



EDINBURGH TENANTS
FEDERATION



Edinburgh Tenants Federation

2014/2015 Annual Report





Introduction

This is the 2014-2015 Annual Report of Edinburgh Tenants Federation (ETF), Edinburgh's Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations.

ETF is the umbrella organisation for tenants' and residents' groups and our purpose is to represent tenants at a citywide policy level. During 2014-2015, 48 tenants' and residents' groups were members of ETF, with 26 Individual Non-Voting Associate Members and 8 Organisation Non-Voting Associate Members.

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

We provide:

- Independent advice, information and training for tenants
- 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.

EC Report

It gives us great pleasure to introduce this *Annual Report* on behalf of Edinburgh Tenants Federation. This report outlines our activities over the past year and this work has been extensive and rewarding.

One of the main pieces of work we have been involved in this year was rents. This included a conference, campaign and deputations seeking a rent freeze for Council tenants.

We have been particularly busy with our ETF issue based groups including Repairs and Tenant Led Inspections, where our latest batch of Inspectors were involved in scrutinising the City of Edinburgh Council's Repairs Reporting Process. Our Outreach worker has been busy supporting local groups and helping to set up new groups.

Another major focus has been developing and consulting on the Council's new Tenant Participation Strategy for 2015-2018. We're delighted this has now been launched with a focus on expanding the way tenants can get involved and more scope for work with under-represented tenants. The Council's Tenants' Panel has been successful as a way to get individual tenants involved and we have been actively promoting this.

Our new e-newsletter which started in December goes out to an ever increasing audience and we are pleased to have a new communication system in place.

The Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Residents Network has been established as an independent group and will bring together housing association tenants throughout Edinburgh.

This report is intended to give you a flavour of the work that goes on in ETF. We hope you enjoy reading this report and look forward to working with you all in the year ahead.

The Executive Committee of Edinburgh Tenants Federation

Highlights from August 2014

The ETF High Flats Group held a hustings with speakers from Better Together and Yes Scotland in attendance.

Outcome one:

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

The Executive Committee of ETF are always working to develop tenant participation in Edinburgh and through a partnership approach with City of Edinburgh Council, tenants are involved in a range of activities.

Senior Managers' Meeting

Representatives of ETF continued to meet with senior managers of the City of Edinburgh Council every two months and ETF was able to influence a number of housing issues including:

- Dogs in multi-storey blocks
- Priorities relating to the Registered Tenant Organisation surveys
- Fuel Poverty
- Establishing a rent group with tenants.

Highlights from September 2014



One of our Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs) Restalrig and Lochend House Residents Association won a gold award at the Beautiful Scotland Awards.



Representatives of ETF visited Dundee as part of a very successful study visit.

Gie's a Break, Gie's a Rent Freeze

ETF held a conference on rents for Council tenants and ran a six week long campaign that took Executive Committee members round local areas to speak to tenants about rents. 138 tenants supported a petition seeking a rent freeze for Council rents. ETF made deputations to Council meetings and although Councillors agreed to increase Council rents by 2%, ETF successfully put forward tenants' concerns around the affordability of rents. Representatives of ETF protested outside the City Chambers with a giant Kit Kat and slogan *Gie's a Break, Gie's a Rent Freeze* on the day of the deputation. The campaign enabled more creative campaigning and the planning group included members that are relatively new to ETF.



A new ETF Rents Group has been established to bring Council tenants together to talk about rents and a new working group has been set up with the Council to take this work forward.

Highlights from October 2014

ETF hosted a session and contributed a paper to the Smith Commission regarding new powers for the Scottish Government.



Euan Maclachlan started his student placement with ETF.



ETF representatives visited Maryhill Housing Association in Glasgow to discuss the issue of keeping dogs in multi-storey blocks.

Tenant Led Inspections

It has been a very busy time for our Tenant Led Inspection Group. We held a Public Meeting, where tenants were able to find out more about what is involved in being an Inspector and ask questions about the Council's Repairs Reporting Process. We held learning modules for the new Inspectors and this involved many different exercises as they got to grips with what was required throughout the inspection.

The Inspectors met with Council staff to agree an action plan for their suggested improvements to the Repairs Reporting Process in the City of Edinburgh Council.

Repairs

During the year, the Repairs Group contributed to the development of new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Council's Capital Investment programmes e.g. Kitchen & Bathroom installations. The KPIs have now been agreed and will enable the Council to help monitor the performance of all its contractors and ensure a robust reporting system for its tenants.

