

LEASEHOLDER



OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION

T E N A N T
M A N A G E M E N T
O R G A N I S A T I O N



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

LANGUAGES



If you would like a translation of this booklet or any of the other parts of the Leaseholder Handbook please contact the Equalities Officer on 020 7361 3449.

Arabic

إذا أردت ترجمة لهذا الكتيب أو لأي جزء من كتيب المستأجر، الرجاء الاتصال بضابط المساواة "إكواليتيز أوفيسر" على الرقم 020 7361 3449.

Bengali

যদি আপনি এই বুকলেটের অনুবাদ চান অথবা লীজহোল্ডার হ্যান্ডবুকের কোন অংশের অনুবাদ চান তাহলে দয়া করে ইকুয়ালিটিস্ অফিসারের সাথে 020 7361 3449 নাম্বারে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Portuguese

Se você quiser uma tradução deste folheto ou de uma parte do Leaseholder Handbook (Livreto de Aluguel), por favor entre em contato com o Equalities Officer no telefone 020 7361 3449.

Somali

Haddii aad rabtid in xaashidaan yar ama qeyb ka mid Leaseholder Handbook lagu turjimo fadlan la soo xiriir the Equalities Officer lambarka 020 7361 3449.

Spanish

Si desea una traducción de este folleto o cualquier otra parte del Folleto del arrendatario, rogamos se ponga en contacto con el oficial de igualdad de oportunidades, llamando al 020 7361 3449.

Tagalog

Kung gugustohin ninyo ang pagsalinwika itong aklatan o kahit ano man sa ibang bahagi ng "Leaseholder Handbook" maari ninyong tawagan ang "Equalities Officer" [Taong naninigurado na ang serbisyong binibigay para sa lahat ay pantay-pantay] sa 020 7361 3449.

LEASEHOLDERS AND PARTICIPATION



Introduction

The TMO is committed to involving all residents, be they tenants or leaseholders, in the TMO's decision making, and this booklet sets out the ways in which leaseholders are able to participate in the democratic life of the TMO.

Why participate?

There are four main reasons why getting involved in the democratic life of the TMO is important:

1. The TMO exists to provide services to residents. Those services will be improved and offer greater value for money over time if residents are fully involved in monitoring, evaluating and influencing those services, how they work and how they are delivered.
2. The TMO is lead by an elected board. The board members should be held accountable for their decisions. Active involvement by residents helps ensure accountability.
3. The TMO is more than the 'sum of people's homes'; it has a direct interest in ensuring safe, clean, well maintained communities. Resident involvement helps establish standards and ensures that all residents can come to value their community. Involving all residents is the key to obtaining the acceptance of such standards.
4. Homes are not islands. What happens with one property may impact adversely upon a neighbour. This can be true of poorly maintained homes as it is of poorly behaved residents. The TMO and residents have an interest in seeing property properly maintained and in ensuring that anti-social behaviour is unacceptable. Leaseholders, as with tenants, share this common ground. Participation can 'add value' to the quality of community life and the quality of services.

There are a range of formal bodies that provide an opportunity for leaseholders to participate:

Residents'/Tenants' Associations

- Known under either name, though referred to throughout this booklet as Residents' Associations, these bring together all the people who live in a defined area, normally an estate, though it may be an individual block or a group of properties on one or more streets.
- Residents' associations are open to all TMO residents in the defined area. They are required to hold an AGM and to elect officers.
- The TMO has made strengthening residents' associations a priority. It wants to see residents whether tenants or leaseholders getting involved.
- Apart from participation in these more general ways, the TMO is required to consult leaseholders about major building works (known as "major works") proposed for their home or the building or estate in which their home is located, on behalf of the Council as landlord. Please see the separate handbook booklet entitled "Major Works" for more details of these schemes. That statutory consultation also includes some long-term service and repair contracts.
- The TMO carries out this consultation with leaseholders on an individual basis, and via any recognised Residents' Association involved in the properties affected by the works or services. It provides an opportunity for comment and allows matters such as the works or services themselves, and the impact upon the service charge and costs in general to be considered. It also provides the Residents' Association with the opportunity to sit on the project team for any works scheme affecting its properties, and to be involved in the scope of the works and selection of contractors.
- It is also possible for a recognised Residents' Association to form its own Leaseholder Sub-Group to concentrate on issues that affect leaseholders alone, rather than tenants, within the properties served by that Residents' Association. However, any such group must be formally created through the Residents' Association AGM, and must report to and through the Residents' Association. It cannot be recognised as a separate body itself.

- It should be remembered that absentee leaseholders (those who sub-let their properties and live elsewhere themselves) are not eligible for membership of the residents'/tenants' association. However their tenants to whom the property is sub-let are eligible for membership.

