

NEWCASTLE TENANTS FEDERATION

TENANTS FUND

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATIONS

It is advised that all groups read these notes carefully before completing the application form. If you have any queries, please contact the Federation, we will be pleased to help.

1. In April 1995, Newcastle's Housing Committee agreed to fund the running costs of tenants associations out of the Housing Revenue Account. The "Tenants Fund" is distributed to tenants groups representing council tenants who meet the recognition criteria. The criteria are enclosed in the application pack.
2. Grants will be made available on the following basis:

Groups representing:

Up to	149 properties	£150
Between	150 – 399 properties	£250
Over	400 properties	£500

Please note that only Council properties are taken into account, **NOT** those purchased under The Right To Buy.

3. These grants are to be used to cover the running costs of tenants' groups active around housing issues. These running costs include the hire of meeting rooms, travel expenses, stationery costs, costs associated with producing leaflets and newsletters. The grant is not intended to meet the costs of running premises, nor is it intended to be used for social activities. Your Community Co-ordinator can advise you about other grants that are available to cover these sorts of expenses.
4. If this is your second year of applying for a grant, your grant will depend on:
 - (A) **the previous grant having been spent appropriately**
 - (B) **a recent statement of accounts showing that your financial records have been independently assessed**

The statement should accompany your completed application form.

5. There are 2 application forms – one for the basic grant (white) and one for the special fund (green), which is a top-up fund for those groups who need to provide regular crèche or translation costs, or have other particularly heavy costs, for example, producing a welcome pack for new tenants, producing surveys/reports as part of a campaign or there may be other reasons that you need more than your basic grant. Contact the Federation to discuss any special needs for such funding and we will be able to advise your group.
6. If this is your first application, and you are simply applying for the basic Grant, you need not supply us with a budget. However, if you intend to Apply for top-up funding we will need a full breakdown of your expenses, including detailed costs of childcare, meeting room hire or translation costs etc. If this is your second application, see paragraph 4 above.
7. The Federation's guidelines on childcare are:
 - a. A recognised crèche provider should be used to provide crèches for public meetings. A list is available from the Federation.
 - b. Baby-sitting allowances are only intended to be paid to those people who would not normally be expected to be responsible for looking after the children (i.e. it is not intended to be paid to partners of the committee member).
 - c. As with ALL expenditure, childcare payments should be agreed by the whole committee, and minuted as being paid.
8. Completed application forms should be returned to Newcastle Tenants Federation. The application will be acknowledged in writing.
9. All applications are considered, in the first instance, by the Federation Executive Committee. If the group meet the criteria, then the application is forwarded to the Community & Housing Department, with a request for payment. Cheques will then be sent by them directly to the group.
10. Grants will be monitored by the Community & Housing Directorate.
11. If any group wishes to attend either the Federation Executive Committee or Tenant Involvement Advisory Group, please contact the Federation and we will send you notification of meetings.
12. Finally, if any group needs help with their application, please contact the Federation.

NEWCASTLE TENANTS FEDERATION

RECOGNITION CRITERIA FOR TENANTS GROUPS

1. **Setting Up:** The group should have been set up at a public meeting called for the purposes of setting up a tenants/residents association. The meeting should have been widely publicised with a combination of leaflets and posters, and everyone in the area to be represented should have been invited.
2. **The group should clearly indicate the area they are representing. For the purposes of the funding, only council tenancies matter, although it is recognised that tenants and residents groups strive to represent everyone in their area.**
3. **Membership:** Membership of the group should be open to everyone on the estate.
4. **Committee:** The Committee should have been elected at the public meeting, although co-options should be possible throughout the year. Council tenants must make up the majority of members on the Committee.
5. **Constitution:** At the earliest possible opportunity the group should adopt a constitution, along the lines of the Tenants Federation model constitution. This constitution should include a commitment to equal opportunities, and an anti-racist and anti-sexist clause. The other recognition criteria should also be included in the constitution. If the present constitution does not cover these points, then this should be changed at the earliest opportunity.
6. **Accountability:** The group should regularly report back to the wider membership through regular public meetings and newsletters. A minimum of three public meetings should be held per annum, including the AGM.
7. **Finances:** The group should have a proper system for handling money, this should include having a bank account in the name of the group

with at least 2 signatories on cheques and proper record-keeping. Accounts should be independently inspected each year, either by an officer or councillor of the local authority, or by the Tenants Federation, and these accounts should be presented to the AGM of the group.

8. *AGM: An Annual General Meeting* should be held each year for the purposes of reporting on activities, receiving the independently inspected accounts and electing a new committee.
9. *Housing Issues:* The funding is only available to those groups who actively take up housing and related issues. Indicators of this would be regular meetings with the local housing staff.
10. *Groups with especially large costs,* particularly relating to childcare or interpretation/translation, will be able to receive funding over and above the formula funding. This will be available through the special fund.
11. *Training:* The committee will be expected to participate in the training programme which is to be established by the Tenants Federation, with particular reference to Finance and Equal Opportunities.

APPLICATION TO THE TENANTS' FUND

Please answer all the questions below. If you need help completing the form please do not hesitate to contact the Tenants' Federation, First Floor, 1 Pink Lane, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 5DW. Tel: 232 1371

1: Name of Group _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Telephone/Mobile _____

2: Estate or Area covered by the Group

Number of Council Properties (do not include properties bought under The Right To Buy)

3: ABOUT THE GROUP

Was the group set up at a public meeting? Yes No

Is there an elected committee? Yes No

Are the majority of the committee council tenants? Yes No

Has the group adopted a constitution? Yes No
If YES please attach a copy

Does your group take up housing issues? Yes No

Does your group meet regularly with housing staff to discuss housing issues? Yes No

4: Please provide the following information on the financial position of your group:

Name of Treasurer

Address

—

_____ Postcode

Telephone/Mobile

Names & addresses of persons who sign cheques

A _____ B

Thank you for completing this form. Please read the declaration set out below before signing and dating the application.

I\We have read the recognition criteria attached to this application form.
I\We agree on behalf of the group that the money granted will only be used for the purposes stated in this application.

I\We declare that the information on this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signed _____ Date _____

Position in Group _____

**Please return your completed form to: Newcastle Tenants Federation,
First Floor, 1 Pink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 5DW. Tel: 232 1371.**

4: Please provide the following information on the financial position of your group:

Name of Treasurer _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Telephone/Mobile _____

Names & addresses of persons who sign cheques

A _____ B _____

Name & Address of Bank/Building Society

Name of Account

Number of Account

Thank you for completing this form. Please read the declaration set out below before signing and dating the application.

\We have read the recognition criteria attached to this application form. \We agree on behalf of the group that the money granted will only be used for the purposes stated in this application.

\We declare that the information on this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signed _____ Date _____

Position in Group _____

Please return your completed form to: Newcastle Tenants Federation, First Floor, 1 Pink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 5DW. Tel: 232 1371.