



SLIGO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK: A GUIDE TO SETTING UP & RUNNING A RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

WHY HAVE WE DEVELOPED THIS GUIDE?

This guide is brought to you by Sligo PPN in response to issues raised during our annual Needs Analysis. Residents Association members identified that there is not currently a support guide for their operations, to ensure that they are working as effectively as possible on behalf of the local community.

Groups identified that they would like some more information and support on both setting up and enhancing existing residents committees.

Residents Associations are quite unique forms of community group. Most groups come together around a core interest, hobby or cause, but Residents Associations are such an eclectic mix, with individuals brought together simply by the geographical location in which they live. This means that there can often be huge differences in opinion with regard to what people want the core focus of the group to be and what they feel should be the priority for their local area. We hope that this guide will help some Resident Associations navigate some of these differences.

The aim of this handbook is to set out a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a group who take on the task of representing their Estate/area with a view to improving the physical and social environment of that area. The handbook also contains details of how a Residents Committee functions, the role of the local authority & the role of the Residents Association and its individual members. This guide is intended to only act as a brief introduction to Residents Associations for relevant Sligo PPN members. Going forward, if the interest is expressed from member groups, there is scope to look at a range of practical initiatives that RAs might get involved with to build local community relationships and enhance the local environment

We hope you find this publication useful and beneficial to your group.

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WHAT IS A RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION?

A Residents' Association (RA) is a group of people, made up of local residents (tenants and/or homeowners) who decide they want to get together to deal with concerns that affect their local community. They come together to represent the views of all residents in their area to help make their community a better place to live. Residents Associations work in conjunction with Local Authorities and other statutory bodies to address physical and social issues and problems that may arise within an area and to get support to make their local community a positive place to live.

There are currently 35 RAs registered with Sligo PPN. To see the full list go to www.sligoppn.com/members-directory/

WHY START A RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION?

Groups of residents might start a RA for the following reasons:

- To campaign for something positive e.g. a better play area
- To work together to improve facilities or services, e.g. a better repair service, improved road safety, improved local security etc. Basically whatever is important to your community?
- To give your community a greater voice than you would have as an individual
- To create a better sense of community in your area
- To keep residents informed of what's happening in your local community
- To organise outings and other social events.
- To have a group who, on behalf of the residents, can approach Sligo County Council or other agencies about issues of interest and concern.

The Benefits of A Residents' Association:

- Creating and developing your community
- Meeting your neighbours socially
- Achievement and pride in your estate
- Providing services and activities for the residents
- Gaining of new skills and knowledge
- Sharing of skills and knowledge
- Achieve more as a group for the well being of the estate

START-UP & ANNUAL GRANTS

Sligo County Council operate a number of grants that Residents Associations might be able to avail of to support the development of projects and activities. Available grants can be found at www.sligococo.ie/Grants/ and also feature on social media and local newspapers.

You can also consider programmes such as Tidy Towns.

Sligo PPN will continuously update the community on any funding opportunities they are made aware of. Make sure you follow us on FB, Twitter and regularly check our emails and website updates.

WHERE DO I START?*

STEP 1: TALK TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Knock on people's doors, use social media, do a mail drop – whatever suits you the best. Find out what are the main issues and concerns in your area? Do people think an RA could make a difference? What homes and area will the RA cover? Organisations such as Sligo PPN, Sligo Volunteer Centre or Sligo Leader Partnership can support you in putting together a needs analysis for this purpose – this can be anything from a few simple questions to a full review of your local area.

This can be a daunting step – taking on this responsibility on behalf of your community and putting yourself out there and don't be disappointed if some people don't agree with you at first. But it is worth it for the good of your local area. You might start off with a very small group, but often these grow once others start to see small progress being made. It is a good idea to try and tackle some visible 'easy' wins first rather than try and take on some of the bigger behind the scenes challenges that might have made you want to get the group together in the first place – because these visible wins are the things that get your neighbours talking, raise their interest and potentially get you the new numbers you need to begin to tackle the bigger issues.



STEP 2: GET IN CONTACT WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT MAY BE ABLE TO HELP.

Sligo PPN 071 91 14430

**Important note, the below advice describes an approach when there are no public health restrictions in place. Always adapt this to ensure you are following good health guidance at times of social distancing*

Sligo County Council 071 91 11111

Sligo Leader Partnership 071 91 14438

Sligo Volunteer Centre 071 9111042

SVC can support volunteer members, develop volunteer programmes, provide related templates and networking opportunities with other groups, offer training related to volunteer engagement and a Garda Vetting service if required.

