Tenant Participation Strategy
2010 - 2012
1. Foreword

On behalf of the Committee of Management and Staff of Angus Housing Association, we wish to confirm the commitment of all Committee and Staff Members to involving the Tenants of the Association as fully as we possibly can in our decision making processes.

We firmly believe that to be effective, Tenant Participation must be an integral part of all of the Association’s work.

Having tenants participate is not an end in itself – it is not just a box to be ticked. It is much more important and needs to be resourced to fully become the means to other much more important ends.

These are the provision of houses and services that are responsive to the needs of our tenants and deliverable in a cost effective way to give tenants value for money for the rent they pay.

This Strategy is our second, our first having been produced in 2006. The first three years have been a learning experience and it has taken time as an Organisation to adjust to a new culture and way of working.

We think we are improving but recognise that there is still a long way to go but we still believe that working collaboratively with our tenants is the way forward to providing more effective and efficient service delivery.

Hazel Farquhar         Bruce Forbes
Chairman               Director
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2. Background

2a. The legal framework for Tenant Participation

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (‘the Act’) introduced a legal framework for tenant participation. By virtue of having a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) and a Short SST, tenants have rights to information and consultation. The aim of the legislation was to develop a platform on which successful and meaningful tenant participation could be built. The Act introduced new rights for tenants and placed new duties on landlords.

Landlords have as statutory obligation to:

- provide a range of information to their tenants;
- have in place a tenant participation strategy
- have a registration scheme for tenant organisations to register with them and keep a publicly available register of these registered tenant organisations (RTOs);
- consult with tenants and registered tenant organisations on a range of housing and related services. These are outlined in the Act as;

  (a) its policy in relation to housing management, repairs or maintenance, where the proposal, if implemented, is likely to significantly affect the tenant;

  (b) the standard of service in relation to housing management, repairs and maintenance which it intends to provide;

  (c) its tenant participation strategy; and

  (d) a disposal which would result in a change of landlord or, if different, of owner of the house which is the subject of the tenancy.

Landlords are also required under section 25 of the 2001 Act to give each tenant not less than 4 weeks’ notice, in writing, before increasing rents or other charges. Where a landlord proposes to increase the rents of all or any class of its tenants, it must first consult those tenants who would be affected.


There are several “Key Principles,” which Angus Housing Association have been and remain committed to, that will ensure all tenants have the opportunity to participate.

There are several “Key Principles,” which Angus Housing Association are totally committed to, that will ensure that all tenants will have the opportunity to participate.
These are:

- Good tenant participation requires a culture of mutual trust, respect and partnership between tenants, committee members, and staff at every level, working together towards a common goal of better housing, conditions and housing services.

- It should be a continuous process where information, ideas and power are shared, common understandings of problems are strived for and a consensus on solutions is worked out.

- It allows all parties to contribute to the agenda. All participants require to have all the information needed to consider issues properly; that information requires to be clear, timely and accessible and to take account of equal opportunities concerns.

- Processes of decision making should be open, clear and accountable.

- Adequate time should be given to tenant representatives to consider the issues properly. Tenants should have the opportunity to work to a common view in advance of meeting landlord's representatives.

- Good tenant participation requires the landlord to recognise the independence of tenant’s organisations.

- Good working relationships evolve gradually and are flexible to adapt to local circumstances.

- Tenant’s organisations require adequate resources for organisation, training and support.

- Tenant Participation in rural areas must be tailored to suit the particular circumstances and needs of tenants in such communities.

- Tenant participation must meet the requirements of the legislation surrounding equal opportunities. Good practice in participation removes barriers to effective participation arising from ethnicity, geographic location, special needs, language difficulties, age, sex, sexual orientation or disability.

2b. Ensuring equal opportunities

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires landlords to approach tenant participation in a manner that encourages equal opportunities and observes equal opportunity requirements laid out in other legislation Other relevant legislation includes the:

- Equal Pay Act 1970;
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975;
- Race Relations Act 1976;
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
The Act introduced specific responsibilities in relation to equal opportunities and tenant participation, and landlords are required to:

- ensure barriers to participation such as language, accessibility, timing, costs for tenants and childcare have been considered;
- consider the needs of equalities groups and proactively involve traditionally excluded groups in the participation process and
- ensure registered tenant organisations promote equal opportunities and are open and accessible to all tenants through the criteria for registration.