The Repairs Group also compiled a report to senior Council staff regarding their approach to install door entry systems in blocks where the Council do not hold the majority ownership. The Repairs Group recommended that unless an arrangement could be made with all the other owners agreeing to pay their share of both the installation and maintenance costs, the Council should not proceed with the installation. Overall, the Repairs Group felt that the Council should initially concentrate their efforts to engage with the other owners in blocks where they do have the majority ownership with the aim of generally improving the common areas of the blocks.

Highlights from November 2014



The Federation Meeting was held to discuss the Federation's position on Council rents in 2015/16 and £200 was raised in aid of Children in Need at the Quiz Night which followed.

ETF on the National and International Scene

Nationally our focus has been on the Independence Referendum and issues for tenants. We hosted a giant game of the 'Wee Play' at our Conference to stimulate discussion amongst tenants. We contributed tenants' views to the Smith Commission and followed this up at seminars about future powers for Scotland with the UK Government; making the case for devolution of welfare to Scotland.

Our International work kicked off with a workshop at the International Association of Community Development (IACD) Conference at Glasgow University. We connected with tenants from Hong Kong, Australia and New Zealand and as a result of this conference and became members of the IACD.

We met with the Secretariat of the International Union of Tenants (IUT), Magnus Hammer and discussed connecting with tenants globally.

Our bid to present a session at the Community Learning and Development Journal International Conference at Edinburgh University was agreed and this work will take place in 2015/2016.

We have started exploring using a Human Rights Based Approach in tenant participation in collaboration with the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) and this will be a key focus of work in 2015/2016.

Highlights from December 2014

ETF's first on-line e-newsletter was launched.

Highlights from January 2015



ETF held a meeting for Council tenants which focussed on rent levels.

Outcome two:

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

Outreach Work

Our Outreach Worker provides support to tenants' groups. This is a flavour of activities this year.

Sheltered Housing Liaison Group

Following the successful Protect Our Sheltered Housing (POSH) Campaign, the Sheltered Housing Liaison Group was set up as a forum for tenants to discuss the services provided to them. There is good tenant representation on this group and our Outreach Worker met with tenants to focus on their involvement. One of the main focusses of the group is to develop a Communication Strategy which will explain how the Council will involve Sheltered Housing tenants.

North Sighthill Residents Association (NSRA)

With the development of North Sighthill beginning to move forward NSRA began meeting again. The lack of community facilities on the site is a real issue for the group and a visit to Napier University took place to allow the group, the Council and our Outreach Worker the opportunity to see if their facilities would be suitable and cost effective for use by the Community. Procurement for a developer is due to take place and ETF will meet with Council Officers to discuss this.

Highlights from February 2015

ETF made deputations to Council meetings seeking a rent freeze.



Representatives of ETF protested outside the City Chambers with a giant Kit Kat and slogan *Gie's a Break, Gie's a Rent Freeze* on the day of the deputation.



ETF representatives met with Magnus Hammer, Secretariat of the International Union of Tenants (IUT).

Moredun 4 Multis Residents Association

M4M held a successful public meeting regarding the Local Development Plan which included plans to build 188 properties on a piece of land behind the bottom four Multis in Moredun. Residents raised concerns about subsidence and the loss of what is essentially a garden area for many households in the area. Following this a drop in session was held where the group assisted residents to formulate their objections. Over 100 responses were submitted to the Council. Although the Local Development Plan has now been agreed there will be future opportunities for residents to object.

New groups

We were delighted to say hello to new groups Loaning Road Sheltered Housing Association, Hailesland Neighbourhood Council and Saughton Mains Terrace Residents Association. These groups were set up in the first half of 2015 with assistance from our Outreach Worker. We wish these groups all the best in tackling issues and making their communities a better place to live.

Farewell to groups

We were sad to say good-bye to the Gracemount Action Residents Association (GARA) and Granton, Royston and Wardieburn Residents Association. Both groups worked hard to represent their areas and it's always disappointing when groups' fold. We are hopeful that smaller groups will emerge in the Granton, Royston and Wardieburn area.

Highlights from March 2015



Our new Admin Assistant Pryde Baxter started working with ETF.



The Tenant Led Inspection Learning Programme started.

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.

Edinburgh Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Residents Network

It has been a very busy year for the Edinburgh (RSL) Residents Network. Due in some part to changing circumstances with the amount and level of support that ETF have been able to provide, the group considered a range of options for how to progress in future years. At the inaugural meeting in April, it was decided to establish the group as an independent network in their own right, but to retain links to ETF.

