

# **South East Scotland Regional Network Constitution**

**Edinburgh, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian,  
Scottish Borders and West Lothian.**

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## **1.0 Name**

- 1.1 The name of the group shall be South East Scotland Regional Network, whose members are from the local authority areas of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian.

## **2.0 Aims & Objectives**

**The aims of the Network are to:**

- 2.1 Promote and uphold our member's rights, interests and views at national policy level in areas such as housing and any other related areas that affect our members.
- 2.2 Encourage the sharing of information between all Regional Networks, Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs) and other Landlord recognised groups we represent (our Members), and the Scottish Government (SG) and other related organisations.
- 2.3 Work with the SG and other organisations to ensure that tenants and residents views are represented in developing and influencing national policy.
- 2.4 Increase awareness of our Regional Network, the RTO movement and recognised groups (see section 4, membership) as a whole within Scotland and especially with tenants and residents, social housing landlords and the RTO and non RTO Memberships.
- 2.5 Respond to relevant housing and other related consultations to ensure tenants views are considered and taken into account.

## **3.0 Responsibilities**

- 3.1 The committee is empowered by the Network to further the aims as set out in Section 2.
- 3.2 All monies provided shall be applied to facilitate our aims and for no other purpose.

## **4.0 Membership**

- 4.1 Membership is open to all tenant and residents groups who are registered with their Local Authority (LA) or Housing Association (HA) landlord as an RTO under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, and tenant and resident groups who are recognised by their LA or HA landlord such as Scrutiny Groups, Forums/Federations.

- 4.2 All groups eligible for membership in the specified area qualify automatically as members and have the option to opt out.
- 4.3 All member groups will be eligible to have one vote, where a vote is required.

## **5.0 The Committee**

### **Committee Membership**

- 5.1 The Committee will manage the affairs of the Regional Network.
- 5.2 The Committee will be elected from the network membership by an election process and thereafter voted on and announced at each AGM.
- 5.3 It will consist of 3 people per Local Authority area in the Regional Network to a maximum of 18 members.
  - 1. If local authority area is lacking in full support the committee can be made up to full strength of 18 by allowing members from other areas to join the committee. They will be co-opted until the next AGM. The committee will ensure this is done fairly to ensure one area does not dominate membership. Additional members to fill places will be dealt with by the committee following the AGM.
    - a) The committee will actively promote membership in areas with little or no representation.
  - 2 . Office bearers will be elected by the committee at the first meeting to be held immediately after the AGM.
  - 3 . There will be four office bearers, Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, who will serve for a period of one year, then stand down, after which they will have to stand for re-election. One third of the committee is to stand down each year, but are immediately eligible for re-election.
- 5.4 The committee will welcome any member and invited non-member who wishes to attend committee meetings as an observer.

## **Election Procedures**

- 5.5 The quorum for committee meetings (not including any co-opted members) will be one third of committee members who have full voting rights and must include at least one office bearer.
- 5.6 Elections shall be undertaken on the basis of one vote per eligible RTO/landlord recognised group.
- 5.7 Where there are more nominations than committee places an election will be held at the AGM. To cast a vote in such an election each member group must have a representative in attendance at the AGM. (Telephone conference calls, video conferencing or Skype by representatives can be organised and will be considered as attendance at the AGM).
- 5.8 Eligible members shall only vote for candidates residing within its own Local Authority area.
- 5.9 The committee will meet at least 4 times per year, which will include the AGM.

## **Office Bearers**

- 5.10 At the first meeting immediately following the AGM, the committee will elect a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer and any other office bearers they consider appropriate to ensure the effective operation of the committee.
- 5.11 No committee member related by birth or marriage or the partner of, or residing at the same address or at a different address to another committee member(s) will be permitted to be a signatory of the bank account at the same time as that other committee member(s).
- 5.12 The officer bearers shall hold their position for a period of one year from the AGM until the next AGM, when they shall be eligible for re-election. All committee members must sign up to the code of conduct, more details in Section 8 below.
- 5.13 Committee members cannot be represented by a substitute this means that they cannot send someone from their own local group to the meeting in their place if they cannot attend.
- 5.14 When a committee member resigns or is expelled from the committee their place will be filled from the local authority area they represented at the next AGM or through an election process agreed by the committee.
- 5.15 Any member with a potential conflict of interest in any matters must declare this at the start of the meeting.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

- 5.16 A record of all meetings will be kept and will be publicly available on the Regional Network website and can also be provided by post on request.
- 5.17 The Committee will consider and carry out all policy related matters and general management affairs of the Committee in accordance with the wishes of the Regional Network.
- 5.18 Any committee member who has failed to attend three consecutive meetings without providing notice in advance or without good reason will be deemed to have resigned from their position on the committee.

## **Co-optees and Sub Committees**

- 5.19 The Committee will have the power to co-opt individuals who have a particular expertise onto the committee in an advisory role for a specific purpose and period of time. Co-optees will have no voting rights on committee decisions.
- 5.20 Where required, sub-committees can be set up, and the committee may seek expert advice from these sub-committees. These experts will have no voting rights. Meetings will take place as agreed by the full committee and any decisions or recommendations made must be considered and ratified by the full committee.

## **6.0 Annual General Meetings**

- 6.1 An AGM shall be held every year to discuss the activities and achievements of the Network and to elect the committee. AGM's can be held within 15 months from the date of the initial AGM.

The AGM will:

- 6.2 Be advertised not less than 28 working days in advance of that meeting.
- 6.3 Present reports from Office Bearers in respect of the Committee affairs and business.
- 6.4 Consider the accounts for the network, which will be audited on annual basis and be presented for approval at each AGM.
- 6.5 Accept the standing down of all retiring committee members.

