

APPROVED MINUTES



Tenants Together Meeting held on Wednesday 5th February 2025 at 10.00 a.m. via Zoom

Meeting Chair – Shona Gorman

Name	Initials	Position	Local Authority Area
Present:			
Colin Stewart	CS	Chair	Aberdeen City (in attendance item 10 onwards)
Shona Gorman	SG	Vice-Chair	Falkirk
Gordon Saunders	GS	Treasurer	Scottish Borders
Anne Cameron	AC	Committee Member	South Ayrshire
John Duffy	JD	Committee Member	North Lanarkshire
June Anderson	JA	Committee Member	Clackmannanshire
Linda Lennie	LL	Committee Member	Orkney
Liz Richardson	LR	Committee Member	Highlands
Margaret Dymond	MD	Committee Member	Renfrewshire
Scott MacLeod	SMacL	Committee Member	Highlands

In attendance:			
Carolynne Watson	CW	Tenant Priorities Team	Scottish Government

Apologies			
Bruce Cuthbertson	BC	Committee Member	East Ayrshire
Irina Lazarenko	IL	Committee Member	City of Edinburgh
Liz Mcknockiter	LMck	Committee Member	Moray
Norma Ferguson	NF	Committee Member	North Ayrshire
Rebecca Blackwood	RB	Committee Member	Aberdeen City
Sarah-Jane Dunbar	SJD	Committee Member	Stirling
Willie Derrick	WD	Committee Member	Stirling

Absent			
Donna Murray	DM	Committee Member	South Lanarkshire
Frances McGonagle	FMcG	Committee Member	West Dunbartonshire
Kath Fennell	KF	Committee Member	Orkney
Ruth Fraser	RF	Committee Member	Aberdeenshire
Suzanne Austin	SA	Committee Member	Renfrewshire

Scotland's tenant participation and engagement network

W www.tenantstogether.scot E info@tenantstogether.scot



	AGENDA ITEMS	ACTION
1	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of interest</p> <p>SG welcomed everyone to the first Committee meeting of 2025 noting apologies as above.</p> <p>Under Declarations of Interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS noted his role on the Board of TIS; • JA noted her role on the Board of Paragon HA; • MD noted her role on the Board of TPAS; • SG noted her role on the Board of Link Housing; • SMacL noted his role on the Board of Albyn Housing Society. 	
2	<p>Business Matters</p> <p>2.1 • <u>Minutes of previous meeting</u>: Approved previously by JD and JS.</p> <p>2.2 • <u>Matters Arising from previous meeting</u>: There are no Matters Arising which are not already covered on today's agenda.</p> <p>2.3 • <u>Treasurer's report</u>: GS presented the Treasurer's report, noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opening balance - £2193.55. ○ Money out - £388.94. ○ Income received - NIL. ○ Closing balance at 31 Jan 2025 - £1804.81. <p>2.4 • <u>Correspondence</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An application for has been received from Ruth Fraser, who joins Tenants Together Scotland as a second independent member. ○ SG noted correspondence received from the Local Government, Housing & Planning committee in relation to the building safety consultation; this will be covered at AOCB. 	
3	<p>Subgroups</p> <p>3.1 Communications and Social Media sub-group: SG provided an update, noting that key work on the TTS Communications Strategy & Action Plan is now progressing, with the group supported in this work by Fawn Russell, TIS. The group will meet with Fawn for an initial online meeting on 12 February, and intend to follow up with an in-person session in Glasgow on 12 March. The existing Comms Strategy (for Regional Networks) is available on Basecamp. SG also highlighted that the group will be considering TTS' approach to social media, and noted that a</p>	

	<p>separate session will be arranged for TTS members who will be taking forward work on social media.</p> <p>3.2 Accessibility group & AHIL: At the December 2024 meeting, members agreed that although work on AHIL has paused, TTS are keen to re-establish the work of their own sub-group on accessibility and independent living, with LR and JA coordinating this group. An up-to-date list of sub-group members has been collated since the December meeting, and CW agreed to take forward planning for an initial meeting in the coming weeks to determine the topics of focus for the sub-group, as well as a meeting schedule.</p> <p>3.3 SHR Liaison group: SG updated on the most recent meeting of the SHR Liaison group with SHR representatives, which took place on 4th February. This meeting was the first to take place under the new group Terms of Reference; the new group Chair, Helen Trouten-Torres, SHR Board, was scheduled to Chair the meeting, however for personal reasons was unable to attend, and the meeting was Chaired by Kelda McMichael, SHR, with input from Marieke Dwarshuis, SHR Board.</p> <p>The meeting covered presentations on the recent Gypsy Traveller and tenant participation thematic, and on the review and changes to ARC indicators as well as an update on the most recent SHR Board meeting. Topics which were also covered included RAAC, Annual Assurance Statements, human and childrens' rights, the risks which SHR will be focusing on in the coming year and an update on the recent British Sign Language report. SHR also provided updates on current engagement plans and intervention, and on the work of the Tenant Advisors group.</p> <p>SG highlighted that the current Board Chair, George Walker, will be stepping down this year, and recruitment will shortly commence for a new Chair and Board member.</p> <p>3.4 Net Zero/ Decarbonisation: Members have previously discussed a range of areas of interest and concern around net zero and decarbonisation and at the last meeting in December, had agreed they were keen to consider these in more depth. In the context of the housing emergency and the range of work Tenants Together are currently progressing, however, members discussed whether it may be beneficial to await a clearer picture on next steps with net zero, and agreed in the first instance to convene a meeting to collate clearly the concerns and interests on net zero so that these are readily available when the position becomes clearer. A meeting to progress this will be arranged.</p> <p>3.5 Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA): JA raised the issue of HRA, noting her attendance at a recent Scotland's Housing Network (SHN) session on HRA and highlighting a number of areas of concern which have been identified. The group noted that previous TTS/ Regional Network focus on HRA issues have been on the approach of individual local authorities to use of the HRA, and agreed that JA's update indicates broader, more</p>	
--	---	--