Your local elected members

(full list at <https://www.sligococo.ie/YourCouncil/CountyCouncil/CountyCouncilMembers/>)

STEP 3: ARRANGE AN INITIAL MEETING

Have a look around your local area to find a place to hold your initial meeting. Talk to local organizations or community groups to find a space. Don't forget to be aware of cultural differences when planning your meeting and make provision for people with disabilities.

- Book a suitable venue: community centre/parish hall
- Inform all residents of the meeting
- Have an agenda (list of things to be discussed) ready
- Make sure someone is in place to Chair the meeting
- Chairperson should make sure everyone who wishes to join in the discussion is given an opportunity to contribute.
- Record any decisions or proposed actions agreed at the meeting
- Record the names of everyone in attendance so you can keep everyone up to date with progress
- Check with the community whether an online meeting is a preferred option



STEP 4: MAKE SURE THAT EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT THE MEETING

There are plenty of templates available to create a simple letter or leaflet to let people know about the date, time and place of the meeting. Make sure that the leaflet mentions the issues that concern people the most in your area and that these will be discussed at the meeting. Social Media is a good option for getting people's attention and for spreading the word quickly. You can use it for quick polls and to get an idea of who is interested. Any notification needs to be delivered at least 10 days before the meeting.

Maybe talk to local organizations representing new communities in Sligo – find out if there is a need to get this information translated to ensure that everyone can take part.

STEP 5: HOLD THE FIRST MEETING

The first meeting is a chance to talk about the issues which everyone is concerned about and to explain what you hope the RA will achieve.

After your first meeting you will know if residents want to set up a RA and the types of priorities that your local community are facing.

WHAT NEXT.....

If you do decide to set up a RA, there are a number of things that you need to do. At the next few meetings, you will all need to:

- Choose a name for your group – though this can seem trivial, the name sets the tone for how you move forward, the affinity people have towards the group and the sense of ownership they have over the committee – make sure as many as possible are involved in naming the group and you could also do something like an online community vote for the preferred options – this would also enhance awareness of what you are doing.
- Select committee members including a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. There are lots of supports out there for you to set up a group and templates that define key committee, codes of conduct etc – Sligo PPN or Sligo Volunteer Centre can point you in the right direction
- Agree a constitution and work plan for the group. This sets the tone for how you operate, the kind of relationships your group has and the respect that you have for each other. Again there are lots of guides and templates available that you can simply adapt to your group.
- Keep copies of minutes and agendas
- Be representative of the neighbourhood or community you live in. Choose 2 or 3 key initial aims for your RA. If you can make visible changes quickly in the area you live, then other people will see that you are effective and will want to join you.
- Try and set meetings as far in advance as possible – people are busy juggling work, friends and families and need as much notice as possible
- It may take a couple of months or longer for your group to get organised. Don't worry if it takes a long time. Don't rush to launch your RA before you're ready

Register your RA with Sligo PPN – registration only takes a few minutes and you can do this directly by emailing ppn@sligococo.ie or on the website www.sligoppn.com. This means you will be kept in the loop about all funding and information, have a chance to connect with other groups, promote your groups achievements and activities. This also makes you eligible for Local Authority funding.

As a member of Sligo PPN, we can also promote the activities of your group to raise awareness of your work and encourage engagement from the broader community.

THE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

The Committee Itself

It is up to you to decide how many committee members you want, how they are elected and how often they should meet. But whatever you decide it needs to be stated in the constitution.

As a general guide

1. A committee shall be elected to carry out the business of the RA.
2. The committee shall be made up of a minimum of secretary, chair, treasurer and 3 general members.
3. The committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM)
4. Committee members shall carry out the duties given to them at the general meetings.
5. The committee shall meet X a month and no less than X times per year.
6. Minutes of all meetings shall be made available to all members.
7. Vacancies arising during the year can be filled by an election at the next general meeting. The committee may fill any vacancies arising in the committee until the next general meeting.

Committee Members – What are the Responsibilities

The first task of a committee member is to attend meetings of the committee, or send apologies if they are not able to. However the role of a committee member is much greater.