- 6.6 Announce the results of the election process for the Regional Network Committee. Office bearers will be agreed at the first committee meeting following the AGM.
- 6.7 Consider any proposals to amend the constitution. These must be submitted to the Secretary no less than 10 working days in advance of the AGM.
- 6.8 Nominations for the committee to be received no less than 14 days prior to the AGM.

## 7.0 Extraordinary General Meeting

- 7.1 Any request for an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) must be made in writing to the Secretary, carrying the signatures and addresses of 30% of members or 75% of elected committee members stating the reason for calling the meeting.
- 7.2 The Secretary will respond in writing to the originator of this request at least 14 working days from receiving the request.
- 7.3 The Secretary will advertise the date, time, place and purpose of the EGM not less than 28 working days in advance of the meeting.
- 7.4 The EGM will be held within 56 Working days of being agreed by the Committee as required.

## 8.0 Conduct

- 8.1 As soon as elected at an AGM Committee Members are required to sign a Committee Code of Conduct. This requirement extends to each time someone is elected to the Committee.
- 8.2 Where a **member group, an individual of a member group or a committee member, when representing the network** acts in a way which is detrimental to the aims of the network, the Committee will have the right where there is good and sufficient reason to suspend membership and investigate circumstances. Such a suspension shall in all circumstances be subject to a right of appeal.
- 8.3 Where a decision to suspend a **member group, an individual of a member group or a committee member** is being considered the Committee, the Committee Chair shall present a report outlining the circumstances and reason for its' decision to the next scheduled meeting of the Network for its consideration. Where a decision to

suspend is agreed the member group, an individual of a member group or a committee member will be advised in writing.

- 8.4 Anyone considered to have breached the constitution by engaging in improper conduct during a meeting shall be warned by the Chairperson about their behavior, if further improper behavior occurs they will be asked to acknowledge their behavior and apologise to those present. If they do not do this they will be asked to leave the meeting. If this person is the Chairperson then the Vice Chair will be requested to carry out this duty.
- 8.5 Failure to accept the Chair's ruling on conduct shall result in the **member group, an individual of a member group or a committee member** being instructed to leave the meeting immediately.
- 8.6 If a member of the Committee refuses to comply with the Constitution, they may be expelled on a **two-thirds** majority vote of the full Committee. Any such committee member will have the right to appeal within **21** working days of the expulsion. The appeal shall be heard by another Regional Network Committee, at a meeting called specifically for that purpose.

## **9.0 The Constitution**

- 9.1 A copy of the Constitution will be available on the Regional Networks website and will be made available on request.
- 9.2 The Constitution can only be amended at an AGM, or an EGM called for that purpose. (See section 6.0 & 7.0).
- 9.3 Amendments and proposals, to the Constitution, must be agreed by **two-thirds** of Network Members present.
- 9.4 The Committee shall inform all Members of the Regional Network of any amendments to the Constitution within 28 working days of agreement of the amendment.

## **10.0 Finance**

- 10.1 All funds raised by, or on behalf of, the Regional Network, or grant funding from any source, shall be used solely for regional Network activities and to help achieve the aims set out in section 2.0.

## **11.0 Dissolution of the Network**

- 11.1 The Network may only be dissolved at an AGM, or an EGM called for the purpose of discussing dissolution.



- 11.2 A request for dissolution will take place following proposals, in writing, by a minimum of two thirds of the full membership being submitted to the Secretary, or two thirds of elected committee members stating the reason for calling the meeting.
- 11.3 All Members must be informed, in writing, at least 56 Working days prior to the date of the meeting.
- 11.4 A quorum of two thirds of member will be required for the dissolution meeting to take place. Dissolution will only take place if two thirds of the Members present vote in favour of dissolution.
- 11.5 Accounts and Balances held by the organisation shall be returned to the funders.

## **12.0 Equal Opportunities**

- 12.1 The Committee will uphold equal opportunities and work towards good relations amongst all Members and do all it can to promote equality and diversity.
- 12.2 The Committee will especially prohibit any conduct which discriminates on grounds of; race, religion, disability, geographical location, political belief, age, gender or sexual orientation.

### **Adoption**

This constitution was adopted on .....

Signed.....Chairperson

Signed.....Secretary

Date.....

## **13.0 Committee Code of Conduct**

***The aim of the following Code of Conduct is to promote the standard of conduct required, of Committee members of the South East Scotland Regional Network. It will ensure:***

- a) That all members conduct themselves in a professional manner.***
- b) That one member does not gain an unfair advantage over another.***
- c) That members do not misrepresent themselves.***

### **Committee Code of Conduct**

- a) Committee members shall at all times treat other members and visitors with respect.
- b) No Committee member shall use foul or offensive language towards anyone else.
- c) No Committee member shall attend or hold meetings, in the name of the committee, without Committee approval.
- d) No Committee member shall issue correspondence, in the name of the Committee, without committee approval.
- e) No Committee member shall act in the name of the Committee without their prior approval.
- f) All letters or correspondence etc must be tabled and discussed by the committee.
- g) Committee members must respect and uphold the confidentiality of others at all times.
- h) No Committee member will tape, video or electronically record meetings without the prior consent of all Committee members present.
- i) Committee members attending meetings or conferences on behalf of the Committee and its members must represent the interests of the Network and report back findings in writing.

- j) Any member breaching the Code of Conduct may be asked to resign, or be removed by a Committee decision.
- k) I, the undersigned, agree to be bound by the terms of the above Code of Conduct and understand that a breach of the terms and conditions may require my resignation from the Committee if requested or by removal by a Committee decision.

Name	Signed
Group	Date
Name	Signed
Group	Date
Name	Signed
Group	Date
Name	Signed
Group	Date
Name	Signed
Group	Date
Name	Signed
Group	Date

Name	Signed
Group	Date