

Grants for Tenant Groups

1. Introduction

The Council recognises that tenants need time and proper resources to fully participate in the influencing and developing of services. The council can provide a range of direct and indirect resources and support for this, including:

- Grants for tenants groups
- Training costs
- Conference attendance
- Membership Costs to external organisations, e.g. TPAS, TIS, TIGRA
- Travel and subsistence expenses
- Free access to council venues for meetings
- Provision of refreshments for consultative meetings
- Tenant Newsletter and calendar
- Dedicated staff resources
- Venue hire and crèche costs
- Access to independent advice
- Assistance to organise events
- Staff time, including other services

This guidance covers **Grants for Tenant Groups** available from Housing & Property Service and includes the following sections:

Section 2 – Grants for Tenant Groups

Section 3 - Eligibility for Grants

Section 4 – Types of Grants

Section 5 – How to apply

Appendix – Application Form

A separate policy covering arrangements for individual out of pocket expenses is available as **Volunteer Expenses**.

2. Grants for Tenant Groups

The funding for **Grants for Tenant Groups** is provided from council house rents through the Housing Revenue Account.

a) Grants are intended to promote and sustain any organised tenant group by provision of an annual administrative core funding grant to cover day to day running costs.

b) Occasional Project Grants may be paid to individual groups or forums or area panels for the purpose of match funding any external funding or for a specific project which forms part of the Tenant Participation Action Plan, and these will be considered on a case by case basis.

c) Tenant Groups carry out a wide variety of tasks and undertake projects which can cost very significant amounts of money. It is recognised that many groups have gained skills and expertise in identifying and scoping a range of community projects and initiatives and have been successful in achieving a range of voluntary and charitable sector grant funding for projects which support and develop their communities. This policy does not cover this type of project funding.

d) The types of grant available within the scope of this guidance is detailed at section 4.

3. Eligibility for Grants

Eligibility for Grants varies according to a group's status.

A group's status can change over time as circumstances and people within communities change. This will not affect eligibility for funding, but may affect the level of funding that can be accessed.

In general a group's status will fall into one of the following 4 categories:

Group Status	Definition
New Group	Emerging group being supported to establish.
Constituted New Group	<p>Group which has formed, elected a committee, & adopted a constitution. Must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A written constitution available for inspection by the public that sets out how and where it will operate, its procedures, how funds are managed and how decisions are reached. A clear commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities. An elected committee with at least three office bearers. A commitment to representing the interests of its members – which is yet to be demonstrated because of the newness of the group. It must also be open to all tenants within its area of operation. The intention to open a bank account when it has funds to deposit.
Established Group Sometimes referred to as a 'Non – Registered'	<p>An established group which does not satisfy registration criteria of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 but does meet certain minimum standards. Must have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a written constitution available for inspection by the public that sets out how and where it will operate, its procedures, how

	<p>funds are managed and how decisions are reached.</p> <p>a clear commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities</p> <p>an elected committee with at least three office bearers.</p> <p>proper accounting records showing income and expenditure and a statement of assets and liabilities.</p> <p>A demonstrable commitment to representing the interests of its members.</p> <p>It must also be open to all tenants within its area of operation.</p>
Registered Tenants Organisation (RTO)	An established group which satisfies registration criteria of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and which has applied for registration and has been accepted on to the Register.

4. Types of Grant

A Group's status will influence **what type** of Grant Funding it may be eligible for.

Grant Type	Groups eligible	Max Amount
Costs only	New Group for the first 3 months	Up to £120 as agreed by Tenant Participation Officer for reasonable costs of venue hire and publicity.
Start Up grant	Constituted Group New	Up to £150.
Annual Running Cost Grant	Established Groups RTOs	Up to £270.
Occasional Project related Grants.	RTOs Forums Tenant Area Panels	Grants will be assessed and awarded with reference to the TP Action Plan
Grant for Public Liability Insurance	Established Groups RTOs	The area TP Officer will meet the cost of insurance directly from the area TP Budget.
Grant for Volunteer Expenses	None	Volunteer expenses can be claimed from Highland Council as outlined in the Volunteer Expenses Policy.

5. How to Apply

With the exception of **Costs only** and **Start Up Grant**, groups can apply for grants using the form attached **Grants for Tenant Groups Application Form** stating:

what level of grant they require

why they require it

How it will help meet the objectives of the Tenant Participation Action Plan

Grants will be considered in the context of the level of funds the group already has or may apply elsewhere for, as well as its planned activities and how these link with delivering the Tenant Participation Strategy 2009 - 2012.

A statement of support will also be sought from the relevant Tenant Participation Officer, or another worker who is engaged with the group for the purpose of supporting and developing community groups or community capacity.

How are 'Costs only' paid?

The area Tenant Participation Officer can cover initial costs directly from the council when there has been prior agreement.

How are 'Start Up Grants' paid?

To receive a start up grant groups do not need to complete an application form.

The area Tenant Participation Officer will raise a cheque in the group's name when they are satisfied that the group meet the criteria. This cheque will be raised as soon as possible after the group adopt their constitution and are officially named. The bank may also require a copy of the minute showing the names of office bearers elected and eligible to act as signatures on their bank account. Groups at this stage must also demonstrate willingness to formally register as a Registered Tenant Organisation.

Please read 'Grants for Tenants Groups' before completing this form

Name of Group	
<p>Is your group: <i>(please tick or circle)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a new constituted group 2. an established constituted group 3. a Registered Tenants Organisation (RTO) with the Highland Council 4. a Tenant's Forum 5. A Tenant Area Panel 	
<p>Category 1 & 2.) if you are a new constituted group or an established, constituted group please complete the following:</p>	
<p>Contact Name (normally Secretary as per your constitution)</p>	
<p>Contact Address: (Include contact telephone number and email if available)</p>	
<p>Category 1 & 2 groups- a new or established group that has not registered but is constituted.</p> <p>Please enclose a copy of your constitution with this application form. We need to check that it includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how and where you operate your procedures how funds are managed and how decisions are reached. a clear commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities an elected committee with at least three office bearers. <p>Please also enclose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a copy of the summary of your last financial years accounts signed off by an independent verifier and an office bearer (established groups only) An inventory of any assets e.g. computer equipment, tools. Evidence that you are complying with your constitution – e.g. minutes of meetings held. A list of your Committee Members together with a note of whether or not they are tenants of the Council 	

Category 3 group - a Registered Tenants Organisation (RTO) with the Highland Council. You don't need to fill in the rest of the information on this form if you have been recognised as a RTO in the financial year for which this claim relates to **OR** if you have recently submitted an application to register – we will already have this information as part of the registration criteria. Just sign this form at the end.

Category 4 – A Tenant Forum

Please enclose the last set of forum minutes

Please also list all tenant groups normally involved in your forum:

Category 5 – A Tenant Area Panel

Please enclose the last set of TAP minutes

Please describe below how much grant you are applying for, what it will be used for and how it will help meet the objectives of the Tenant Participation Action Plan:

Signed

Print name.....

On behalf of (group/forum/Tenant Area Panel)

(To avoid delay – please check you have enclosed all documents)