A committee member needs to:

- Be aware of and be committed to the aims of the Residents Association
- Participate fully in meetings and events
- Take share of the work in between meetings
- Work together with other members to ensure work of the groups gets delivered
- Volunteer if they can see a job needs doing
- Put items on the agenda
- Report back when they have completed a task or gone to a meeting on behalf of the RA
- Respect confidentiality of individuals
- Don't let differences of opinion disrupt the workings of the group
- Support the committee and accept majority decisions
- Make sure they represent the views of members
- Ask members for their views on important issues



SPECIFIC ROLES

CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson's primary role is to lead the committee and facilitate its meetings. A Chair is elected to provide leadership, plan, call and chair meetings, and ensure that the committee works well together. A Chair should ensure that the RA keeps to its aims.

The key responsibilities of a chairperson include:

- Taking responsibility for facilitating the group to work well together towards achieving the committee's aims, and giving help and support where needed, ensuring all are allowed/encouraged to speak.
- Acting as spokesperson and representing the committee to outside bodies, networks, etc.
- Helping the committee to maintain its focus on achieving the agreed aims, objectives and work plans.
- Making emergency decisions between meetings, where necessary, in accordance with procedures agreed by the committee.
- Planning and running of meetings (or delegation as necessary).
- Ensuring that all necessary information is made available to committee members.
- Ensuring that adequate records of meetings are kept.
- Ensuring that plans decided on during meetings are implemented.

SECRETARY

A Secretary is responsible for administration and communication.

They set the agenda with the Chair, take minutes of meetings, distribute previous minutes and agendas for meetings coming up, and occasionally write letters on behalf of the RA. Members of the RA can assist the Secretary with their allotted tasks.

The key responsibilities of a Secretary include:

- Writing letters officially on behalf of the group.
- Receiving correspondence on behalf of the group and keeping the group up to date on all correspondence.





TREASURER

Treasurer - A Treasurer oversees the management of any money collected. They pay bills and keep accurate records of money received and spent. The Treasurer works with the committee to carry out financial planning for the year. They ensure that all expenditure is agreed at a minuted meeting. They should prepare a financial report and bank statement to the committee at every meeting. At the end of the year they prepare the final account.

The key responsibilities of a treasurer include:

- Establishing Policy and Procedure.
 - Monitoring income and expenditure of the group.
 - Keeping the committee informed of the financial situation of the organisation.
 - Keeping an eye on the budget.
 - Presenting the accounts at the organisation's AGM.
 - Representing the organisation in funding applications.
-

MINUTE TAKER

The key responsibilities of a minute taker include:

- Organisation of meetings, e.g. time and place etc.
- Drafting the agenda with the Chairperson.
- Taking of minutes.
- Writing up and circulation of minutes and next meeting agenda

HOLDING A MEETING

The most important thing a committee does is to meet to discuss issues and make decisions on addressing those issues. A good meeting is well planned and organised to ensure decisions are made in an effective manner. Try and ensure you schedule a meeting at a time that suits the majority of local residents.

To ensure your meeting is well organized you should;

- Notify all members of the committee of the meeting at least one week in advance.
- Prepare the meeting agenda in advance (a list of items that you want to discuss)
- Members should be informed that any items they wish to discuss should be forwarded to the chairperson before the meeting.
- Any new items to be added to the Agenda at the beginning of the meeting are added under Any Other Business (AOB).
- Each meeting should have an agreed number of members present in order to go ahead. This is known as a Quorum (Your group will decide what your Quorum is while completing the Constitution). For example the committee's quorum might be 1/3 of the membership plus 1.
- The meeting should start no later than 10 minutes AFTER the time you set.
- Meeting should be in a suitable venue, warm, accessible free from disruption



TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

- Agree a time for the meeting and stick to it, meetings should last no longer than 2 hours.
- Ensure all mobile phones are switched off or put on the silent setting
- Agree on ground rules for the group.
- Agree on confidentiality: what is discussed at the meeting stays within the meeting
- Questions should always be directed through the chairperson
- While everyone may not always agree, it is important to respect the opinions of every member.

AN EXAMPLE OF A MEETING AGENDA

1. Welcome, introductions & apologies (the chairperson should welcome everyone to the meeting; introduce any new member, or anyone who is attending the meeting. Apologies from members who are unable to attend should be read & recorded)
2. Minutes - this is a record of the decisions made at the previous meetings, members agree that the minutes are accurate, and propose any changes or amendments
3. Matters arising- Relates to issues within the minutes that need to be reported on
4. Correspondence- Any letters, information that has been sent to the committee since the previous meeting should be read & recorded
5. Committee issues – feedback and discussion on any issues being progressed by the committee
6. AOB. Any other business that should be discussed
7. Confirm date, venue & time for the next meeting

SETTING THE AGENDA

The secretary and the chair should set the agenda for each meeting, with committee members being given the opportunity to put forward items for discussion. Agendas mean that meetings are effective and structured.

