

November 2022

Regional Network Newsletter

The primary aim of the Regional Networks is to ensure developments in national housing policy reflect the priorities and interests of tenants and service users throughout Scotland. Since the Regional Networks were established, they have brought a tenant and resident perspective to several key national policy areas, working in partnership with the Scottish Government and other representative organisations, with a number of significant accomplishments. They are well respected by colleagues within the Scottish tenants movement, Scottish Government and the social housing sector.

This is our second Newsletter of 2022, and updates on the outcomes of our recent Annual General Meetings and our priorities for the year ahead.



**REGIONAL
NETWORKS**
bringing tenants,
residents and the
Scottish Government
together

 Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Annual General Meetings 2022

During May and June, each Region held their virtual Annual General Meeting, the second year we have held our AGMs online. The Chairs of each Regional Network reported on the work of the committees since the previous AGMs in 2021, highlighting a range of achievements. This year the Regional Networks have:

- Completed a number of Scottish Government consultations, offering a tenant and resident viewpoint on key areas of national policy importance, including the New Deal for Tenants, the Scottish Social Housing Charter, energy efficiency, Heat in Buildings and homelessness.
- Met twice with the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government, Shona Robison MSP, and Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel and Tenants' Rights, Patrick Harvie MSP, to discuss matters of interest to social housing tenants and residents.
- Fed in our views and suggestions through short-term working groups on areas of key interest to tenants, including rent setting, affordability and use of local authority Housing Revenue Accounts.
- Contributed to a range of working groups including the Scottish Housing Regulator Liaison Group, the Rent Focus Group and the Housing to 2040 sub group. Contributed to the ZEST (Zero Emissions in Social Housing Taskforce) working group.
- Led a workshop at the recent TPAS conference in Clydebank on the role of the Networks and how we work;
- Completed a review of our Communications Strategy and updated our website.



We are pleased to have been able to maintain our regular schedule of committee and working group meetings on a virtual basis, despite the ongoing challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, and have maintained the same positive working relationships and links with Scottish Government Ministers and officials through the year.

Departures and arrivals

This AGM cycle we said goodbye to several of our Regional Network colleagues who took the decision to step back from the Networks after a number of years of dedicated work and commitment on behalf of tenants and residents.

From North of Scotland, we bid farewell to **Alasdair Mackenzie** and **Sue McAleaney**. From Central Scotland, **Hugh McClung**, **Philomena McClung**, **Georgia McCambley** and **Geoff Morgan** stepped down, and from South West Scotland we said goodbye to **Margaret Anderson** and **Mary Logan**. We are grateful to each and every one for their hard work and wish them all the very best for the future, and for long and happy retirements.

At the AGMs, we were also delighted to welcome some new members. **Kath Fennel** and **Linda Lennie** joined the North of Scotland Regional Network, representing the Orkney Islands, and **Alan Dalby** and **Gordon Saunders** joined the South East Scotland Network representing Fife and Scottish Borders respectively. We are looking forward to getting to know our new members and working with them over the coming year.

At the end of August, we also said goodbye to **Leonora Montgomery**, North of Scotland Regional Network. Prior to Leonora's departure, we were delighted to learn that she was joint winner of the Alan Ferguson Tenant Champion of the Year award at the recent Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) National Good Practice Awards. We thank Leonora for her work and wish her all the best for the future.



Our committee members and office bearers 2022

North of Scotland Regional Network

Aberdeen City/ Aberdeenshire/ Angus/ Argyll and Bute/ Dundee City/ Highland/ Moray/ The Western Isles/ Orkney Islands/ Perth and Kinross/ Shetland Islands.



Office Bearers

- Colin Stewart – Chairperson – Aberdeen City
- Steve Byrne – Vice Chair – Argyll & Bute

Committee Members

- Thomas O'Brien – Angus
- Elizabeth Richardson – Highlands
- Gerald Low - Perth and Kinross
- Kath Fennel – Orkney Islands
- Linda Lennie – Orkney Islands

<https://www.regionalnetworks.org.uk/region/north-scotland-network-region-1>.

South East Scotland Regional Network

City of Edinburgh/ East Lothian/ Fife/ Midlothian/ Scottish Borders/ West Lothian.



Office Bearers

- Bill Campbell – Fife – Chair
- Irina Lazarenko – City of Edinburgh – Vice Chair
- Terry Kirby – City of Edinburgh – Secretary
- Cathie McArthur – East Lothian – Treasurer

Committee Members

- Alan Dunton – East Lothian
- Lillias Reid – Midlothian
- Isabella Vint – Midlothian
- Gordon Saunders – Scottish Borders.

www.regionalnetworks.org.uk/region/south-east-scotland-network-region-2



South West Scotland Regional Network

Dumfries and Galloway/ East Ayrshire/
East Renfrewshire/ Inverclyde/ North Ayrshire/
Renfrewshire/ South Ayrshire.

