



Edinburgh Tenants Federation 2018/2019 Annual Report



EDINBURGH TENANTS
FEDERATION



Introduction

Welcome to Edinburgh Tenants Federation's (ETF) 2018-2019 Annual Report.

As the umbrella organisation of tenants' and residents' groups throughout Edinburgh, our purpose is to represent tenants at a citywide policy level and we aim to promote the improvement of the quality of life of residents and the housing conditions of all tenants.

ETF provides:

- Independent advice, information and learning opportunities for tenants;
- Information, advice and support to tenants' and residents' organisations to assist them develop and achieve their goals;
- Networking opportunities bringing local organisations together to work on issues of collective interest;
- Events to assist people to participate individually and through their groups in decision making about their homes, locality and environment.



22

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

Executive Committee Report

On behalf of ETF, it gives us great pleasure to share our Annual Report with you, outlining our activities over the past year. Here's a flavour of our work:

- Our Executive Committee (EC) members have been out in their respective localities to meet with senior City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) housing staff. This has allowed EC members to find out what is happening in their areas and for CEC staff to find out more about the work of ETF;
- The Sheltered Housing Liaison Group (SHLG) has had a very busy and productive year. From carrying out surveys of tenants living in sheltered housing, to holding a Conference and taking a deputation to Councillors, the group has gone from strength to strength;
- The Rent Matters Working Group (RMWG) worked with CEC staff to develop the rent consultation;
- ETF took a deputation to Councillors asking for a rent and council tax freeze for one year. Although ETF's deputation was well received, CEC decided to proceed with a rent and council tax increase;
- The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Scrutiny Group had a very productive year. The group scrutinised CEC's Standard of Let and tenants noted what works well in the Standard of Let and made recommendations on what can be improved;
- ETF's Tenant Led Inspection (TLI) Team worked with CEC to take forward the recommendations from the Rent Collection Communication Inspection. This included organising a workshop to look at how CEC can improve the way it communicates with tenants about their rent;
- We continued to influence housing issues in Edinburgh from repairs, to customer service, stair cleaning and tenant participation in our ongoing work with CEC;

- We held a number of Federation meetings throughout the year which allowed tenants to network and discuss collective issues of interest.

We hope you enjoy reading this Annual Report and would welcome your feedback on the work we do. Thanks to everyone for your valuable contribution, time and effort in making ETF a success. Finally, a big thank you to CEC for providing the funding needed to allow us to carry out our very important work.

Highlights from July 2018



ETF representatives attended the Housing and Ageing Conference in Stirling.

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 EC continue to work to increase tenant participation in Edinburgh and through a partnership approach with CEC, tenants take part in a range of ways.

EC meetings in localities

Over the past 12 months, ETF has adapted to changes in the approach to tenant participation in Edinburgh. These changes focused on developing a more local presence, which included EC members meeting with senior housing staff in their respective localities on a regular basis. These meetings have enabled EC members to find out what is happening in their areas and for CEC staff to find out more about the work of ETF. Here are some of the highlights:

North West Locality: I have held a number of meetings so far with the Housing Operations Manager. We have discussed the improvements which are needed in the area and it's good to see these being put into action. (Betty Stevenson)

North East Locality: CEC staff spoke to us about their five year plan which started in 2017 and will run until 2022. We have attended walkabouts in the Willowbrae and Magdalene areas. (Nicol Johnstone and Sue Taylor)

North East Locality: We carried out a walkabout in the Broughton area. CEC staff were impressed by the work achieved by the residents in the creation of the Redbraes Community Garden. The housing staff looked around to see if there were any issues that required attention and arranged for these to be attended to. (Davie Thomson)



The walkabout in Broughton.

South West Locality: We have held four meetings with the Housing Operations Manager and Team Leader. These meetings have given us an insight into what improvements are taking place in the locality. We were shown a former void flat in Hailesland Place, which is ready to be added to the Housing Register. (Maud Wylie and John Aitken)

These meetings will continue throughout the year.

Tenant Led Inspections

The TLI team carried out a review of the Rent Collection Communication Inspection, including:

- What worked well;
- What could be improved;
- What, if anything, could be improved for future inspections?

One aspect which came out of the inspection was that the rent letters could be worded better and be less intimidating to tenants. It was agreed to hold a Rent Collection Communication workshop to discuss the rent letters in more detail and suggest ways to make improvements to the letters. A number of meetings took place to plan the workshop.