Area Review Boards(ARBs)

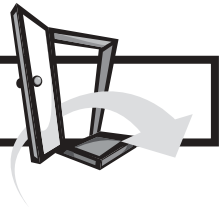
- These bodies bring together representatives from each residents' association. Their role is to help develop TMO policy, to oversee performance of the housing service and to spend funds budgeted from the Housing Revenue Account especially for their use on environmental improvements and security in their areas.
- It's a committee of TMO tenant association representatives that meets to decide how to promote communal improvements in your neighbourhood. It also provides residents with information about TMO business and performance matters, policies and performance matters, budget decisions, and value for money issues. Each year your local ARB will elect a chair and vice chair from amongst its membership of resident association representatives.
- ARBs allow representatives from residents' associations to share common concerns and discuss common issues. ARBs currently meet four times a year. Leaseholders who are elected to represent their residents' association are able to serve on their ARBs. Each ARB sends delegates to key decision making committees of the TMO. For example the Leasehold Services Sub-Committee, the Equalities sub committee, the Participation sub committee and the Services Group.
- To become a member of your local ARB you need to be nominated to attend as a representative from your local TMO registered Residents' Association. Each Association can send two representatives. Each Association is entitled to one vote on the ARB should the business of the ARB require voting to resolve an item of business. Other TMO residents can attend an ARB and speak at its meetings, but not vote, after seeking permission from the Chair and the Lead Officer.
- You may attend your local ARB as a non-voting visitor. Your Neighbourhood Manager will be happy to advise you of local ARB meetings.

- If you have an idea for an ARB works scheme, you should raise your idea at your ARB meeting. Neighbourhood Management or Community Development staff will advise you on how to turn your idea into a concrete proposal. TMO staff will arrange for a site visit, investigate the feasibility of your idea and obtain a budget estimate to report to a future ARB meeting.

Neighbourhood Conferences

- ARBs in the north and south of the borough will meet together two times a year as neighbourhood conferences. This will allow members of ARBs to meet, discuss major policy issues and common concerns, experience or good practice.
- Leaseholders representing their residents' association are able to contribute to the neighbourhood conferences.

TMO LEASEHOLDER SPECIFIC BODIES



Annual leaseholder's conference

This event offers all leaseholders the opportunity to meet together, to meet the TMO management team and to consider the opportunities and options for leaseholders in terms of both service delivery and the democratic life of the TMO.

The first of these was held in April 2003 and future conferences are under discussion.

Leaseholder Services sub committee

This TMO committee brings together TMO board members with leaseholder nominees from the ARBs. The sub committee considers policies and performance relating to leaseholders.

Council Participation Structures

The council also operates two bodies that directly engage with leaseholders:

Tenants' Consultative Committee (TCC)

- Despite its name the TCC brings together representatives of all residents' associations in the borough. It meets four times a year and discusses major policy issues and matters such as rent setting. It provides a forum for residents' association representatives to meet together on a borough wide basis.

Leaseholders' forum

- This council body is occasionally active, and exists to bring together leaseholders to discuss issues of common concern.

TMO Tenant Participation, policy and training team contacts

We have established a Tenant Participation team at the corporate level within the TMO who can be contacted via your Leasehold Management Officer (or Housing Officer in the case of leaseholders/freeholders living within the Lancaster West EMB area), or direct on any of the following telephone numbers:

020 7361 1885 or 020 7361 1886 or 020 7361 1887.

Written communication should be addressed via your TMO Leasehold Management Officer (Housing Officer for Lancaster West EMB residents) or direct to the TMO Tenant Participation Office at The Town Hall, Hornton Street, London, W8 7NX.

With the legal phrase for a leaseholder actually being a "qualifying tenant", tenant participation as we refer to it includes leaseholders and freeholders as well as rent paying tenants. Members of the Tenant Participation team can advise you on all of the opportunities for participation mentioned in this booklet as well as any other related issues, including tenant training schemes.

In addition there are two Community Development Officers who are part of our overall team, though they are managed by the Area offices. They can be contacted in writing in the same way, or by telephone on 020 8964 0597 (North area) or 020 8838 5308 (South area).

You will also find that there is generally at least one Tenant Liaison Officer associated with every major works scheme, either appointed by the TMO or the Council, or by the contractors themselves. Contact details of these staff will be provided to you at the start of each individual major works scheme.

In addition to this, if your property within the Council's housing stock is also your main place of residence, you may qualify to become a member of the TMO itself.

TMO MEMBERSHIP



The TMO is the Managing Agent of the housing owned by the Royal Borough. It was set up by the residents themselves as a Private Limited Company in 1995. It is a “company limited by guarantee” which means that there are no shareholders, just members. It is a not-for-profit organisation, ploughing any surpluses back for the benefit of TMO residents. In the unlikely event that the company is wound up Members may be asked to contribute a sum not exceeding £1.

Benefits include: your own personalised Membership Certificate, mailshots on Company business only sent to Members, opportunity to stand for the TMO Board positions and vote personally in these elections, opportunity to attend the Company Annual General Meeting and submit resolutions, opportunity to have more of a say in how the TMO manages your property and more control over your housing. We are continuing to explore the introduction of more benefits to TMO members.

Membership is not transferable, so each new occupant must apply for themselves. Anybody over 18 years of age living in the property whether they are lessees, spouses, partners, sons, daughters, other relatives or lodgers, are all eligible to apply, where it is their main residence.

It should be remembered that absentee leaseholders (those who sub-let their properties and live elsewhere themselves) are not eligible for TMO membership. However their tenants to who the property is sub-let are eligible for membership.

Application forms are available in most editions of TMO Link or by contacting any TMO office or via your Leasehold Management Officer (Housing Officer for Lancaster West EMB residents). Forms are also available direct from the Company Secretary, at the Town Hall, Hornton Street, London, W8 7NX. Telephone number 020 7361 2164.

If you are not a member join now, otherwise you may miss what's going on at the TMO!

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