Office Bearers

- Anne Cameron – Chairperson – South Ayrshire
- Bruce Cuthbertson – Vice Chair – East Ayrshire
- Norma Ferguson – Secretary – North Ayrshire
- Margaret Dymond – Treasurer – Renfrewshire



Committee Members

- John (Mac) McKenzie – East Ayrshire

www.regionalnetworks.org.uk/region/south-west-scotland-network-region-3

Central Scotland Regional Network

Clackmannanshire/ East Dunbartonshire/ Falkirk/
Glasgow City/ North Lanarkshire/
South Lanarkshire/ Stirling/ West Dunbartonshire.

Office Bearers

- Shona Gorman – Chairperson – Falkirk
- Lindsay Anderson – Vice Chair – Falkirk
- John Duffy – Secretary – North Lanarkshire
- Frances McGonagle – Treasurer – West Dunbartonshire



Committee Members

- June Anderson – Clackmannanshire
- Jeanette Arneil – South Lanarkshire

www.regionalnetworks.org.uk/region/central-scotland-network-region-4



Our priorities for the coming year

Each of our Regional Networks has now set our meeting dates for the remainder of the year and we are looking forward to an interesting, varied and challenging year ahead.

Our **Rent Affordability working group** has recently issued surveys to landlords and tenants on their approach to rent setting and affordability to capture a picture of practice within the sector and tenants' views. The outcomes of the surveys will help the group to shape their work on affordability going forward for the remainder of the year, including a closer look at the lived experience of tenants.

Our **Communications working group** will be taking on a challenging workload this year to increase awareness of the Regional Networks, and to promote the role and work of the Networks amongst tenants and residents. At this time, we have several vacancies across a range of local authority areas within the Networks and we are keen to reach full membership again this year to ensure the views of tenants and residents across Scotland are being fully represented.

Our **Scottish Housing Regulator Liaison group** will be continuing to bring the views and priorities of tenants and residents on regulatory issues to SHR at our quarterly meetings.

We will be involved with activities flowing from the **New Deal for Tenants: Rented Sector Strategy consultation and Housing to 2040**. In particular, our Housing to 2040 working group will be involved with work on the 2040 objective to “put tenant participation at the heart of developing the Rented Sector Strategy. For the social rented sector, we will establish a national network of social rented tenants which will represent the diversity within the social rented sector by including people with protected characteristics, families with children and younger people, as well as people with a wide range of backgrounds, such as those who have experienced homelessness.”

We plan to take a closer look at **disability-related issues in housing** this year, with a planned workshop session on Housing for Varying Needs and a focus on the lived experience of tenants and residents.



We want you to join us!

We currently have a number of vacancies on our Regional Network committees and we would love to hear from interested tenant and resident volunteers who are part of an RTO or landlord-recognised group, and who would like to join us in representing the views and priorities of tenants, residents and communities throughout Scotland.

As we all know, so many of us are experiencing challenges in our day-to-day lives at the moment as we come out of the Covid pandemic, with increased energy prices and costs of living. We need to make sure that tenants and residents from all areas of Scotland have the opportunity to participate in the conversation about these issues, and the things that matter to us. Arguably, there has never been a more important time to contribute our views on the issues that affect us and our communities.

Places are available in the following local authority areas:

North of Scotland Regional Network

Aberdeen City – **1**;
Aberdeenshire – **2**;
Angus – **1**;
Dundee City – **2**;
Highland – **1**;
Moray – **2**;
Western Isles – **2**;
Shetland – **2**.

South East Scotland Regional Network

City of Edinburgh – **1**;
East Lothian Council – **1**;
Fife – **1**;
Midlothian – **1**;
Scottish Borders – **1**;
West Lothian – **3**.

West Scotland Regional Network

Dumfries & Galloway – **2**;
East Renfrewshire – **2**;
Inverclyde – **2**;
North Ayrshire – **1**;
Renfrewshire – **1**;
South Ayrshire – **1**.

Central Scotland Regional Network

Clackmannanshire – **1**;
East Dunbartonshire – **2**;
Glasgow City – **2**;
North Lanarkshire – **1**;
South Lanarkshire – **1**;
Stirling – **2**;
West Dunbartonshire – **1**.

Training and support will be provided, and out-of-pocket expenses will be covered. We are very happy to meet with tenants and residents groups as well as landlords to explain more about the Networks and the work we do, and to answer any questions you might have, and we are happy to have observers along to attend our meetings to see first-hand how we work.

For further information on the Regional Networks or details of how to apply to join us, please email TPAdminsupport@gov.scot or call us on **07385461397**.



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