Registered tenant organisations (RTOs) are also required to promote equal opportunities for those in the communities they represent and their commitment to do so should be included in their constitution. Landlords should ensure, through support and encouragement that equal opportunities are at the centre of their activities. RTOs should proactively seek the participation of excluded groups in their own organisation.

2c. The Role of the Housing Regulator

The Scottish Government has the role of regulating and inspecting social landlords through its Scottish Housing Regulator. In relation to tenant participation, all landlords inspected by the Scottish Housing Regulator will have to demonstrate that they are achieving the following Performance Standard:

“We have published and are implementing a sound strategy for encouraging and supporting tenants, residents and service users to participate actively in all areas of our work. We support tenants who take an active interest in managing their homes.”

The inspection process will examine how well the landlord’s participation strategy is being put into practice and the views of tenants, tenant groups and staff will be considered.

Guidance on the inspection process can be found on the Scottish Housing Regulators website www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk
3. Aims and Objectives

Angus Housing Association’s Tenant Participation Strategy provides a framework for taking forward the key principles and aims and objectives for tenant participation on an ongoing and evolving basis.

AHA’s aims and objectives for tenant participation are;

• To promote and increase tenant awareness of their rights to participate highlighting ways in which they can get involved through the provision of clear accurate and regular information.

• To ensure that real and perceived barriers that prevent or discourage opportunity are identified and removed.

• To encourage the introduction of tenant forums and a consultation register as a means of gathering tenant’s views on policy and service issues.

• To encourage and support the formation and development of Registered Tenant Organisations to enable consultation and to empower communities to become organised and tackle issues within their area.

• The Management Committee and Management Team to give full consideration to tenant’s views when developing policies and services and will give feedback on reasons for decision’s taken.

• Information will be fed back to RTO’s, Tenant Forum members, Consultation Register members and individual tenants timeously as agreed between the Association and tenants.
4. **How this strategy was developed and who was involved.**

This strategy was developed using the Scottish Government’s “Guide to successful tenant participation” as a template.

The strategy was developed in consultation with the Association’s Tenant Forums and Registered Tenant Organisations who contributed significantly to its design. The Forum members undertook a review of the existing strategy and identified what had worked well and areas where there were need for improvement. The RTO’s gave their views during discussions with the Association’s Communities Officer.

Whilst the 2010 -2012 strategy more or less mirrors the strategy in place during the years 2006 to 2009 there are a few significant changes suggested and approved by our tenants.

If any tenant is interested in finding out more about Tenant participation they should contact

**John McDonald;**  
Communities Officer,  
Angus Housing Association Limited  
93 High Street  
ARBROATH  
DD11 1DP

Telephone 01241 879537

e-mail john@aha.org.uk

or make an enquiry through our website [www.angusha.org.uk](http://www.angusha.org.uk)
5. **Why the strategy is in place and the benefits of Tenant Participation.**

The strategy is in place for two reasons. Firstly, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 makes it a statutory duty of Housing Associations to have a Tenant Participation Strategy.

Secondly, and more importantly, we value the people we serve i.e. our tenants and want to provide a first class housing service to them. We want tenants to feel that they have a say in the running of their homes and therefore, this Tenant Participation Strategy Document is extremely important to us. The document lays out what we will do and is our focus for carrying out what we promise.

We believe that effective tenant participation can have many benefits.

These include:

- Better service delivery and improved value for money.
- Opportunities to develop new knowledge and skills.
- Developing better communication between the Association’s staff and tenants.
- Developing better links between the communities where we have tenants and the Association.
- Have better informed and knowledgeable tenants who can develop skills and confidence to influence decisions.
- Association Committee, Management, Staff and Tenants developing an awareness of each other’s perspectives and organisational and financial limitations.
- Developing and building strong relationships based on trust.
- Increased tenant satisfaction with their home and neighbourhood.
- Increased Job satisfaction for staff.
6. **Links to other strategies and services.**

It is a fundamental objective of Angus Housing Association that opportunities exist for our tenants to participate in the development and review of policies and service delivery.