	<p>systemic concerns on HRA. In order to consider the issues in more depth and to offer the issues a clearer focus, members are keen to re-establish the working group on HRA, and a Basecamp group will be set up to identify members who are keen to be part of the group with a date and time for an initial discussion for the group to follow.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>TTS Updates</p> <p>4.1 SHR Board: CS and SG delivered a presentation to the SHR Board in January on TTS which was well-received.</p> <p>4.2 SFHA: CS and SG met with Sally Thomas and Cassandra Dove, SFHA, and discussed the possibility of running a workshop or alternative session at the upcoming SFHA conference later in February, although no further information has yet been received. CS noted that SFHA have invited TTS to submit an article for their Newsletter, and this is in hand. CS also noted that TTS were invited to submit an article for the Edinburgh Tenants Federation (ETF) Newsletter, which has now been submitted.</p> <p>4.3 Cosla/ ALACHO: LR asked if there are plans in place to carry out any introductory presentations on TTS with Cosla or ALACHO, and CS confirmed that these will be progressed shortly. CW noted that it would be beneficial to include suggested groups to meet with and TTS promotion opportunities as part of the Comms Strategy & Action Plan work as a number of opportunities and events are now in the mix.</p> <p>4.4 TIS and TPAS: CS noted that he will progress a rescheduled date for the TPAS webinar which was planned for November 2024, and will also discuss offering a webinar via TIS.</p> <p>4.5 CIH: CS and SG highlighted that TTS will be running a workshop session at the CIH conference in March, and noted that they have also been invited to join a panel discussion on the same day, which will focus on health inequalities. Members agreed it would be beneficial to have representation from tenants on the panel discussion session, and members will have the opportunity to contribute their ideas and comments closer to the session date.</p> <p>4.6 Members discussed the volume of engagements and commitments outlined above, and noted that whilst it is very positive to have a range of opportunities to spread the word about TTS, there is a lot to manage in this space. Members agreed that as part of the Comms work, it will be worthwhile considering whether any tools can be developed to support in sharing information about TTS, for example, videos, pre-recorded webinars and/ or sharable resource packs.</p>	

<p>5</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p>	<p>Open discussion- Rents</p> <p>Members discussed whether increases to business National Insurance contributions are impacting on landlord approaches to rent increases and consultation. There is a prevailing view that, since the NI changes were announced, landlords have or are planning to amend their approach to rent increases and consultation. Members were keen to establish whether landlords are communicating with tenants about the NI changes, and if so, whether any landlords are making clear to tenants that the NI changes are leading directly to a change in approach. Members are of the view that although the NI changes are having an impact, this is not necessarily being communicated to tenants.</p> <p>At the last meeting in December, members were keen to undertake project work on rent consultation and are keen to progress this. Members are conscious that previous work has been done in relation to rent consultation however feel that the cost of living crisis and changing 'state of play' with tenant participation and engagement post-Covid necessitates a fresh perspective. CS noted that NETRALT is also keen to progress work on rent consultation, and this could be an opportunity for a collaborative piece of work with other tenant representative groups.</p>	
<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p>Agenda Standing Items</p> <p>Working Group Representation</p> <p>As discussed above, representation for the Accessibility & Independent living sub-group is being finalised.</p> <p>Meeting with Minister</p> <p>CW is continuing to follow up with the Minister's Private Office on a date and time for the next meeting with Mr McLennan.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>AOCB</p> <p>SG noted that TTS have received correspondence from the Convenor of the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, inviting to submit views on the Committee's Building safety consultation. Members are in agreement that they wish to respond to this, and set a date for Monday 10 February for further discussion and to agree an outline response. CS will share joining details for this session on Basecamp.</p> <p>Members requested clarity on the meeting dates to the end of 2025, CS noted that these have been posted on Basecamp under the main project in the Yellow Pages at the bottom of the project and members should put dates in their diary as soon as they are provided to ensure no clashes with other events.</p>	

	Dates will also be included on the end of each set of minutes for clarity.	
	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 02 April 2025 at 10am – via zoom.</p> <p>Forthcoming meetings for 2025</p> <p>Saturday 7 June at 11am (AGM) – Via Zoom Wednesday 18 June at 10am – Via Zoom Wednesday 13 August at 10am – Via Zoom Wednesday 8 October at 10am – Via Zoom Wednesday 3 December at 10am – Via Zoom</p>	

Date	13-Feb-25
Proposed	AC
Seconded	GS