

Regional Interest Groups East Midlands



Join your peers and the Federation to make a difference for housing in the East Midlands

As a valued member of the National Housing Federation you are entitled to free membership of our regional interest groups - one of the key benefits of Federation membership in the region.

Groups operating throughout the East Midlands cover a very broad range of specialisms - offering something for everyone working in the housing association sector.

Our regional interest groups offer opportunities to:

- Hear about and discuss topical issues
- Contribute to consultations and policy development
- Network with those in similar roles
- Campaign to make a difference for the greater good

- Organise events to inform and influence local stakeholders
- Share best practice
- Discuss any problems or concerns with peers

... and much more.

This brochure has all you need to get involved in the East Midlands.

Alongside the full list of regional interest groups and key contact details, it also includes examples of the work our groups are involved in.

Get in touch

For more information about any of our regional interest groups, contact:

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Examples of East Midlands regional interest groups

Care and Support Group



The East Midlands Care and Support Group promotes partnerships between housing associations, managing agents, health and local authorities.

Each year, members of this group work with the National Housing Federation in the region to run a campaign to raise the profile of care and support services among councillors, MPs, health professionals and others.

Supported Housing Month, recently renamed Support Matters Month, sees care and support providers throughout the region organise

a series of local events such as conferences, seminars, open days, training sessions, youth activities and more besides. If you would like to participate in this year's campaign get [in touch](#).



Continuous Improvement Group

Early in 2012 the group focused on techniques in improving services in response to changes to regulation. Since then, we have been concentrating on welfare reform, sharing information on profiling, demographics, stock density and best use of stock to inform our approaches to tackle the challenges this brings. We have also been following the progress of the Localism Act and it's impact on complaints handling in the sector.

Going forward, there is still learning to be achieved around Welfare Reform impacts and options such as Credit Unions; the approach to fixed term tenancies and; external complaints panels.

Development Group

During 2013 the Development Group will focus on the delivery of the 2011-15 Affordable Homes Programme (AHP), seeking opportunities for additional investment, and promoting to government the benefits of investing in the region.

The group will look at preparation for a possible 2014 'AHP bid Round' for post 2015; market rent and alternative funding models and the roll-out of the National Planning Framework. Recent planning relaxations instigated by the government will also be a focus, alongside the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy and its impact on affordable housing.

Communications Network

The East Midlands Communications Network plays a critical role in supporting Federation media, campaigning and publications work.

We regularly contact members of the group looking for case studies in response to requests from the media, and often liaise with them to find suitable sites as a backdrop for television interviews. We are also able to direct the media to individual members of the group when media outlets are looking

for housing association interviews on a specific subject.

Federation updates on communications activity are provided at quarterly meetings which are well attended and attract a range of speakers. Recently the group has focused on media perceptions of the sector, copyright and social media.



Examples of East Midlands regional interest groups

Central Home Ownership Group



In 2012 members of the group started using social media to raise awareness about shared ownership and to promote the benefits, transforming communication with partners, stakeholders, colleagues and customers. Members of the group also shared experiences of outright sale, giving best practice on using surpluses to cross-subsidise

affordable housing programmes. This included appraisal of market schemes, pricing strategy, promotional activities, show homes and signage.

The FirstBuy equity loan product was also investigated as potential competition to shared ownership. The group concluded it would only be an issue in areas where property values are relatively low.

The group also shared with the National Housing Federation their experiences of negotiating out restriction on S106 and local lending issues.

Financial Inclusion Group

Welfare reform has been top of the agenda for this group during 2012, with members looking at how best to prepare themselves and their tenants. The group organised a Welfare Reform 'Managing the Change' workshop in Derby in the summer, which was attended by more than 80 people.

Another area of recent work has been benchmarking for debt advice services. The group successfully

created a model which can be used by landlords.

As a result of a discussion about the East Midlands Credit Union collaboration project - through which landlords have been asked to donate £1 per General Needs property - 30 organisations have so far signed up with over £150,000 raised. The group will be kept updated about the project's progress.

'Quids In' magazine gave a presentation at the March meeting and a number of associations have since signed up. To date, tenant feedback about 'Quids In' has been very positive.

During 2013, the Financial Inclusion Group will push ahead with these projects and keep the wider sector updated. With the welfare reform agenda at the top of the list, it will be a busy year.

Midlands Network for Resident Involvement

In April 2012, the Midlands Network for Resident Involvement (MNRI) launched a groundbreaking partnership to provide free training for thousands of housing association and council residents across the East and West Midlands.

The Training Academy is the first of its kind in the UK to offer learning and support at no charge. By boosting customers' skills and confidence, the new academy aims to help build safe, happy

neighbourhoods where local people have a strong voice.

The first training topic was equality and diversity, followed by courses on going green to save energy and money, confidence and assertiveness and communication skills.

To find out more, join the Training Academy, or to host or run a training session, email [Richard Hancock](mailto:Richard.Hancock@midland-network.org) or call 01905 342600.



East Midlands regional interest groups 2013

Care and Support Group

Chair: [Jackie King-Owen, Enable Housing Association](#)

Central Home Ownership Group

Chair: [Bob Deol, Mercian Housing](#)

Chair's Forum

Contact: [Leah Jackson, National Housing Federation](#)

Continuous Improvement Group

Chair: [Kathryn Webster, East Midlands Housing Group](#)

Development Group

Chair: [Jim Patman, East Midlands Housing Group](#)

Finance Forum

Chair: [Rob Griffiths, Longhurst Group](#)

Financial Inclusion Group

Chair: [Peter Cowley, Nottingham Community HA](#)

Governance & Legal Compliance Group

Chair: [Joanne Tilley, East Midlands Housing Association](#)

HAMMAR (Housing Asset Management, Maintenance and Regeneration)

Chair: [Steve Grocock, Trent and Dove Housing](#)

Midland Network for Resident Involvement

Chair: [Chris Pinson-Bradley, Heantun Housing](#)

PR and Communications Group

Chairs: [Mel Grant, Longhurst Group](#)

[Alison Bessey, Waterloo Housing Group](#)

Rural Housing Sub Group

Chair: [Craig Felts, Midlands Rural Housing](#)

Small & BME housing association Benchmarking Group

Chair: [Nikki Chawda, Foundation Housing Association](#)

Social Enterprise Forum

Chair: [Claire Eden, Framework Housing Association](#)

Yorkshire & East Midlands Diversity Discussion Forum

Chair: [Hannah Mason, Housing Diversity Network](#)

Want to find out more or join? Is anything missing?

For information about any of these groups, please contact the chair directly.

If you would be interested in joining a group please get in touch, contacting michelle.monks@housing.org.uk.

If you think there's a need for a new group, please call or email Chris Hobson: 07919 111 060 or chris.hobson@housing.org.uk.

Make the most of your membership and get involved

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