It is therefore crucial that the Association’s Tenant Participation Strategy is linked to other policies, strategies and services to ensure they reflect the basic principles of tenant participation. This will ensure that we are effectively consulting with tenants and providing them with opportunities to be involved on issues that are important to them.

Tenant Participation will be integral to everything we do.
7. How tenants will be consulted and kept informed

Communication with tenants is vital to effective tenant participation. The Association is committed to devising along with tenants suitable ways in which we can inform people about issues that are of concern to them about their homes and areas and will seek their views. We will make sure that any printed information will be written in easy to read and easy to understand “plain English” and a translation service will be provided free of charge to tenants whose first language is not English.

The ways in which we will communicate with our tenants will be:

- A bi-monthly newsletter
- A tenants Handbook (in calendar form)
- An annual tenants conference/open day
- Tenants Forums (meeting monthly)
- Consultation Registers
- The Association’s Website
- Information leaflets
- Annual Reports
8. Consultation

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (Section 54) states that Housing Associations should consult either individually or collectively through a Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) on the following:

- If it proposes to raise rents for all or any class of its tenants.
- Its policy in relation to housing management, repairs and maintenance where the proposal, if implemented, is likely to significantly affect the tenant.
- The standards of service in relation to housing management, repairs and maintenance which it intends to provide.
- Its Tenant Participation Strategy
- A disposal which would result in a change of Landlord.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (section 53) indicates that Landlords must have a strategy for:

- Consulting tenants on the arrangements for obtaining and taking into account the views of RTOs and tenants.
- Notifying RTOs and tenants of the matters on which the landlord expects to be making proposals.
- Information to be provided to RTOs and tenants about such proposals and their likely effect.

In accordance with the legislation Angus Housing Association will formally consult with tenants either individually, or as part of a group, such as a Tenant Forum, Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) or Focus Group on the following:

- If we want to make changes to policy or service standards relating to housing management or repairs and maintenance, and the change would have a major impact on tenants.
- If we intend to increase rents.
- Our Tenant Participation Policy and Strategy.
- Changes to the Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement.
- Changes to rent collection methods.
- Our Standards of Service.
• Our investment strategy for our housing stock

We have set a minimum standard for all consultations with tenants. On an annual basis we will:

• Advise tenants about the topics we propose to consult them on for the following year.

• Provide a timetable of main events including time for responses by the tenants. We would plan to give tenants and tenant groups a minimum of three months to respond to discuss topics and give their response.

• Explain what information we will make available to an individual tenant to help them take an informed and effective part of the consultation.

• Tenants will be able to suggest topics for discussion. They will be encouraged to influence what policies are to be reviewed

At the time of consultation we will provide the following details:

• How and when a final decision will be taken.

• How the proposal may affect tenants.

• How and within what timescale tenants can make their views known to us.

• Details of how tenants will receive feedback.

• The contact officer dealing with the consultation.

• Information on how and where to complain.

We will use a variety of ways to consult and inform tenants. This includes our bi-monthly newsletter and website, door to door surveys, house visits, open days/conferences, consultation register or as part of an RTO, Tenant Forum or Focus Group, in the way that suits them best.
9. Giving Tenants Feedback

If Tenant Participation is to succeed it is vital that any contribution to a debate on policy change or service standards by tenants or RTOs is evaluated by the Association’s Management Team and information on decisions taken fed back to them. Finding the mechanisms for this feedback needs to be agreed between the Association and the Tenants and RTOs. Angus Housing Association is committed to working with tenants to develop these mechanisms.

We believe that there is no better way to encourage tenants to participate in decision making about policies or service standards etc. than letting them know how their views and opinions helped to influence the decisions.

We will feed back information to individual tenants and RTOs in a variety of ways.

These are:

- Individual letters.
- Information posted on the Association’s website www.angusha.org.uk
- Our bi-monthly newsletter.
- Follow up meetings with Forums and focus groups.
- Conference/Open days.
10. How will the strategy be monitored and reviewed

Tenant Participation within Angus Housing Association is continuously developing and this Tenant Participation Strategy provides a framework for continuing the promotion and development of tenant participation.