A copy of the agenda with minutes of the previous meeting should be sent out at least 10 days before meetings and should include the following:

- The name of the group
- Date, time and place of the meeting
- A brief description of each item (with time limits if needed)
- Any other business
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting
- Date time and venue of the next meeting
- An example agenda is included in this guide under Appendix 3

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

It is really important that minutes are kept of each meeting as a record of the decisions that are made and actions that have been taken.

The secretary is responsible for taking the minutes, but someone else can take them if necessary.

- If you're not sure what has been decided, ask the chair to summarise.
- There is no need to say who said what and when, just what decisions have been made and who will carry out the actions.
- Write up the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting whilst details are still fresh in the memory.
- Keep notes until the minutes have been checked by the chair.
- Circulate the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting.

TIP: it is useful to have a distinct 'Actions' section in the minutes that clearly defines; what the action is, steps to be taken and who has agreed to take responsibility

FINANCES

Although the treasurer keeps the accounts in order, the group's finances are the responsibility of the whole committee. There are a few basic rules when it comes to money – you must:

- Keep one clear book-keeping system
- Check the book-keeping on a regular basis. It's much easier to spot a mistake after a month than after a year
- Keep everything in a safe place. Receipts, cheque books and records of transactions are just as important as cash
- Open a suitable bank account in the name of the RA with 3 signatories
- Pay any money received into the bank as soon as you get it. This means you have a receipt that the group actually received the money
- Keep as little cash as possible and use the bank to make transactions whenever you can
- Keep receipts for every amount spent, however small. If a receipt is lost or not provided, the person claiming the money back must sign a petty cash slip, which authorises the spending
- The accounts should be open and available to all members
- Make sure you receive and keep bank statements regularly (ideally monthly)

DEVELOPING A RESIDENTS WORK PLAN

In the early stages of a Residents Committee it is good practice to develop a work plan.

A work plan will keep the committee focused and will help the committee to track their progress and achievements.

A work plan is a list of actions/tasks that the Residents Committee have agreed to follow up on. Tasks are usually issues/ concerns raised at meetings by the members of the Residents committee.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD WORK PLAN?

- Clearly sets out the issues/concerns and the solution the committee would like to achieve
- Clearly sets out what needs to be done to ensure each task is achieved
- The Actions/tasks within the work plan should be realistic and achievable
- A timescale for each action/task should be agreed
- It is good practice to assign a committee member to be the leader of each task/action. The leader can then encourage others to help them.
- Progress on each action/task should be reported on at each meeting and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- It is important for the committee to evaluate the workplan regularly. This will allow the committee to identify successes, barriers and help plan for the future.

WHAT IS A CONSTITUTION AND WHY SHOULD YOU HAVE ONE

A constitution is a written understanding of what your group is going to do and how it is going to do it. It sets out the aims, objectives and rules of the group.

A constitution is important to a group because:

- A written understanding keeps the committee on the right track, and avoids members becoming at cross purposes.
- It will serve as a reference, and help to resolve problems in times of controversy.
- Potential funders typically want to see that your group is accountable and transparent and fair in how it operates and makes decisions
- There are plenty of sources of help to assist the group in developing a constitution that reflects the work and ethos of the Residents Committee.

Appendix 1:

Examples of constitutions can be found online, but here is some guidance on what it should include:

1 The name of the organisation

Here you state the agreed name of your RA

'The name of the association shall be ***** Residents Association'

2 Aims

Here you list what you want your group to do, e.g.

1. To promote the interests of all residents in the area, and maintain good relations within the community.
2. To promote all residents rights and the maintenance and improvement of housing conditions.
3. To work towards eliminating all forms of discrimination within the community by encouraging all members to join the RA.
4. To work with Sligo County Council and other organisations for the benefit of all residents.
5. The RA shall be non-political.

3 Membership

Here you state who can join the group. e.g.

1. Membership shall be open to all residents in the community.
2. All members will have an equal vote. It is important that one or two members do not take on the responsibility of making decisions and taking action on behalf of the rest of the committee. This is where the majority of problems within RAs arise.
3. All members should actively seek to represent the various needs of the area and must not discriminate on the grounds of nationality, political opinion, race, religious opinion, gender, age, sexuality or disability.
4. Members shall at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable manner when attending meetings or any functions linked to the RA..

You may decide that only one member per household shall have a right to vote. This would need to be clearly stated.

