



# WDH and Communities Together Agreement





**If you need this document in another format  
please contact us**



**0345 8 507 507 (Text Relay calls welcome)**



**[communications@wdh.co.uk](mailto:communications@wdh.co.uk)**

(calls to OneCALL may be recorded for training purposes)

# Communities Together Agreement

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## Purpose

We will provide advice, support, resources and opportunities for participation, consultation and community development. We will encourage the development of community groups and tenants' and residents' associations (TARAs) by promoting fair and democratic practices for all participants and enable groups to be as inclusive and representative as possible. This document sets out each party's rights and responsibilities.

## What is a community group or TARA?

We define a community group or a TARA as a group of people who come together to help improve their chosen area. They may campaign for better services, improvements to their environment and tenants' homes or organise activities that bring people closer together. They may have a specific area or location which they represent and work to improve. We will work closely with community groups and TARAs to deliver our services and monitor how well we are doing. For the purpose of this document the term group will be used to describe all types of groups.

## How the system of recognition works

Recognition is the system we use to acknowledge the role of a group in a particular area and will work with them to make positive changes in their community.

We may only be able to recognise one group representing the shared interests of its membership and acts collectively on their behalf through our Communities Together Annual Grant and Neighbourhood Grant. For the purposes of this Agreement these groups are referred to as the **primary group**.

We are keen to support other community groups that can demonstrate significant benefit to our communities. If they have different aims but operate in the same area as the primary group, we may be able to support them through our Neighbourhood Grant. For the purposes of this Agreement these groups are referred to as the **secondary group**.

For transparency purposes our Resident Involvement Monitoring Group (RIMG) will consider all applications.

By completing the Agreement application form, the group is agreeing to abide by the conditions set out below. We will make sure that the group has access to the benefits listed.

The Tenant Involvement Officer (TIO) will provide support and guidance to make sure the group successfully fulfils the agreed criteria and accesses the benefits available.

We reserve the right to withdraw, suspend or decline from entering into the Agreement with a group. In such circumstances, we will clearly explain the reasons in writing to a nominated individual of the group within 10 working days of the decision. Examples would include but are not limited to:

- the group's arrangements for dealing with safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, in terms of group activities linked to the individuals, are considered to be unsatisfactory;
- activities carried out by the group that are considered to be in breach of its constitution; and
- activities, acts or omissions by the group that could cause us reputational harm.

## Agreement

### Community groups



A community group has agreed to represent and be accountable to residents in a certain location, be constituted and have an elected committee, which will include a chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer.

Your group will:

- Have a written constitution, which should contain an Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding Policy.
- Have a democratically elected committee consisting of, where possible, a chair, a vice chair, secretary, treasurer and committee members.
  - **The chair** is responsible for making sure that the group runs well, promotes the interests of local residents, has effective meetings and acts as the spokesperson for the group.
  - **The vice chair** is responsible for making sure that the group runs well, promotes the interests of local residents, has effective meetings and acts as the spokesperson for the group in the absence of the chair.
  - **The secretary** is responsible for making sure that the committee runs smoothly and has the information it needs to run the group. They also plan and support the meeting, keep records and deal with correspondence.
  - **The treasurer** is responsible for the finances of the group and keeps the committee up to date with the financial position. This includes dealing with banking, recording and checking financial transactions, budgeting and planning for the groups' activities.
  - **Committee members** attend meetings regularly and contribute effectively to discussions.
- Have a committee that is responsible for making sure that membership is clearly open to all members of their community in the defined area and that no individual member is unfairly excluded. This can be achieved by widely advertising open meetings through the distribution of flyers, posters and use of social media.
- Have a clearly defined geographical area of cover and provide a list of streets the group represent. This will be checked to verify the number of properties we own and are covered by the group.
- Have open financial accounts that are independently checked at least every 12 months.

- Demonstrate that all members have the opportunity to attend open meetings of the group.
- Keep all residents informed so that they have an opportunity to get involved with the group.
- Listen and act on what group members have to say.
- Keep accurate records of income and expenditure.
- Individual checks **must** be carried out in accordance with the groups safeguarding policy or statement with the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS).
- Actively represent the views of its members.
- Demonstrate a shared interest in a small geographical area, such as the streets surrounding a community facility or open space, an apartment building, or part or whole of a WDH estate.
- Ensure the group's activities will be open to or have a direct benefit to our residents living in the area it operates in.
- Demonstrate that it will encourage or enable residents living in the area it covers to participate in our resident involvement activity.

If your group meets all the criteria, please complete the application form on page eight of this document and post to: WDH Engagement team, Merefield House, Whistler Drive, Castleford WF10 5HX.

