

GET INVOLVED

Getting Started

TRA Lead Committee Member: Chair - Role and Responsibilities

This section details the role and responsibilities of the Chair and advice about how to perform the role.

The Chair is seen as the leader of the group. They are the spokesperson for decisions that are made and campaigns that are being run. The Chair should:

- Chair meetings
- Set the meeting agenda and guide committee members through the agenda at the meeting
- Ensure that the meeting is kept on the right track
- Summarise the main decisions
- Ensure that any actions agreed are carried out by members in between meetings
- Ensure that the TRA adheres to the terms as stated in the constitution
- Deal with conflicts and bad behaviour at meetings, using a Code of Conduct as an aid
- Ensure that there are satisfactory procedures in place for the effective running of the TRA
- Ensure the TRA is registered with the council
- Be a signatory for the TRA bank account
- Lead on developing the Annual Business and Activities Plan (in conjunction with the other committee members)

Developing Further

Holding an effective meeting

As the Chair of the TRA, one of your main responsibilities will be to ensure that on the day, TRA meetings are successful.

Keep the meeting running to time

A meeting which sticks to the allotted time is more likely to keep people's attention and will ensure all agenda items are given the time they deserve.

To make sure the meeting runs to time, it helps if the Chair has an idea beforehand of how much time to give to each agenda item. These timeslots can be added to the agenda. The Chair must then be strict in concluding discussions when they reach their allotted time. Topics which are not fully covered in their timeslot can be deferred to the next meeting.



Make sure the Agenda is followed to and those who speak stay on topic

Off-topic discussions can either cause a meeting to overrun, or it can distract from the topic at hand and affect a TRA's ability to reach a satisfactory conclusion and agree actions above. The Chair will need to be strict in reminding those going off-topic of the purpose/remit of the agenda item.

Encourage everyone to have a chance to speak

Gathering the views of as many TRA members as possible will allow the TRA to make decisions that more accurately reflect the interests of the community it represents. Some people are naturally more vocal and outspoken than others but quieter members may still have just as many opinions to share. If they do not get their say, they may be discouraged from attending a future meeting.

To hear all views, it will be important for the chair to actively monitor who is speaking in the room. Lines such as 'before we move on, would anybody else like to have their say?' can encourage discussion from quieter members. Likewise more vocal members may need to be cut short at times in order to give others a chance to speak.

Sum up discussions

Helping to summarise the conversation and resulting actions at the end of each agenda item or major point of discussion can help the group to follow what has been going on and can help the Secretary to ensure everything essential has been minuted.

Ensure that all in attendance are acting in a respectful manner

Disrespectful behaviour, whether it is irate shouting, interrupting, separate conversations, phones ringing etc. can all serve to distract from the agenda item. Disrespectful behaviour can be intimidating or seen as rude and disrespectful which may discourage people from coming to subsequent meetings.

A Code of Conduct should be distributed and employed by the TRA to enforce a standard that members should comply to. It is the chair's job to enforce the Code of Conduct at meetings. Those who act out of line should be reminded of the code of conduct and asked to correct their behaviour. Those who refuse to correct their behaviour should be asked to leave the meeting.

Check that actions are followed up between meetings

Delivering on actions agreed at previous meetings will increase the trust of the community and help the TRA meet its purpose.

The Chair should ensure that, by the time the next meeting comes around, the other committee members and officers have completed their actions.