It is important that the strategy is working effectively in practice and that tenants are able to meet the challenges that meaningful participation offers them. The strategy will be agreed reviewed and agreed with tenants and RTOs.

Angus Housing Association will apply the following criteria for monitoring and reviewing the tenant participation strategy. These criteria will allow measurable outcomes against identified targets and will include:

In conjunction with the Tenants Forum and RTO’s we will carry out an Annual Review of the effectiveness of the Tenant Participation Strategy.

This review will measure outputs by examining:

- areas that tenants have influenced, such as policy development;
- the influence tenants have had in decision-making
- range of decisions in which tenants are involved;
- variety of tenant participation structures and mechanisms;
- actual and committed expenditure on tenant participation compared with budget provision;
- representation of tenant group membership, for instance, area coverage, age, gender, ethnicity, and how this has changed over time;
11. Working with Registered Tenant Organisations

Angus Housing Association wishes to support and help develop Registered Tenant Organisations. We believe that tenant organisations which become organised can achieve significant benefits to the members they serve and to the wider community that they live in. We also believe that they can make a significant contribution to the consultation process between our Association and the tenants that we serve.

By becoming a registered tenant organisation any tenant group can get help and support including financial support from Angus Housing Association. However, to become registered the group must satisfy certain registration criteria. The registration criteria for our Association is at appendix 2.

If registered by Angus Housing Association the RTO can expect the following support:

- An annual lump sum (Direct Grant) to assist with running costs of £250. (if appropriate)
- Training in management committee skills, tenant participation, housing issues etc.
- Administration support
- Accommodation for meetings.
- Groups can ask for other support which will be discussed with the Association i.e. if they want to attend conferences, produce their own newsletter etc.

We will also place the RTO on a Register which we will maintain and which will be available for inspection by the public during office opening times. The register will contain the name of the organisation; the area it covers and any other relevant information such as where and when it holds its meetings.

Registration Procedure

Any tenant group that wants to become registered will need to complete the application form at appendix 1. Additional copies of the form can be obtained by telephone, fax, e-mail or in writing from the Communities Officer of Angus Housing Association. Alternatively, it can be accessed our website www.angusha.org.uk

If you wish to contact the Communities Officer write to

Angus Housing Association Limited
93 High Street
ARBROATH DD11 1DP

Telephone 01241- 879537 - Fax No 01241-430355 - e-mail admin@aha.org.uk
Appeals Procedure

A tenant’s organisation may appeal against the landlord’s decision:

- not to register the organisation; or
- to remove the organisation from the register; or
- not to remove the organisation from the register.

The appeals process will be considered by the Scottish Housing Regulator, on behalf of Scottish Ministers. It is important to note, however, that an appeal should be presented only after the Association’s internal appeal procedures have been exhausted. The internal appeals procedure should be initiated without delay and should be completed within three months of the appeal being made, or as otherwise agreed between the Association and the RTO.
12. Resources

Angus Housing Association recognises that essential to the Tenant Participation Strategy being effective is the provision of resources.

Therefore, it will provide the following:

- We will ensure that all our staff, management and committee members are fully trained in tenant participation.
- We will offer training in tenant participation to all tenants who wish to learn more about it.
- We will provide a meeting room for tenant forums or focus groups.
- We will provide refreshments at all our tenant participation meetings (if required).
- We will provide crèche facilities at all tenant participation meetings (if required).
- We will pay travelling expenses to tenants who incur expense by travelling to tenant participation meetings.
- We will prepare and distribute a bi-monthly newsletter to all our tenants.
- Each newly Registered Tenant Organisation will receive an initial direct grant of £250 and will receive £250 annually provided the registration criteria are still satisfied and if it is appropriate.
- We will, where possible and practicable, provide support to RTOs by providing staff time, access to IT support networks and office machinery including photocopiers and printers.
- Provide funds for delegates to attend Annual TIS Conference.
13. Timescales

It is essential that Angus Housing Association plan and include enough time to consult with tenants and RTOs so that they have sufficient time to debate and discuss issues with the tenants they represent. We understand that tenants need enough time to consider options fully. We will consult with tenants and RTOs and come to a joint conclusion as to the best way of ensuring this.