The group established a Constitution and Code of Conduct together with a three year Business Plan which the group will take forward.

ETF has long supported work with RSL tenants in Edinburgh and helped secure resources with the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC).

The group is indebted to David Allan of The Scottish Community Development Centre for enabling this journey to take place; his drive and professional guidance has been invaluable in realising the group's goal. A special thanks also to all the ETF staff for their continued support and assistance over this long period of formation.

Highlights from April 2015



The first meeting of the Edinburgh Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Residents Network Group was held.



The 25th Anniversary Planning Group start to discuss how to celebrate this achievement.

Information and Publicity Sub Group

It has certainly been a very busy year for the Information and Publicity Sub Group. We launched our new website at our AGM and we started our e-newsletter, both of which have received very positive feedback. We now have a modern communications system in place.

Representatives of the group were also involved in promoting ETF's services at each of the Council Roadshows which were held in all of the housing neighbourhoods throughout the city. This will continue to be a priority for the group in the coming year.

Study visits

Representatives from ETF spent a day in Dundee, finding out more about Dundee City Council's District Heating Project at the Lochee High Rise Flats. Part of the study visit included visiting flats now being supplied with heating and hot water at a reduced cost to tenants. ETF representatives had the opportunity to take part in a question and answer session with Council officials on a range of issues, including anti social behaviour, dogs in multi-storey flats and the Kitchen and Bathroom Programme.

Representatives of ETF visited Maryhill Housing Association in Glasgow to find out more about the implementation of a new dogs policy and registration scheme. ETF has been concerned about the issue of dogs in multi-storey flats for a number of years and continue to have discussions with Council officials about introducing a similar scheme in the Edinburgh area.

Highlights from May 2015



Betty Stevenson and Ken McKay celebrated their 70th birthdays at the Federation meeting.



ETF representatives met with the Scottish Human Rights Commission.

Outcome four:

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

ETF holds lots of different events throughout the year which give tenants an opportunity to come along and share their views. Feedback is collected and processed from all events and the results are available in the office.

Every year we send out a survey 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 content of future workplans.

Developing ETF as an organisation

The Federation's Executive Committee (EC) has had a very productive year in developing the organisation. The EC held a Planning Day in August 2014 and a Review Day in January 2015 to check progress on work and plan ahead.

ETF was successful in recruiting an Admin Assistant through the Community Jobs Scotland scheme with Pryde Baxter starting work with ETF.

The Convenor has held a meeting with five representatives of Member Groups with a view to them joining the Federation's Executive Committee at the AGM in June 2015.

A number of meetings have taken place planning for some exciting events to celebrate ETF's 25th Anniversary this year. Events will kick off in September 2015 with a social event and live music, followed by a Civic Reception hosted by the Lord Provost in October and ending in November with an Exhibition and Reception at the Scottish Parliament.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2015

	2015	2014
	£	£
Income		
City of Edinburgh Council service agreement	241,083	241,083
Start up grants	-	225
Bank interest	379	370
RSL group funding	2,000	1,000
Training income	677	1,156
	244,139	243,834
Less: Expenditure		
Wages	125,142	124,216
Employer's NI	10,800	12,775
Pension – employer's contributions	25,838	25,302
Staff travel and subsistence	1,927	1,519
Staff recruitment and training	1,575	1,139
Payroll processing costs	509	494
Rent	15,944	15,944
Insurance	1,249	1,341
Repairs and equipment	520	2,006
Stationery	1,474	1,970
Postage	5,527	5,464
Telephone and internet	1,382	1,311
Photocopying	3,652	3,774
Professional fees	7,272	7,438
Training and conferences	6,579	9,320
Travel and subsistence	12,301	16,391

Room hire and catering	2,035	2,561
Printing and publicity	7,524	6,863
Computer software	836	-
Journals	127	397
Membership	555	383
ETF Development	767	930
Depreciation	829	1,215
Miscellaneous	593	537
Tenant Led Inspections	1,675	-
Start up grants	186	183
Website costs	5,443	4,515
	<u>242,261</u>	<u>247,988</u>
Surplus before Taxation	1,878	(4,154)
Taxation	(76)	(74)
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	<u>1,802</u>	<u>(4,228)</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2015

