



housing community network



**Housing
Executive**



The Housing Executive has always been keen to involve residents and their local community associations in discussing and developing their local services, and addressing housing issues generally.

By being more involved, communities will be better informed, can contribute to better decision-making, improve services and standards locally, and develop their own skills and opportunities.

To achieve this, the Housing Community Network (HCN) has been established. The Housing Executive, together with the Department for Social Development, funds Supporting Communities Northern Ireland (SCNI) an independent province wide voluntary organisation to work with community groups and housing providers to achieve meaningful community participation.

The Housing Community Network operates at four levels:

- Community
- District
- Area
- Centre



community

At the estate or community level, District and SCNI staff are available to assist communities in setting up bona fide associations to represent the views of their local community to the Housing Executive and other agencies. Community groups are required to be properly constituted. They liaise with neighbourhood offices to ensure effective management at estate level.

district

District Managers will also look for representatives from each of the local resident/community associations across their neighbourhood to come together at a district forum. The forum will be asked to discuss service group standards, service delivery and related housing issues, including the identification and sharing of best practice.





area

In turn, there is also a forum set up in each of the Housing Executive's 5 Areas, to which each District HCN sends at least 2 representatives. These groups, known as Area Housing Community Networks, monitor and review services throughout their Area, as well as providing the forum for consideration of the Area Housing Plans and the physical programmes of work for the housing stock in their respective areas. They deal with issues submitted to them from the various District HCNs and the Central HCN.

centre

The Central Housing Community Network is the Housing Executive's central panel. It advises on Housing Executive policies and procedures, particularly on their implications for individual residents, local communities and other client groups. The Central Housing Community Network comprises 15 Tenant and Community Representatives nominated from the Area Housing Community Network. It also acts in an advisory capacity to SCNI.

To make it easier for community groups to participate in the HCN the local Housing Executive Neighbourhood Offices may provide the following services for Community Associations.

community association handbook

Gives practical support to residents and their Community Associations, including information on the Housing Community Network, the structure of the Housing Executive, its Services and Standards, SCNI, Community Funding and useful addresses.



provision of materials & equipment

District Managers have the authority to provide some materials and equipment to community groups to carry out work programmes such as estate clean ups and gardening.



community lettings

The Housing Executive can facilitate community groups by leasing a property for use as a community base. This is dependent on availability of suitable stock and housing demand for the estate or area. District managers will facilitate groups with premises where possible.

community training & development

To enable residents to participate more fully with the Housing Executive and other agencies, training courses continue to be developed. Training is also provided on policy issues such as Allocations, Housing Benefit, Maintenance etc. A range of courses is offered by SCNI, some of which are:

- Dealing with the Media
- Managing Conflict
- Communicate Your Message
- Money Matters
- Dealing with Anti Social Behaviour
- Effective Meetings
- Measure your Success
- Effective Lobbying
- Building Good Relations
- Community Capacity Building Level I
- Community Capacity Building Level II
- Community Capacity Building Level III
- Community Cohesion
- Social Economy Level II

For further details on training courses, visit SCNI's website: www.supportingcommunitiesni.org

news letters

The Housing Executive helps with the production of newsletters to provide communities with information on activities on their estates.

printing/photocopying

The neighbourhood office can arrange to have newsletters, flyers, posters or leaflets printed or photocopied for Community Associations.

notice boards

Each neighbourhood office has a notice board in its reception area and places flyers, posters and other information relating to community association activities on this.



meetings rooms

The neighbourhood offices, where possible, can arrange for Community Associations to use rooms within the office for holding meetings.

funding information

A monthly bulletin is issued by SCNI to all member groups of the Housing Community Network detailing updated information on funding opportunities.

This document is available in alternative formats. Contact:

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