Angus Housing Association will produce a yearly action plan that clearly sets out achievable priorities for the year ahead. These should equally reflect both the Associations and tenants priorities.
14. Training

Angus Housing Association is committed to training its staff, management team and management committee members to ensure they have the skills to let them get involved in tenant participation.

We will:

- Undertake in house training to ensure new staff and new members of the Committee of Management know what tenant participation is, how it impacts on their roles and the benefits that can accrue from it.

- Tenants and the Association will undertake a training needs assessment with all tenants who have expressed an interest in becoming members of a consultation register or tenant forum.

- Hold joint training courses between staff and tenants to break down barriers and build positive relationships.

- Regularly review training needs
15. Equal Opportunities

The Management Committee and senior staff of Angus Housing Association are committed to the promotion of equality and diversity throughout the organisation including a commitment to barrier free tenant participation.

In the implementation of AHA’s Tenant Participation Strategy we aim to ensure that in every relationship and activity we undertake, to promote the opportunities available for participation and that those opportunities reflect the diverse needs of our tenants.

To this end, AHA will continue to develop and explore new methods for consulting and engaging with representatives from traditionally excluded groups with a view to ensuring maximum opportunities for involvement for these groups.
## 16. Action Plan

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<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>HOW WILL IT BE ACHIEVED</th>
<th>WHO WILL BE INVOLVED</th>
<th>TIMESCALE</th>
<th>HOW WILL SUCCESS BE MEASURED</th>
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<tr>
<td>Consult with tenants regarding the Review of Office Opening Hours.</td>
<td>By involving tenants forum members in the discussions on opening hours.</td>
<td>Bruce Forbes Director and Tenant Forum Members</td>
<td>By December 2010</td>
<td>Questionnaire to Tenant Forum Members regarding the level of consultation and how they felt their input influenced decisions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keeping tenants informed through an article in the bi-monthly newsletter</td>
<td>By writing an article for inclusion in newsletter once sufficient information or decisions are taken</td>
<td>John McDonald Communities Officer</td>
<td>By December 2010</td>
<td>Article featured in Newsletter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appraise tenants on the Office Relocation Feasibility Study</td>
<td>By keeping the tenants forum members appraised of the progress of the feasibility study. Involve Tenant Forum Members in discussions about office relocation.</td>
<td>Bruce Forbes Director and Tenant Forum Members</td>
<td>By December 2010</td>
<td>Questionnaire to Tenant Forum Members regarding the level of consultation and how they felt their input influenced decisions</td>
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<td>Consult Tenants on Review of “Anti Social Behaviour Policy.”</td>
<td>By asking tenant forum members to discuss and review the policy, make recommendations and ultimately approve any changes.</td>
<td>Linlay Anderson Housing Manager and Tenant Forum Members</td>
<td>By December 2010</td>
<td>Questionnaire to Tenant Forum Members regarding the level of consultation and how they felt their input influenced decisions</td>
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<td>Consult tenants on The Review of “Estate Management Policy and Procedures”</td>
<td>By asking tenant forum members to discuss and review the policy, make recommendations and ultimately approve any changes.</td>
<td>Geoff Cosgrove Property Manager and Tenant Forum Members</td>
<td>By December 2010</td>
<td>Questionnaire to Tenant Forum Members regarding the level of consultation and how they felt their input influenced decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consult tenants on Review of “Tenants Alterations and Improvements Policy”</td>
<td>By asking tenant forum members to discuss and review the policy, make recommendations and ultimately approve any changes.</td>
<td>Geoff Cosgrove Property Manager and Tenant Forum Members</td>
<td>By December 2010</td>
<td>Questionnaire to Tenant Forum Members regarding the level of consultation and how they felt their input influenced decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consult tenants on Review of “Tenants Right to Repair Policy”</td>
<td>By asking tenant forum members to discuss and review the policy, make recommendations and ultimately approve any changes.</td>
<td>Geoff Cosgrove Property Manager and Tenant Forum Members</td>
<td>By December 2010</td>
<td>Questionnaire to Tenant Forum Members regarding the level of consultation and how they felt their input influenced decisions</td>
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**17. Beyond the Strategy**