4 Finance

Finance is very important to groups and can also cause the most concern. If detailed clauses are included in the constitution this will help the group run smoothly and help the treasurer in their role.

1. All money raised by or on behalf of the RA is to be used only to further the aims of the RA.
2. The treasurer shall open a bank account in the name of the RA. This is a must for accessing Local Authority and most other funding.
3. Cheque signatories will be nominated by the committee (one must be the treasurer). There shall be 3 signatories. These should not be from the same household or the same family.
4. All cheques and instructions to the RA's bankers shall require 2 of the agreed signatures.
5. The treasurer shall have the accounts checked by an independent person with adequate financial experience, at the end of each financial year.
6. The accounts shall be available to all members at the AGM.

Most funding bodies require that a recognised group should be able to demonstrate responsible accounting methods.

5 Annual General Meetings

This is an important meeting as it is the meeting where the committee reports on the activities of the RA over the previous year. At this meeting all members of the committee stand down and new members are elected. Your constitution should state when and how this meeting will be held and how members will be informed of it.

- There shall be an AGM held every X at which the committee shall report on its work, present a statement of accounts and resign from their posts.
- The committee for the next year shall be elected at the AGM.
- At the AGM, members shall vote on recommendations and any amendments to the constitution.
- The secretary will notify all members of the date of the meeting not less than 21 days before the AGM.

6 Other general meetings

These are the other meetings throughout the year that are open to your members. This section will state how these meetings will be organised.

- There will be a general meeting open to all members every X months.
- A special general meeting open to all members will be held if 12 or more members request for such a meeting to the secretary. The secretary shall arrange for this meeting to take place within 21 days.
- The secretary will publicise all general meetings at least 5 days in advance.

7 Quorum

This is the number of members required for a meeting to go ahead. You can decide what the quorum will be for your group.

- E.g. The quorum for committee meetings of the association shall be one-third of its elected membership, or XXXX members, whichever is the greater. The quorum for all general meetings shall be one-third of the membership.

8 Changes to the constitution

Your constitution should develop along with your group, so it would be sensible to have a section on how to alter it.

- The constitution can only be altered at an AGM or at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.
- Any suggested changes to the constitution must be handed to the secretary at least 14 days before the AGM.
- Changes to the constitution must be agreed by two thirds of the members present at the meeting.

9 Voting

This sets out how you will make your decisions, e.g.

- Any member can make a proposal, but, in order for it to be voted on by other members it must be seconded or supported by another member.
- Only members present at the meeting may vote (whether meeting is in person or online) unless already agreed prior to the meeting
- Before voting any member may propose an amendment which must also be seconded.
- No member shall exercise more than one vote.
- In the event of an equal vote, the chair shall have the casting vote.

10 Dissolution

Here you must state how your group can be wound up and what will happen with any funds that remain.

- The RA may only be dissolved at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose, which must be advertised before the meeting.
- A proposal to dissolve the association shall take effect only if agreed by two thirds of the members present at the meeting.
- Any assets (financial or otherwise) remaining, after the payment of all debts and liabilities, shall be given to registered charitable organisations, according to the wishes of the membership of the association.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND THEIR ROLES

The committee runs the RA on a day to day basis on behalf of the members. The members of the RA are the residents in the defined community/area. The committee will organise general meetings and the AGMs and will carry out any decisions made at these meetings. The membership of the committee should reflect the people it represents with regard to age, tenure, sex, ethnicity and disability whenever possible

Appendix 2:

Frequently Asked Questions Anything to be added from SCC with regard to general questions

Frequently asked questions

Is there a limit to the number of members a group can have?

A group can be as small or as large as you want it to be. For example, it could cover a small sheltered housing scheme, one street or the whole of an estate. It is up to the residents to decide the area they want the group to cover.

Should leaseholders or other residents in the area be members of the association?

If the group is going to deal with social and environmental issues as well as housing management issues then it is best that everyone living in the area covered by the group is allowed to be a member.

Will we need insurance?

Your group is not required to have insurance. However, you will need public liability insurance for any formal outings or events you organise. If you are given premises or equipment, you will also need to insure them.