## What benefits and support can groups expect?



### Financial benefits

- **Annual grant** – this grant is only available to **primary groups** and should be used to cover running costs such as meeting room hire, postage, stationery, DBS checks and committee expenses. It will be paid using a top up system. If the group only use part of their grant, the balance can be carried over to the following year, for example, if a group is eligible for a grant of £100 and only spends £50 then they can apply for the difference, £50 in the following year, or alternatively, carry over the balance and top up when required.
- **Premises grant** – where a property which belongs to us is leased by a TARA, a fixed annual payment will be paid towards building running costs such as gas, electricity, water and phone. This grant is only available to **primary groups**.

## How to apply for an annual grant?

Groups can only apply for an annual grant and, where applicable, a premise grant once in any 12 month period. The group will be required to provide a copy of the following supporting documents:

- their current constitution;
- the group's independently checked accounts;
- evidence that all members are invited to an open and annual general meeting; and
- a newsletter, information sheet or social media.

If you need any further information or support completing the application, please contact the Engagement team on 01977 788647 or email [tenants@wdh.co.uk](mailto:tenants@wdh.co.uk). Alternatively, you can contact the Tenant Involvement Officer (TIO) for your area.

## Additional benefits

- **Insurance** – We can arrange insurance cover on behalf of groups. We can insure for public liability claims made by a third party, which arise as a result of the group's normal business, including organised events. As members of the groups are not employees, they will be treated as third parties for the purpose of the policy.

**Contents insurance will remain the responsibility of the group.**

- **Communities Together Forum** – We will facilitate a bi-monthly meeting for group representatives to come together to provide a voice for tenants and residents groups across WDH homes and estates, influencing change, organising networking events, sharing good practice, information and resources.
- **Tpas (Tenant engagement experts) membership** – members will automatically be given full access to a leading national tenant participation organisation providing independent advice, support and resources for tenants and community groups.
- **Community premises** – we will consider requests from community groups for premises to enable the group to run community activities, information sessions and meetings. The premises, repairs, maintenance and contents insurance will be the responsibility of the group.
- **Annual independent check of accounts** – to ensure good practice, groups must have their accounts independently checked. We can provide an accounting service who can carry out an independent check of accounts, if required.
- **Digital support** – help to design newsletters and flyers can be provided, as well as support to use digital methods to help communicate messages to your local community.
- **Learning opportunities** – for groups such as committee and treasury skills.
- **Our support** – help with funding applications and attendance at meetings (preferably a minimum of 10 working days' notice is required).
- **Neighbourhood Grant** – Both primary and secondary groups can apply for a Neighbourhood Grant. Applications to a maximum of £400 in a 12 month period will be considered.

## Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs)

### Did you know that you can apply to manage your own estate?

There are already a number of TMOs operating across the UK where tenants have chosen to take formal control of their housing service, including the management of their estates. If you would like to find out more about running a TMO in your area, please contact the Engagement team on 01977 788647 or email [tenants@wdh.co.uk](mailto:tenants@wdh.co.uk).

## What if your WDH and Communities Together application is not successful

If your application is not successful, we will explore all options available to help groups meet the criteria set out in this agreement. In the event this cannot be achieved, we will explain our decision and the reasons why.

## Monitoring and review

We will monitor the progress of the agreement once a year through your group's accounts and monitoring form. Where any part of the agreement is not being met or where we receive information of an alleged breach of the agreement, we will investigate and develop an appropriate response.

Grants awarded must be used for the purpose stated on your application form. If you are unable to use all or part of your groups award the remaining balance may need to be repaid to us.

## Benefits at a glance

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Primary Group</b>	<b>Secondary Group</b>
Annual grant	✓	x
Premises grant	✓	x
Public Liability Insurance	✓	x
Tpas membership	✓	✓
Annual check of accounts	✓	x
Digital support	✓	✓
Learning opportunities	✓	✓
Our support	✓	✓
Neighbourhood grant (dependant on eligibility)	✓	✓
Community premises	✓	x
Communities Together Forum	✓	✓

## Contact information

### Engagement team

WDH  
Merefield House  
Whistler Drive  
Castleford  
WF10 5HX

Phone: 01977 788647  
Email: [tenants@wdh.co.uk](mailto:tenants@wdh.co.uk)  
Website: [www.wdh.co.uk](http://www.wdh.co.uk)

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### Tpas

**Tpas**  
c/o Beever and Struthers,  
St George's House,  
215-219 Chester Road,  
Manchester, M15 4JE

Phone: 0161 868 3500  
Email: [info@tpas.org.uk](mailto:info@tpas.org.uk)  
Website: [www.tpas.org.uk](http://www.tpas.org.uk)