The workshop took place at the beginning of June and there was plenty of lively discussions in the different groups. The main feedback from the workshop was:



Planning the Rent Collection Communication Workshop.

- The layout, language and structure of the letters needs improving to attract the tenant's attention and get across the vital message;
- There is too much information crammed into one letter which can mean that tenants are likely to be overwhelmed and not digest the key points that the letter is trying to explain.

It was pleasing to note that CEC staff in attendance were on board with the suggestions and will be making the necessary amendments to the letters.

Highlights from August 2018

ETF and CEC held a Housing Roadshow at the North East Locality Office.



Rent Matters Working Group

ETF supported tenants in the RMWG to work closely with CEC officers to finalise the consultation process for the rent consultation. This included:

- Online activities;
- Posters;
- Postcards;
- Stalls at the locality offices.

The findings from the Rent Consultation will go towards planning for next year's consultation.

We also took a deputation to a full CEC meeting asking for a rent freeze. Federation members expressed concern about CEC's proposed 2% rent increase and 3% council tax increase. Councillors were also sent a number of personal stories from tenants explaining the impact that a rent and council tax increase would have on them. Our campaign was entitled *Get real and give tenants a fair deal*: and achieved a great deal of positive publicity for the Federation. Although Councillors voted for a rent and council tax increase, it was an effective grassroots movement, where tenants were able to have their say and try to influence issues.

Housing Revenue Account Scrutiny Group

It has been a very busy and productive year for the HRA Scrutiny Group. The group has been carrying out a number of activities to scrutinise CEC's Standard of Let. The group were also keen to find out more about the letting process, including why CEC tenants were so dissatisfied. This was done by:

- Interviewing Housing Officers and Team Leaders;
- Carrying out a Benchmarking exercise, which shows the work of other local authorities and how it compares to Edinburgh;
- Holding a Focus Group with tenants.

The group will shortly be presenting their findings to CEC.



Two members of the HRA Scrutiny Group interviewing a Housing Officer.

Highlights from September 2018



The TLIs carried out a review of the Rent Collection Communication Inspection.

High Flats Group

The ETF High Flats Group have been busy throughout the year holding a number of meetings to discuss topics such as:

- The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing post 2020, in particular the work being carried out in high flats across the city to achieve this;
- The work to be carried out by CEC in housing in the near future, including how tenants can influence this;
- CEC's Lift Replacement Programme in high rise flats.

The High Flats Group has continued to keep a close eye on fire safety in high rise flats as a result of the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017.



A meeting of the ETF High Flats Group.

Repairs Monitoring

The ETF Repairs Group brings together CEC tenants to influence repairs issues. The group held a meeting to identify the group's priorities and issues for the coming year, which include:

- Communication between CEC and tenants;
- What procedures do the workforce have to follow when going to an address to carry out the work and complete the job?
- Who is responsible for checking the repair job has been completed to a satisfactory level?

These priorities and issues were reported to a Repairs Performance Meeting. CEC will report back on how they intend to take forward the priorities identified by tenants.



Members of the Repairs Group identifying their priorities for the coming year.

In addition, ETF representatives met with senior Housing Property staff throughout the year and discussed:

- Tenant satisfaction levels and performance targets for Housing Property;
- CEC's Responsive Repairs budget and how it is being spent;
- Progress on installing kitchens and bathrooms, heating, windows and external doors.

Highlights from October 2018



ETF representatives travelled to Dundee to meet staff from the new Social Security Agency.

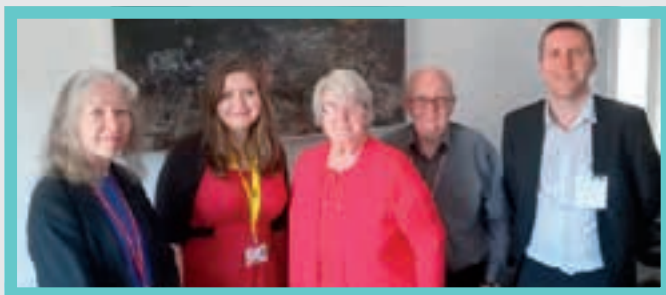


The SHLG Conference took place.