	2015	2014
	£	£
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	<u>1,821</u>	<u>2,650</u>
Current assets		
Debtors	5,121	3,850
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>116,479</u>	<u>114,550</u>
	<u>121,600</u>	<u>118,400</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(9,116)	(8,547)
Net current assets	<u>112,484</u>	<u>109,853</u>
Net assets	<u>114,305</u>	<u>112,503</u>
Represented by:		
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds - unrestricted	97,428	95,728
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds - designated	13,580	15,292
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds - restricted	<u>3,297</u>	<u>1,483</u>
Net funds	<u>114,305</u>	<u>112,503</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 2015 and of its surplus for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

BDO LLP
Chartered Accountants
 Edinburgh
 United Kingdom

Highlights from June 2015



ETF's Convenor Betty Stevenson was installed on the Roll of Honour on display in the City Chambers as Inspiring Volunteer of the Year.



A tree was planted in memory of former ETF activist Gwen Crystal.

Members Groups 2014/2015

21st Century Gracemount
Belgrave Place Residents Association
Bingham Neighbourhood Association
Birnies Court Tenants Association
Cables Wynd House Residents & Tenants Association
Calders Residents Association
Calders Sheltered Housing Association
Claremont Court Residents Association
Coillesdene Complex Neighbourhood Association
Craigmillar Castle Regeneration Group
Craigour Drive & Green Residents & Owners Association
Crewe Excluded Residents
Dumbryden Neighbourhood Council
East Pilton Crewe Tenants Residents Group
Easter Drylaw Residents Association
Gateside Tenants and Residents Association
Goosander Residents Association
Gordon Street & Manderson Street Residents Association
Granton, Royston & Wardieburn Residents Association
Greendykes Neighbourhood Association
Hailesland Park Neighbourhood Council
Hamilton Wynd Residents Association
Hays Neighbourhood Association
Hyvot & Moredun Residents Association

Inch Community Association
Laichfield Community Association
Madelvic Square Residents Association
Magdalene Neighbourhood Association
Maidencraig Court Residents Association
Meadowfield, Lady Nairne and Paisley Residents Association
More dun 4 Multis Residents Association
Muirhouse Hi-Rise Action Group
Murrayburn Residents Organisation
MY (Murdoch and Yeaman) Residents Group
Niddrie Mill Tenants & Residents Association
North Sighthill Residents Association
Oxgangs Central Residents Association
Prestonfield Tenants & Residents Association
Ratho Station Residents Association
Redbraes Residents Association
Restalrig House & Lochend House Residents Association
Southhouse and Burdiehouse Residents Organisation
Sutherland Street Tenants Association
Tenants, Residents in Fidra Court
Top Blocks Residents Association
Viewpoint Tenants Representative Group
West Cromwell, Persevere & Citadel Court Residents Association
Westfield Court Residents Association

Individual Non-Voting Associate Members 2014/2015

George Anderson

Lil Anderson

Lillian Dolan

Terry Dolan

Jim Fitchie

Henry Guntley

Adam Hunter

Gary Innes

Ankhra Laan-Ra

Alexander Lazarenko

Irina Lazarenko

Louise Madden

Kevin Main

Jan Mawdsley

Gillian M. McClenning

Ken McKay

Rahel McKay

Laurie Nelson

Cait Ni Cadlaig

Neil Palmer

Morag Patterson

Barbara Poplawski

Marek Poplawski

Muhammed Rahman

Joan Robertson

Ernest Ross

Organisation Non-Voting Associate Members 2014/2015

Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association

Changeworks

Dunedin Canmore Housing Ltd

Link Housing Association Ltd

Manor Estates Housing Association

Muirhouse Housing Association

Neighbourhood Alliance

Viewpoint Housing Association Ltd

Executive Committee 2014/2015

John Aitken - North Sighthill Residents Association

Rosemarie Hamilton - Elizabeth Maginnis Residents Group
(resigned 16/02/2015)

Maureen Jarvis - Oxfangs Central Residents Association

George McKie - (Honorary Member)

Sheila Rutherford-McCallum - Ratho Station Residents Association

Betty Stevenson - Birnies Court Tenants Association

Lynne Tait - Southhouse and Burdiehouse Residents Organisation

Scott Tait - Top Blocks Residents Association (resigned 25/05/2015)

David Thomson - Redbraes Residents Association

Maud Wylie - Hailesland Park Neighbourhood Council

Staff 2014/2015

Admin Assistant:

Pryde Baxter

Development Co-ordinator:

Clare MacGillivray

Development Worker:

Mark Henry

Office Manager:

Mary Cockburn

Outreach Worker:

Justine Bradd

Student:

Euan Maclachlan

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