



Partnership Agreement:

1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Housing Leeds

&

West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service (WYCAS)

1. The general aims of the partnership are to:

- Improve the financial recording practices of the tenants and residents groups and community groups operating in Housing Leeds areas – and to encourage a consistent and robust approach to their financial activity.
- Help groups evidence to their tenants, members, funders and Housing Leeds that their financial accounts and their financial transactions are appropriately recorded.
- Put in place more formal support and audit arrangements for the groups accounts and therefore give assurance to Housing Leeds that their funding to them is properly accounted for.
- Encourage a culture of continuous learning by identifying and providing additional training and support to build skills, confidence, self-sufficiency and good practice - helping the groups further their own aims and objectives.
- Where possible, to undertake additional training and support for tenants, residents and community groups at tenant events organised by Housing Leeds.

2. Scope

The Housing Leeds funding and scope of this agreement commits WYCAS to carry out account preparation and the auditing of accounts process. The agreement operates on the understanding that any face to face visits and informal support to groups, given either on a one to one basis or with their committees, is funded by WYCAS directly.

3. Background

Housing Leeds, part of Leeds City Council's Environment and Housing Directorate, support and recognise some 100 individual tenants, residents and community groups. These groups are a mixture of the new and long established and all conduct themselves at different paces, focussing on their own local priorities.

Housing Leeds requires all groups who they financially support to have the accounts of their groups audited by WYCAS; however there will be flexibility to allow for exceptions. Where appropriate, Housing Leeds will work with WYCAS to agree specific group support or training needs.

4. The process

- a) Subject to the tenants and residents association agreement, Housing Leeds will provide a list of active tenants, residents and community groups, including the Treasurers contact details. We will also provide guidance about which groups need to be prioritised in terms of need or their AGM dates etc. and staff contact details.
- b) Housing Leeds will publicise this service to all relevant groups.
- c) Committee Treasurers will in turn make contact with WYCAS to produce an annual accounts statement that will be fit for purpose to show to tenants at their AGM and to show to Housing Leeds as evidence their accounts have been audited.
- d) WYCAS will provide 1 to 1 support to the Treasurer and offer advice and guidance using a common approach (as per the model letters, accounts and financial health checks shared with Housing Leeds..

5. Financing

- a) WYCAS will provide a service at the rate of £46 per hour for account preparation and support activity during 2015/16.
- b) Housing Leeds will provide funding equivalent to 188 hours (£8,648)
- c) The annual sum will be paid in one payment upon receipt of an invoice.
- d) If Housing Leeds exhausts the number of pre-paid hours within this arrangement, they are able to 'top up' their purchase of hours from WYCAS to provide additional work.
- e) Any funds not used on account preparation and auditing can be used to pay for training or group support delivered by WYCAS or carried forward into the next financial year.

6. Reporting

Housing Leeds requests:

- a) One short and simple contact report (by email) at the end of each month, broken down into three geographical areas- briefly stating what contact and action has been undertaken, how many hours the service has been used and any recommendations for Housing Leeds action such as training and development needs.
- b) a six month review meeting with Housing Leeds to determine what is working well and help us collectively identify future training and development issues that may be emerging that Housing Leeds can collectively offer to groups (via WYCAS training).
- c) A year end review meeting.
- d) WYCAS will produce an end of year report that highlights:
 - Which groups have had their accounts prepared in the previous 12 months; when accounts completed; hours used; turnover; financial year end details; a summary statement indicating the anticipated future level of support for the groups in the coming year including learning or training needs.
- e) A flexible approach from all parties to the agreement to respond or participate in any tenant consultation about the service (such as a focus group or joint survey work etc).
- f) Where appropriate the sharing of good practice or case studies from groups.

Housing Leeds will ask tenants and residents associations what they think about the service and will share this with WYCAS.

7. Additional Information:

a) Housing Leeds have offered the opportunity for Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation (BITMO) and its three existing tenants and residents associations to use the service, the time for which can be charged against Housing Leeds' overall activity.

8. The Housing Leeds contacts for this agreement are:

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