSCR has been approved. This was the culmination of many years of work and we are delighted at the final outcome;
- The EC held an Induction Programme in August 2017 and a Review Day in March 2018 to monitor progress on work and plan ahead;



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Federation meetings held this year

- A number of events were held throughout the year to give tenants an opportunity to come along and share their views including:
 - ◇ Federation Meetings, which included:
 - » Meeting with members of the Council's Housing and Economy Committee;
 - » The City of Edinburgh Council's rent consultation;
 - » A vote on ETF becoming a SCIO, which also included a Burns Supper and quiz;

- » 'The Big Picture', generating ideas for ETF's Work Plan for 2018/2019 and developing a longer term vision for ETF.



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ETF Learning sessions held this year

- ◇ The learning sessions topics included:
 - » Tenant Participation – Back to Basics;
 - » Public Speaking: Finding Your Voice;
 - » Finance Training: Balancing the Books;
 - » Consensus Decision Making: Mediating Group Conflict.
- A survey was sent out to all member groups and interested individuals asking what they like about the services that ETF provides and what, if anything, can be improved. This information is used in deciding the direction of future work;
- Digital Champions work is an emerging theme for ETF as we realise the need to support tenants' and RTOs to get online. Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisation funding for a Digital Champions training day helped envisage new ideas for ETF which we will develop in 2018/19.



569 tweets this year

174 new followers this year

972 followers



36 new likes this year

560 likes

Highlights from April 2018



Tenant representatives took part in a mock scrutiny exercise.



MSPs from the Scottish Parliament visited Persevere and Citadel Courts and West Cromwell Street to find out more about the human rights work being carried out.

Highlights from May 2018



Members of the SHLG attended a workshop on Housing and Ageing: linking strategy to future delivery for Scotland.



Virginia Bras Gomez, Chair of the UN Committee for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights visited Leith to talk about our housing rights work with SHR and PPR.

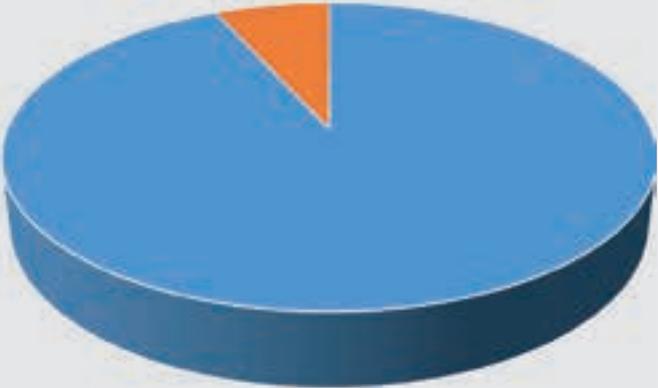


Liz Lowe, Tower Blocks UK met with ETF representatives.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2018

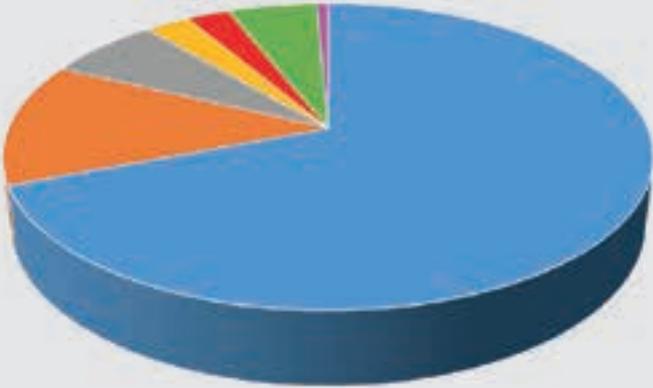
	2018	2017
	£	£
Income		
City of Edinburgh Council service agreement	241,083	241,083
Other income	17,512	12,028
	<u>258,595</u>	<u>253,111</u>
Less: Expenditure		
Staff Costs	179,920	166,672
Operating Costs	33,819	32,989
Professional fees	6,919	6,750
Meetings and Events	17,444	19,326
Publicity	6,570	8,873
Project Work	13,912	8,141
Miscellaneous	1,700	1,350
	<u>260,284</u>	<u>244,101</u>
(Deficit)/ Surplus before Taxation	(1,789)	9,010
Taxation	-	(14)
(Deficit)/ Surplus for the year	<u>(1,789)</u>	<u>8,996</u>