This strategy document is only the start of the process to develop and improve tenant participation. The Association’s Director, Managers, Management Committee Members and Frontline Staff, are committed to supporting tenants to be involved in the decision making process.
APPLICATION TO BECOME A REGISTERED TENANTS ORGANISATION

Please read our guidance notes called “Criteria for Registration and Grant Funding” before completing this form. If you need help to complete the form, please do not hesitate to contact us on telephone number 01241 879537.

The completed form with the relevant information attached should be returned to:

Communities Officer
Angus Housing Association Limited,
93 HiArbroath
DD 11 1DP

Please complete in capital letters

What is the name of your organisation?


Please tell us the name, address and telephone number of your Secretary?

<table>
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<th>Name:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
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<td>Post Code:</td>
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<td>Telephone Number:</td>
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Please try to answer all of the following questions. Don’t worry if you answer “No” to any question. This lets us know if we can help your organisation in any way to become registered.

**PART A – YOUR CONSTITUTION**

1. **Does your organisation have a constitution?**
   - Yes [ ]
   - No [ ]

2. **Does your constitution include a list of streets, or a map representing the area that you represent?**
   - Yes [ ]
   - No [ ]

3. **Are you able to meet all the conditions set out in your constitution?**
   - Yes [ ]
   - No [ ]

   If the answer is “No” – please explain why

4. **Are you the only Tenants Organisation covering this area?**
   - Yes [ ]
   - No [ ]

   If the answer is “No” – please tell us the name of any other group (s) represented in the area.
5. How many COMMITTEE Members are there in your organisation?

Total

Of your committee members, please give a breakdown of those who are tenants of the Association and others.

Angus Housing Association Tenants
Local Authority Tenants
Tenants of other Landlords
Owner Occupiers

6. How many members do you have in your organisation?

Total
PART B – ANNUAL ELECTIONS

1. What was the date of your last Annual General Meeting or when do you plan to have an AGM?
   
   Date

2. How many members attended?
   
   Total

3. Was the meeting quorate in accordance with your constitution?
   
   Yes   No

4. How did you advertise and inform members of your AGM?
   
   

5. Did you elect Office Bearers and committee member at the AGM?
   
   Yes   No

   How many office bearers?
   
   Total

   How many committee members?
   
   Total
PART C – KEEPING RECORDS

1. Do you keep minutes of meetings?

   Committee Meetings?
   Yes   No

   Public Meetings?
   Yes   No

   Annual General Meetings?
   Yes   No

2. Do you keep records of your income and expenditure?

   Yes   No

   2(a) Please tell us what method you use to record income & expenditure (examples –
       cashbook, spreadsheet)?

   

3. Can any member of your Organisation examine a copy of the income and expenditure – if
   they want to?

   Yes   No

4. Are your accounts audited?

   Yes   No
5. Please tell us the name of your auditors?

6 (a) How many people are signatories to your bank account?  
(Example: for signing cheques or other payment instructions)  
Number

6(b) Please tell us the names of the signatories to your accounts and what position they hold on the committee?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position Held (e.g. Treasurer)</th>
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PART D – ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES

1. What priorities have you identified for your Association?

Our main priorities are:

2. Please tell us about any activities or campaigns you have been involved with during the past year?

3. What have been your main objectives over the past year?

4. Have you achieved these objectives?
I confirm that, to my knowledge, the information I have given on this application is correct.

Signed:

Date:

Position within the Organisation:

Please Note:

The Housing (Scotland) Act requires Angus Housing Association to produce a public Register of Tenants Organisations, including the name and address of the contact person.

This register is published on AHA’s website and is available on request.

If your organisation does not want this detailed information to be passed on, please tick the “No Publicity” box.