Appendix 3:

Resident association code of excellence

1.0 Community committees and resident groups providing an excellent service will:

1.1 Be courteous at all times in their dealings with staff, contractors, agencies, other residents and members of the public and never use sexist, racist, abusive or other inappropriate language;

1.2 Represent the best interests of residents in their area/estate and try to reflect and understand the views of the community;

1.3 give residents at least two weeks' notice of all meetings. A resident group demonstrating best practice will, if possible, develop an annual meeting schedule

1.4 Provide feedback to members about discussions at forums;

1.5 produce minutes of all meetings, making them available to all in attendance. All residents can receive copies upon request.:

1.6 produce annually, at least one newsletter to update members and residents with regard to activities. Newsletters should subscribe to the guidance attached as appendix A

1.7 hold an open and accessible AGM at least once for residents during the committee year. Adequate notice should be provided and every effort should be made to encourage and promote attendance. This may include for example, use of notice boards, letters, social media and or flyers.

1.8 run meetings in a professional and welcoming manner with committee members seated at the front of Open Meetings and Annual General Meetings with members and guests introduced to delegates;

1.9 hold and observe written financial procedures and have three bank signatories who should be unrelated and from different households. Two signatures will be required on each cheque. Written updates of income and expenditure should be presented at each meeting and a comprehensive list of the income and expenditure of the year should be given to all members attending the AGM for scrutiny;

1.10 have a clear and effective policy for dealing with breaches and disputes;

1.11 demonstrate how the group has developed committee skills and encouraged new members. Peabody will fund and promote members to achieve training to assist them in their role;

1.12 hold meetings in accessible and appropriate venues for all residents and staff;

1.13 consult members appropriately and adequately and feedback outcomes of consultation small sheltered housing scheme, one street or the whole of an estate.

2.0 Conflicts of Interest

- Individual members should disclose any interest whether personal or on behalf of any group they represent, that may affect or influence their approach to the matter under discussion.
- Members should not expect to receive more or less favourable treatment by Peabody staff because of their membership of the Residents Association RA.
- Members must use Peabody's normal procedures for reporting repairs, complaints etc.

3.0 Confidentiality

- Members should respect the confidentiality of all individual residents, whether present or not and not mention specific individual cases which may cause embarrassment or identification of an individual.
- Any information or items shared with Gallions that is of a confidential nature must not be disclosed to anyone else apart from members of the RA.

4.0 Breach of the Code of Excellence

- If a member of the RA, committee or member of the public does not abide by the code of excellence the chair will warn that if they break the code again they will be asked to leave the meeting. This will be dealt with independently by the RA.
- The chair may give the member of the RA, committee or member of the public two further warnings (a maximum of three warnings in any new meeting and/or three consecutive meetings).
- If the member of the RA, committee or member of the public continues to ignore the code then the chair will ask the meeting to vote on whether the member should be asked to leave.

Appendix 4

Resident Associations Financial Guidelines

Sample Resident association financial guidelines

1. A bank account is to be opened with a financial Institution.
2. Two signatories are required to withdraw any money. These should be Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the association. Signatories should not be from the same family.
3. Under no circumstances will the association use an open or pre-signed cheque.
4. The procurement of equipment or any other expenditure in excess of €xx must be subject to committee resolution.
5. An inventory of all items purchased, including purchase price, together with full details of all other expenses and expenditure must be maintained by the Treasurer. The inventory must be made available for inspection upon request at any time.
6. No monies are to be paid to committee members other than out of pocket expenses (e.g. travel, telephone, stationary etc.).
7. Where monies are claimed for travel expenses (e.g. attending Regional Forums, training, conferences etc.) the following details are required; reason for attendance, date of attendance, destination to and from, total mileage claimed.
8. Where monies are claimed for telephone calls an itemised bill is required which identifies all calls to which the claim refers.
9. Petty cash up to a maximum of €xx may be kept by the Treasurer for incidental expenses, such as stationary, stamps, out of pocket expenses etc. No money is to be issued without a receipt.
10. A proper record is to be kept of all income and expenditure which will run for each financial year. Books are to be examined by a reputable independent person outside the organisation. Copies of the examined accounts must be presented to the Annual General Meeting.
11. The Treasurer must report details of expenditure and income at each meeting of the association for the period since the previous meeting.
12. These rules are to be brought to the second meeting after an AGM for review and amendment if necessary.

Adopted on date

Signed Treasurer

Chair

Appendix 5:

Sample Content for First Meeting

Proposed Residents Association for Anywhere Meeting to be held on any date at whatever time Anywhere Community Centre

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Apologies for absence
3. Reasons for forming a residents association and the type of group required
4. Choice of name
5. Nomination and election of officers and committee members
 - Chairperson
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Other committee members
6. Adoption of a constitution
7. Identification of issues of interest I concern
8. Any other business
 - How are you going to make the meeting enjoyable?
9. Date of next meeting