Meetings with CEC Administration

ETF held bi-monthly meetings with the Convenor and Vice Convenor of CEC's Housing and Economy Committee. The purpose of the meetings is for ETF representatives to bring up strategic housing related issues of concern and ensure there is joint working between ETF and CEC. Issues that have been discussed at the meetings include:

- Challenging discrimination in all types and forms;
- What help is CEC giving to private tenants who are struggling to pay their rent and live in their property?
- How can CEC make rents more affordable to tenants?



ETF representatives meet with Councillor Campbell, Convenor of the Housing and Economy Committee and Councillor Mandy Watt, Vice Convenor.

Senior Managers' Meetings

Representatives of ETF met with Senior Managers of CEC on a bi-monthly basis. These meetings are an ideal opportunity for ongoing discussions with senior officers about key issues, which enable tenants to have their say on guiding housing issues. ETF representatives played a key role in influencing:

- Development of CEC's new Tenant Participation Strategy;
- Community Planning in Edinburgh;
- Addressing homelessness in Edinburgh.



Discussions take place at a Senior Managers' Meeting.

Highlights from November 2018



ETF held a Federation meeting to discuss CEC's Tenant Participation Strategy.

Stair Cleaning

Stair Cleaning continues to be a major issue for tenants. ETF representatives attend the Stair Cleaning Project Board Meetings to discuss the contractor's performance and identify any issues for tenants. As a result of Focus Groups held by CEC, ETF representatives have helped influence CEC's action plan on how to improve the stair cleaning service for tenants.

ETF has carried out 'spot checks' in stairs throughout the city to highlight any issues and check if the service being offered to tenants is satisfactory.

ETF on the National/International scene

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

- Responding to the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing post 2020;
- Meeting with the Housing Minister, Kevin Stewart, MSP to discuss housing issues in Edinburgh, including:
 - ◇ How a Tourist Tax in Edinburgh could help towards funding affordable housing in Edinburgh;
 - ◇ The use of funds from an Air B+B levy towards funding affordable housing;
 - ◇ Sleep in the Park - what is the legacy for Edinburgh?

Highlights from December 2018



ETF representatives met with the Housing Minister, Kevin Stewart, MSP.

Outcome two:

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

Sheltered Housing Liaison Group

It has been an incredibly busy year for the SHLG. The group analysed the results of the survey of a number of sheltered housing complexes throughout the city, which highlighted issues relating to:

- Reporting repairs;
- Loneliness;
- Community Alarm Telecare System (CATs);
- Service cover for tenants when the Warden was absent.

The findings from the survey were shared with the SHLG, CEC staff and Councillors.

The SHLG held a very successful conference in October with 32 tenants attending from 15 different sheltered housing complexes. The conference discussed the survey results and looked in more depth at the issues highlighted. Participants also took part in a seated exercise session.



Tenants taking part in an exercise at the conference.

Members of the SHLG took a deputation to a meeting of the Housing and Economy Committee to highlight the issues raised in the survey and give feedback on the conference.

The group has continued to hold regular meetings with senior housing staff and Councillors to highlight the work of the group and discuss where progress is required. Members of the SHLG also met with Kezia Dugdale, MSP to give an update on the work currently being carried out.

ETF's work with local groups



8

Local groups ETF worked with this year

ETF provided development support to the following groups:

- Bedford Community Association;
- Carnegie Court Residents Action Group;
- CMG Residents;
- Kirklands Park Gardens Residents Association;
- Laichfield Community Association;
- Moredun Multis & Maisonettes Residents Association;
- West Cromwell, Persevere and Citadel Residents Association;
- Willowbrae and Duddingston Residents Association.

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

- Newcraighall;
- Balgreen.

Highlights from February 2019



ETF representatives took a deputation to a Council meeting to ask for a rent freeze.

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

Housing Roadshow

ETF and CEC held a Housing Roadshow at the North East Locality Office. The aims of the Housing Roadshow were for CEC tenants to:

- Become aware of ETF and local Registered Tenant Organisations;
- Find out more about the CEC housing services;
- Get advice on issues such as rent and tell us what they need.

ETF and CEC will be holding more Housing Roadshows later in the year.

Highlights from March 2019



ETF's Convenor and Development Worker attended the TV show Scotland Debates at Edinburgh University, Craiglockart Campus.