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### Wakefield Council

Wakefield Council  
Burton Street  
Wakefield  
WF1 2EB

Phone: 0345 8 506 506  
Email: [customerservices@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@wakefield.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.wakefield.gov.uk](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk)

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### Nova Wakefield District Ltd

11 Upper York Street  
Wakefield  
WF1 3LQ

Phone: 01924 367418  
Email: [info@nova-wd.org.uk](mailto:info@nova-wd.org.uk)  
Website: [www.nova-wd.org.uk](http://www.nova-wd.org.uk)

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### Disclaimer

Nothing in this Agreement shall constitute or be deemed to constitute a partnership between WDH and the group. The group shall not have any authority to bind WDH in any way.





## Communities Together Agreement Annual Membership Application

Name of group:	
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Name of secretary		Signature	
Address			
Postcode		Phone (including area code)	
Email			

Name of treasurer		Signature	
Address			
Postcode		Phone (including area code)	
Email			

Name of chair		Signature	
Address			
Postcode		Phone (including area code)	
Email			

**Please include a copy of your current constitution**



## Communities Together Agreement Grant Application

Name of group	
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How many tenanted properties that we own are represented by the group?  
If unsure, please contact your Tenant Involvement Officer who will be able to help. Please tick.

Up to 49       50 to 149       150 to 249       250 and over

List the streets covered by your constitution:

Would you like to apply for a grant, if so, please indicate which grant you are applying for.

Premises grant

Annual grant

Not applying for a grant

Top up grant amount      £

Payment type	Cheque <input type="checkbox"/>	BACS <input type="checkbox"/>
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Sort code

Account number

Bank

Payee name

I verify that to the best of my knowledge the information given above is accurate.

Signed on behalf of group	
Group name	
Your role	
Date	



## Neighbourhood Grant Application Form

<b>Section1: Your group</b>		
Name of group:		
Name of the main contact in the group (to whom correspondence will be sent):		
Title:	First name:	Surname:
Position in group:		
Address for correspondence including postcode:		
Phone daytime:		Evening:
If you (the main contact) have any specific communication needs, such as material on tape or in Braille, please tell us what they are:		
What is the amount of the grant you are applying for? (Maximum is £400)		

<b>Section 2: About your event(s):</b>					
Are you applying for: (please tick ✓)					
Entertainer		Equipment		Incentives	Other

**Section 2: About your event(s) continued**

Who will benefit?

When will the event(s) be held?

Where will the event(s) be held?

**Section 3: Please detail your estimated costs for your project**

Item	Cost £

Total cost of project £	Amount requested for grant £
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Payment type	Cheque <input type="checkbox"/>	BACS <input type="checkbox"/>
Sort code		
Account number		
Bank		
Payee name		

Tenant Involvement Officer:

Name:	Date:	Signed:
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## Neighbourhood Grant Application Form Guidance Notes

### What is the Neighbourhood Grant?

The Neighbourhood Grant is a non-repayable award which primary and secondary groups can apply for to help fund equipment or to assist with the cost of a community activity.

### Who can apply and what can be funded?

- Community Groups can apply for up to £400.
- Applications can be made for:
  - entertainment to add to the enjoyment of an event – this could include, but is not limited to, a children’s entertainer, DJ or magician;
  - refreshments to ensure the comfort of participants at an event or activity – this could include, but is not limited to, hot or cold drinks or snacks;
  - equipment which the group will use as part of its typical activities – this could include, but is not limited to, a gazebo, tables, litter pickers and protective equipment for an event; and
  - incentives to encourage participation in the group’s events or activities and might include equipment which the group can use at other times to generate funds to help their financial sustainability.
- The above examples are provided purely for guidance. Groups can apply for funding for any item which supports them in their purpose. It must be clearly stated what is being applied for and how this benefits the group and / or community, in the relevant sections of the application form.

### How to apply

Please read all guidance notes carefully to ensure your application is eligible.

- All applications must be verified and signed by a Tenant Involvement Officer before submission.
- Please send completed applications to:

WDH Engagement Team  
Merefield House  
Whistler Drive  
Castleford  
WF10 5HX  
Email to [tenants@wdh.co.uk](mailto:tenants@wdh.co.uk)

## Approval and monitoring

- Each application will be considered by our Resident Involvement Monitoring Group (RIMG).
- If the RIMG agrees to the payment of a grant, we will make contact to arrange a transfer of funds.
- For audit purposes, successful grants should be treated as 'Restricted Funds' and shown appropriately in the group's accounts. This will be reflected when your accounts are checked.
- We will contact every group which makes a successful application, to consider the impact the grant made to the delivery of the event and the impact on the local community.