No Publicity

Angus Housing Association will be the contact address for organisations requesting no publicity.
Appendix 2

ANGUS HOUSING ASSOCIATION’S CRITERIA FOR REGISTRATION AND DIRECT GRANT FUNDING

To be recognised by Angus Housing Association as a Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) and be eligible for direct funding RTOs must fulfil the criteria as detailed below.

1. The RTO must have a publicly available written constitution. The constitution must set out:

   - Clear objectives that are non-political, non-sectarian and observe and promote equal opportunities in practice.
   - Its commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities
   - Its area of operation, including either a list of streets or a map of the area covered by the RTO.
   - Its commitment to the promotion of housing and housing related interests of tenants.
   - How people can become members of the RTO.
   - The way the committee will operate.
   - How people can become committee members/office bearers.
   - The way the committee will operate.
   - How the business of the RTO will be conducted.
   - How decisions will be reached democratically
   - How funds will be managed.
   - Arrangements for public meetings and an Annual General Meeting (AGM).
   - How changes will be made to the constitution.
2. **The RTO must have a committee that:**
   - (After the first year) is elected at an AGM.
   - Have at least three members.
   - Can co-opt others onto the committee during the course of the year.
   - Has elected office bearers
   - Can demonstrate that decisions are reached democratically.
   - Promotes equal opportunities
   - Represents the interests of Angus Housing Association tenants

3. **The RTO must operate within:**
   - A defined area that includes housing stock owned by Angus Housing Association.
   - Membership of the RTO and participation in its activities must be open to adults over 16 years of age living in the area of operation.

4. **The RTO must keep a record of accounts and present an audited annual financial statement to the AGM.**
   - A copy of the accounts must be available to members of the RTO.

5. **The RTO must appoint authorised signatories for the operation of its accounts.**

6. **The RTO must be able to demonstrate:**
   - Its commitment to representing the views of its members and that, when consulted by Angus Housing Association it can represent the views of its members who are tenants.
   - How it consults with its members on issues that affect them. In particular, the RTO must be able to give examples of the methods it uses to consult with its members, how it takes on board their comments and how it provides feedback to members.
   - How it encourages everyone living in the area who is 16 years of age or older to become involved in the work of the RTO.
• That it has an awareness of the profile and particular needs of its members that it represents, for example, older people, young people, black and minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities, lone parents families.

• How it is proactively trying to engage with traditionally excluded groups (see above for examples) by removing any barriers that may be preventing their participating in the RTO.

• That it held an Annual General meeting within the last 12 months and holds regular public meetings as detailed in the constitution.

• How Annual General Meetings and public meetings are advertised to members living in the area.

7. Direct grant funding

1. RTOs will be invited to apply for funding within the registration period.

2. If funding is approved, it will last for one year and will be paid in one lump sum. RTOs will have to apply each year for Direct Grant Funding and satisfy the registration criteria.

3. At the time of applying for funding, consideration will be given to the money balances held by the RTO, its running costs and it plans for the expenditure.

8. Changes to the constitution/area of operation

If any RTO changes its constitution, membership or geographical area, it would be obliged to re-apply for registration.

9. Failure to meet the criteria

If an RTO does not meet the criteria, their application for registration and funding will be rejected. The reason for rejection will be explained fully in writing, and where appropriate, will include recommendations to enable the RTO to meet the requirements of the criteria.

10. Removal from the register

An RTO can be removed from the Register in any of the following circumstances:

• The RTO did not apply for re-registration.
• The RTO no longer meets the registration criteria.
• The RTO ceases to exist or does not operate.

• There is mutual agreement between Angus Housing Association and the RTO.

Removal from the Register will only take place after the RTO has been notified in writing and given reasonable opportunity to meet the criteria.

11. Appeals

An RTO may appeal against Angus Housing Association’s decision to:

• Not register the organisation.

• Remove the RTO from the Register.

• Not remove the RTO from the Register.

An RTO should appeal in writing to Angus Housing Association in the first instance. Angus Housing Association will respond to the RTO within three months of the appeal being made more as otherwise agreed between the Association and the RTO. Thereafter, if the matter has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the RTO, an appeal may be made to the Regulation and Inspection Division of Communities Scotland.