Training for front line staff in localities offices

ETF's Convenor Betty Stevenson carried out training for front line staff in each of the locality offices. This came about as a result of a number of visits to the local offices carried out by tenants last year. Tenants raised concerns about the attitude and lack of knowledge of some front line staff. The purpose of the training was to provide the necessary support mechanisms for front line staff to deal with the various enquiries they receive from tenants. Feedback from the training has been very positive and front line staff now feel better equipped to deal with the range of everyday queries they receive.

People Know How

Christine Hudson, Chair, Laichfield Community Association spoke about her role as a Digital Participation Champion at the People Know How Trains of Thought Exhibition. Christine's talk was very well received by the delegates in attendance and ETF had a stall at the Exhibition.



Christine Hudson and ETF's Outreach Worker Mari at the Trains of Thought Exhibition.

Housing and Ageing Conference

Representatives from ETF attended the Housing and Ageing Conference held in Stirling. Academics, policy makers, service users and organisations spoke about delivering policy objectives in practice and exchanging knowledge of the issues that the elderly population are facing in their own homes. These organisations want to work together to make changes and a difference to housing and ageing in Scotland by 2030.

The day was very beneficial as it allowed ETF representatives to think about the challenges that are facing the older population, particularly here in Edinburgh. These challenges are being discussed in various ETF and CEC meetings.



ETF representatives at the Housing and Ageing Conference.

Outcome four:

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

Developing ETF as an organisation

It has been a busy year for the Executive Committee in developing the organisation. Highlights included:

- A Review Day held in February to monitor progress on work and plan ahead;
- A number of events, including Federation Meetings, held throughout the year to give tenants an opportunity to come along and share their views. Topics were:
 - ◇ Roll out of Universal Credit in Edinburgh;
 - ◇ CEC's Rent Consultation; ETF submitted a response based on the findings from the Federation Meeting;

- ◇ CEC's Tenant Participation Strategy; ETF submitted a response based on the findings from the Federation Meeting;
- ◇ CEC's budget for the coming year;
- ◇ Addressing homelessness in Edinburgh.



5

Federation meetings were held this year

Highlights from April 2019



ETF's Service Level Agreement was signed.



781 profile visits this year;
1,104 followers;
111 new followers this year.



575 likes;
30 new likes this year.

Highlights from May 2019

Members of ETF's Repairs Group identified their priorities for the coming year.



ETF held a Federation Meeting to discuss homelessness in Edinburgh.

Highlights from June 2019



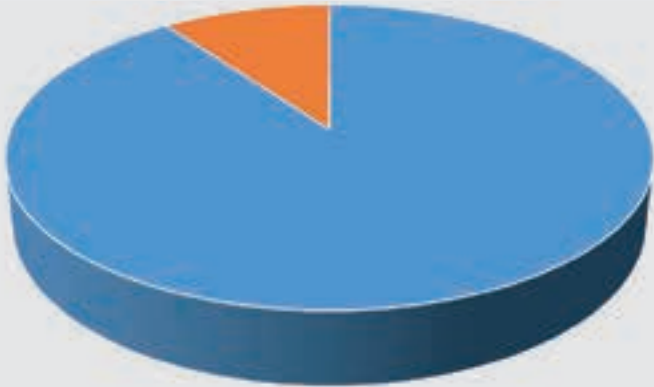
The TLI Rent Collection Communication Workshop took place.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
Income		
City of Edinburgh Council service agreement	241,083	241,083
Other income	26,792	17,412
	<u>267,875</u>	<u>258,495</u>
Less: Expenditure		
Staff Costs (Note 1)	88,938	179,920
Operating Costs	34,289	33,819
Professional fees	7,224	6,919
Meetings and Events	19,675	17,444
Publicity	5,382	6,570
Project Work	18,666	13,912
Miscellaneous	1,021	1,700
	<u>175,195</u>	<u>260,284</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) before Taxation	92,680	(1,789)
Taxation	-	-
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	<u>92,680</u>	<u>(1,789)</u>

