

Midlothian Tenants Forum CONSTITUTION

1. Name of the Organisation

The name of the organisation will be the Midlothian Tenants Forum. The area covered by the MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM is the Midlothian Council geographical area.

2. Aims of the Organisation

To safeguard and promote the interests of Council tenants on all matters concerning housing, the environment, and social and community life of the area. MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM will actively encourage membership of tenants equally from Midlothian Councils' housing management areas and to give all tenants equal opportunities.

3. Membership

Membership is open, regardless of race, sex, political opinion, sexual orientation, disability or religious opinion, to all individual tenants, of Midlothian Council, over the age of sixteen, in the geographical area covered by MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM. Representatives from groups may join MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM as an individual tenant. Where an issue relates specifically to a particular landlord only those currently tenants of that landlord will have a right to vote to establish the MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM view.

4. Committee

- a. A Committee will be elected to carry out the business of the MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM.
- b. The Committee will be made up of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and a minimum of 3 general members.
- c. The Committee will be elected from an Annual General Meeting of the MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM. Vacancies on the Committee may be filled by co-option of member(s) from a general meeting. Co-opted members will have full voting rights on the Committee.
- d. All Committee Meetings will be minuted.
- e. In the event of a tied vote the Chairperson will have the casting vote.
- f. In the Chairperson's absence, the Vice-Chairperson will assume full powers.
- g. Each member will be entitled to one vote.
- h. Any member of the Committee, who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without submitting their apologies for non-attendance, will be deemed to have resigned and the Committee will seek a replacement.
- i. There will be a minimum of 6 Committee Meetings annually.
- j. MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM committee members will use their skills and experience to the benefit of all Midlothian Councils and be committed to tenant participation.
- k. Committee members could represent the MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM on other relevant committees or boards.
- l. Committee members are required to sign a code of conduct and act at all times in the interest of the Forum.

5. Annual General Meeting

- a. An Annual General Meeting will be held in November of each year at which the Committee will make a report of its activities; present an independently verified statement of accounts and after three years four of the Committee will resign on a rotational basis.
- b. Resignation will be decided by length of service or, where there are more than four members due to resign, by drawing lots.
- c. Resigning members may immediately stand for re-election.
- d. The Annual General Meeting will elect committee members, vote on any recommendations and motions and any adjustments to the constitution.
- e. The Secretary will locally advertise details of the Annual General Meeting not less than fourteen days before the meeting.
- f. Nominations for the Committee members should be given to the Secretary 7 days before the AGM and will also be taken from the floor. If more members stand for the Committee than are spaces available, a vote will be taken.
- g. Committee members will elect office bearers at their first meeting.
- h. Members will have one vote per household.

6. Other General Meetings

- a. All General Meetings will be open to all eligible tenants.
- b. A Special General Meeting will be held if 30 or more tenants submit, in writing, a request for such a meeting, stating the reasons to the Secretary who shall arrange a meeting to take place within 14 days.
- c. The Secretary will publicise General Meetings at least 7 days in advance. Items for the agenda should be submitted to the Secretary 10 days before the meeting.
- d. Representatives from other organisations may attend meetings by invitation of the Committee.
- e. All General Meetings will be minuted and made available Midlothian Council and all members on request.
- f. Members will have one vote per household.

7. Quorum

No General Meeting or Annual General Meeting will take place if less than 7 of the members are present. No Committee Meeting will take place if less than 5 Committee Members are present.

8. Executive Committee Powers

- a. An Executive Committee made up of the five Committee Office Bearers will have delegated powers to make essential speedy decisions when necessary. Four out of these five Committee Members, one of which must be the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson, must be present before such decisions can be made. Such decisions will be reported to the next meeting of the Committee. When these decisions relate to financial matters a limit of £50 can only be spent without going to committee.

9. Confidentiality

- a. No member of the Assembly shall speak or correspond on behalf of the Assembly without the permission of the Committee. Spokespersons may be appointed from time to time.
- b. Assembly members will respect the need for confidentiality where this arises.

10. Changes to the Constitution

- a. The Constitution may only be altered at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting.
- b. Any proposed changes to the Constitution must be submitted in writing to the Secretary at least 14 days before the date of the meeting.
- c. Any changes to the Constitution must be agreed by a majority of two thirds of those members present.

11. Dissolution of the MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM

- a. The MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM may only be dissolved by a Special General Meeting for the purpose.
- b. Such a meeting shall be advertised at least 14 days before the date of the meeting.
- c. A proposal to dissolve the MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM shall only take effect if agreed by two thirds of those members present at the meeting.
- d. In the event of dissolution all funds to which there is no prior claim relating to the MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM, shall be disposed of according to the wishes of the members present in accordance with the aims of the organisation.

12. Financial Information

- a. The treasurer must give a financial report at every meeting.
- b. At the AGM the treasurer must present an independently verified statement of accounts.
- c. The treasurer cannot spend more than £50 on any single transaction without the consent of the committee.
- d. In the event of dissolution all funds to which there is no prior claim relating to the MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS FORUM, shall be disposed of according to the wishes of the members present in accordance with the aims of the organisation.
- e. All funds shall be deposited into a bank account. Three Committee Members including the Treasurer shall be nominated as signatories and withdrawals shall require signatures from any two of the three. No two signatories will be permitted from the same household.
- f. A Statement of accounts must be presented to landlords that the organisation is registered to on request.

13. Standing Orders

1. All contributions should be addressed to the Chairperson.
2. Only one person should be speaking at any one time and there shall be no private discussion.
3. The ruling of the Chairperson on any question regarding procedure at meetings shall be final unless two thirds of that present dissent from the Chairperson's ruling.
4. Discussion should be kept to the subject on hand and not wander from the point.
5. Should the Chairperson be unable to attend any meetings, the position shall be filled by the Vice Chairperson.
6. Voting shall be conducted by a show of hands and a simple majority shall prevail except where otherwise provided in these rules.
7. All funds shall be deposited into a bank account. Three Committee Members including the Treasurer shall be nominated as signatories and withdrawals shall require signatures from any two of the three. No two signatories will be permitted from the same household.
8. The treasurer shall give a financial report at every meeting.

(As amended and adopted at the AGM of Midlothian Tenants Forum on Saturday 14th November 2009)

Chairperson Signature Date

Secretary Date