Income 2017/18



■ City of Edinburgh Council SLA ■ Other income

Expenditure 2017/18



■ Staff costs ■ Operating costs ■ Meetings and Events ■ Professional fees
■ Publicity ■ Project Work ■ Miscellaneous

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2018

	2018	2017
	£	£
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	<u>3,192</u>	<u>4,752</u>
Current assets		
Debtors	8,120	5,350
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>98,444</u>	<u>99,134</u>
	106,564	104,484
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	<u>(28,524)</u>	<u>(23,892)</u>
	78,040	80,592
Creditors: amounts falling due greater than one year	<u>(155,000)</u>	<u>(157,323)</u>
Net liabilities	<u>(73,768)</u>	<u>(71,979)</u>
Represented by:		
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds - unrestricted	83,188	86,515
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds – pension	(169,000)	(171,295)
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds - designated	11,590	10,929
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds - restricted	454	1,872
Net funds	<u>(£73,768)</u>	<u>(71,979)</u>

Member Groups 2017/2018

21st Century Gracemount

Bingham Neighbourhood Association

Birnies Court Tenants & Residents Association

Brandfield Residents Association

Calders Residents Association

Calders Sheltered Housing Association

Coillesdene Complex Neighbourhood Association

Community Regeneration Forum

Craigmillar Castle Regeneration Group

Crewe Excluded Residents

Edinburgh RSL Residents Network

Gateside Tenants and Residents Association

Goosander Residents Association

Hailesland Park Neighbourhood Council

Laichfield Community Association

Magdalene Neighbourhood Association

Maidencraig Court Residents Association

Moredun 4 Multis Residents Association

Muirhouse Hi-Rise Action Group

Niddrie House Neighbourhood Association

Niddrie Mill Tenants & Residents Association

North Sighthill Residents Association

Ratho Station Residents Association

Redbraes Residents Association

Saughton Mains Terrace Residents Association

Tenants & Residents in Fidra Court

Top Blocks Residents Association

West Cromwell Persevere Citadel Residents Association

Willowbrae and Duddingston Residents Association

Individual Associate Members 2017/18

John Fairgrieve

Maureen Miller

James Galloway

Cait Ni Cadlaig

Henry Guntley

Michelle Penman

Adam Hunter

Barbara Poplawski

Ankhra Laan-Ra

Marek Poplawski

Jan Mawdsley

Maureen Porteous

Jill McClenning

Joan Robertson

Donald McDonald

Lynne Tait

Ken McKay

Matt Wheatley

Associate Organisation Members 2017/18

Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association

Changeworks

Friends of Moredun

Muirhouse Housing Association

Port of Leith Housing Association

Executive Committee 2017/2018

John Aitken	North Sighthill Residents Association
Heather Ford	West Cromwell, Persevere and Citadel Court Residents Association
Niel Hansen	Moredun 4 Multis Residents Association
Nicol Johnstone	Niddrie Marischal Neighbourhood Association
Irina Lazarenko	Edinburgh RSL Residents Network
George McKie	Gracemount Tenants Association (Honorary Member)
Betty Stevenson	Birnies Court Tenants Association
David Thomson	Redbraes Residents Association
Maud Wylie	Hailesland Park Neighbourhood Council

Staff 2017/2018

Communications Assistant:	Craig Burns
Development Coordinator:	Clare MacGillivray
Development Worker:	Mark Henry
Housing Rights Development Worker:	Justine Bradd
Office Manager:	Mary Callaghan
Outreach Worker:	Mari Lehva / Justine Bradd
Housing Postgraduate Student:	Cath O'Shea



ETF staff members and EC member Irina Lazarenko took part in a Digital Champions Training Day.





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