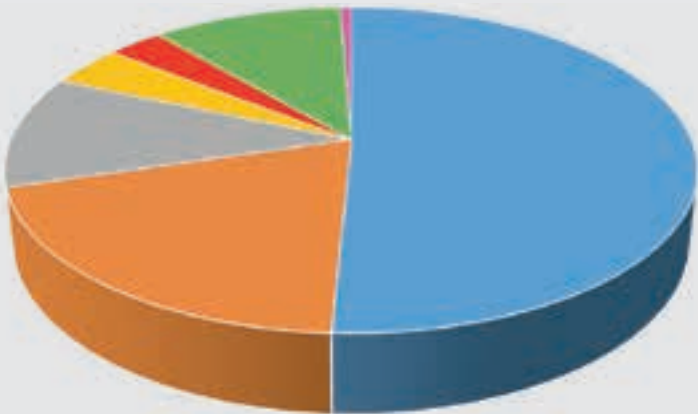
Note 1 – There has been a reduction in ETF’s Pension Deficit under the recovery plan implemented by The Pensions Trust (TPT), following the triennial review carried out by TPT actuaries. This has led to a remeasurement credit of £69,000 to our expenditure for year 2018/19.

Income 2018/19



■ City of Edinburgh Council SLA ■ Other income

Expenditure 2018/19



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

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	<u>2,146</u>	<u>3,192</u>
Current assets		
Debtors	3,850	8,120
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>113,983</u>	<u>98,444</u>
	117,833	106,564
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	<u>(23,067)</u>	<u>(28,524)</u>
Net current assets	<u>94,766</u>	<u>78,040</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due greater than one year	<u>(78,000)</u>	<u>(155,000)</u>
Net liabilities	<u>18,912</u>	<u>(73,768)</u>
Represented by:		
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds – unrestricted	98,185	83,188
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds – pension	(89,000)	(169,000)
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds – designated	9,198	11,590
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds – restricted	<u>529</u>	<u>454</u>
Net funds	<u>18,912</u>	<u>(73,768)</u>

Member Groups 2018/2019

Birnies Court Tenants & Residents Association

Calders Residents Association

CMG Residents

Coillesdene Complex Neighbourhood Association

Community Regeneration Forum

Craigmillar Castle Regeneration Forum

Edinburgh RSL Residents Network

Gateside Tenants & Residents Association

Goosander Residents Association

Hailesland Park Neighbourhood Council

Kirkland Park Gardens Residents Association

Laichfield Community Association

Magdalene Neighbourhood Association

Maidencraig Court Residents Association

Moredun Multis & Maisonettes Residents Association

North Sighthill Residents Association

Ratho Station Residents Association

Redbraes Residents Association

Saughton Mains Residents Association

Tenants & Residents in Fidra Court

West Cromwell, Persevere Citadel Residents Association

Willowbrae and Duddingston Residents Association

Individual Associate Members 2018/2019

James Galloway

Henry Guntley

Adam Hunter

Alexander Lazarenko

Mrs Gillian Margaret McClenning

Donald McDonald

Maureen Miller

Michelle Penman

Barbara & Marek Popslawski

M Rahman

Matthew Wheatley

Executive Committee 2018/2019

John Aitken	North Sighthill Residents Association
Heather Ford	West Cromwell, Persevere, Citadel Residents Association (Resigned 25th March 2019)
Niel Hansen	Moredun Multis and Maisonettes Residents Association
Nicol Johnstone	Magdalene Residents Association
Irina Lazarenko	Edinburgh RSL Residents Network
Barbara Stark	Ratho Station Residents Association
Betty Stevenson	Birnies Court Tenants Association
Sue Taylor	Willowbrae and Duddingston Residents Association
David Thomson	Redbraes Residents Association
Maud Wylie	Hailesland Park Neighbourhood Council

Staff 2018/2019

Admin Assistant	Paul Hamilton (Resigned 31st October 2018)
Communications Assistant	Craig Burns (left 10th October 2018)
Development Coordinator	Clare MacGillivray
Development Worker	Mark Henry
Housing Rights Development Worker	Justine Bradd (post ended October 2018)
Office Manager	Mary Callaghan
Outreach Worker	Justine Bradd/Mari Lehva (left 30th November 2018)
Housing Postgraduate Student	Cath O'Shea (left 4th September 2018)







EDINBURGH TENANTS
FEDERATION

Edinburgh Tenants Federation 2018/2019 Annual Report



Tel: 0131 475 2509
Email: info@edinburghtenants.org.uk
Website: www.edinburghtenants.org.uk
Twitter /Facebook @EdinburghTenant

Produced by
**Edinburgh Tenants Federation,
Norton Park, 57 Albion Road,
Edinburgh, EH7 5QY**



Edinburgh Tenants Federation is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) SC048236, regulated by the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

