

GET INVOLVED

Getting Started

TRA Lead Committee Officer: Secretary - Role and Responsibilities

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

The Secretary assists the Chair by:

- Ensuring that meetings take place. The Secretary should organise the meeting and venue; notify committee members and invite local residents. The Area Housing Office and Resident Involvement team are able to assist with designing and printing flyers and posters.
- Setting the agenda with the Chair or other committee members
- Taking minutes of meetings
- Responsibility for distributing the agenda along with the minutes of the previous meeting
- Receiving post for the TRA and making the committee aware of any letters so that they can be acted on appropriately
- Inviting guests and council officers
- Recording a list of residents who attend a specific meeting
- Keeping records of all correspondence, agendas, minutes and other documentation
- Sending a copy of the meeting minutes to your Housing Officer and Community Engagement Officer
- Keeping an up-to-date list of all committee members
- Ensuring the TRA is registered with the council
- Being a signatory for the TRA bank account

Developing Further

Have a way for the local community to contact the TRA

Setting agenda items which are of interest to the local community is the best way to increase attendance/membership and reflect the interests of the community you represent.

One of the most effective ways is to set up an email account for your TRA. This should not be your

personal email address but one set up exclusively for TRA correspondence and named appropriately, e.g. 'ExampleTRA@gmail.com'. This will look more professional and avoid unnecessary spam in your personal inbox. When your TRA contact email is advertised LBHF will also advertise your TRA's contact details on the TRA section of the Council website. Emails can be auto forwarded from the TRA email address to your personal email address to avoid having to check multiple email addresses. Your Community Engagement Officer can support you to set up an email address.



Ensure the Agenda isn't too long

People generally lose interest if a meeting drags on too long and agenda items may not be given the attention they deserve. It's best to prioritize the most important agenda items within this time period and defer other agenda items to subsequent meetings.

Set the date of the meetings and book a venue

Without a date or a venue, the meeting cannot go ahead. If you have a hall, or room licensed from the council then that will likely be your meeting place. If you do not have a hall, or room, approach your Community Engagement Officer who will find a suitable venue for your TRA to meet.

Ensure the meeting is advertised

Advertising the meetings of the TRA with sufficient notice will allow the TRA to grow and give residents the opportunity to set aside time to attend.

Leaflets or letters through people's doors, posters in the communal areas/entrances of your estate and noticeboards can all help. The Local Housing Office for your area can help with designing and printing flyers, posters and communication materials.

Invite all necessary guests

For some agenda items, having guests such as Councillors, Council Officers, contractors and community groups can be invaluable to discussion and information. Officers are generally very willing to attend subject, to availability and notice, so invite them when it is useful to do so.

Taking the minutes

A record of the meeting allows discussion to be recorded, actions planned not to be forgotten, and serves as a notice of important upcoming dates and events.

Minute taking can be daunting. Minute taking should not be verbatim, but a note of the meeting. Actions, suggestions and items agreed are the most important followed, by a general overview of what has been discussed at each agenda item.

Ensure minutes are made available promptly after meeting

The minutes are a reflection of the meeting. Getting them out early will remind people of actions they must follow up and important dates for their calendar. Once the minutes are done, your Housing Officer can help with printing.

Respond to any correspondence through the TRA email address

Responding promptly will inspire confidence in your TRA throughout the local community. It will also allow you to form better relationships with other organisations. Setting aside a brief amount of time each day/couple of days/week to check and respond to correspondence could be an effective mechanism also.

Keep a record of all important documents

This includes all minutes, agendas, reports, promotional material. The Treasurer will likely keep a record of all the financial things. The committee will turn to you for any important documentation and if you can provide it, it will improve your standing as well as the credibility of the TRA and the TRA's ability to achieve its aims and duties. Keep backups.