

**BEEM (BORDERS, EAST LOTHIAN, EDINBURGH, MIDLOTHIAN)
REGIONAL NETWORK, AGM
HELD IN THE HILTON GROSVENOR HOTEL, EDINBURGH
ON 30 MAY 2009 AT 11.00 am.**

MINUTES

1. PRESENT

Details of those present are noted in Appendix 1.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

Mandy Smith	Nungate Tenants & Residents Association
Judith Cleghorn	Waverley Tenants Organisation
Craig Fyfe	Waverley Tenants Organisation

3. CHAIRPERSON'S INTRODUCTION

Jim Maryniak, BEEM Chairperson welcomed everyone to the Inaugural AGM of the BEEM (Borders, East Lothian, Edinburgh, Midlothian) Regional Network.

Jim introduced his fellow office bearers at the top table. These were:

- Gerry Moss, Waverley Tenants Organisation – Vice Chair
- Kath Beaton, Bannerfield Tenants Association – Secretary
- Harry Sunderland, Edinburgh Tenants Federation – Treasurer

Jim also introduced the other committee members who were in attendance these were:

East Lothian

- Cath McArthur, East Lothian T&R Panel
- Jeanette Boyd, Windsor Park T&R Association

Edinburgh

- Tina Beattie, North Bughtlin TA

Midlothian

- Lillias Reid, Elaine Ferguson & Ellen Robertson all from Midlothian Tenants Forum

Jim then gave a quick overview of what the regional network and national engagement were all about. He said that simply it meant the ability to effectively give our views and bring national issues, which affect tenants and residents throughout Scotland, directly to the Scottish Government. No intermediaries, no

**BEEM (BORDERS, EAST LOTHIAN, EDINBURGH, MIDLOTHIAN)
REGIONAL NETWORK, AGM
HELD IN THE HILTON GROSVENOR HOTEL, EDINBURGH
ON 30 MAY 2009 AT 11.00 am.**

MINUTES

external influences just face to face contact with the people who matter, and who make the policy that affects us all.

Jim then gave an overview of the content of the AGM and members meeting. He said it would give delegates the chance to:

- Meet the Regional Committee
- Receive a report from the Chairperson
- Find out about the activities of the Regional Network
- Meet other representatives from across our region
- Hear the results of the process to fill vacancies on the Committee from the Borders & Edinburgh
- Hear about the proposals in the Scottish Governments Draft Housing Bill Consultation Paper and
- Discuss what issues you think this regional network should be tackling.

4. CHAIRPERSON'S AND TREASURERS REPORTS

Jim then gave his chairpersons report for the first year of the BEEM Regional Network. He said that the last year has been extremely busy for Housing in Scotland and the network committees. During the year the committee have been actively involved with the Scottish Government on a number of policy issues - the networks have had RTO representatives, via the regional networks, on Government advisory groups with the same influence as COSLA, SFHA and other organisations. Following the Government Consultation, Firm Foundations - the Future of Housing in Scotland - a new draft Housing Bill has recently been launched and BEEM will be responding to this consultation and said the committee hoped to hear your views on the draft proposals.

Jim then gave some further details on what the committee and 9 networks have been up to over the past 12 months. These included:

- Establishing ourselves as a committee and getting to know each other – we have had 9 meetings since our Inaugural AGM
- Communication Plan – how we communicate as a region and a network as a whole
- Reviewing our constitution to ensure it is fit for purpose

**BEEM (BORDERS, EAST LOTHIAN, EDINBURGH, MIDLOTHIAN)
REGIONAL NETWORK, AGM
HELD IN THE HILTON GROSVENOR HOTEL, EDINBURGH
ON 30 MAY 2009 AT 11.00 am.**

MINUTES

- Providing our views to support the establishment of an effective a Training and skills programme for network committee members which will begin later this year.
- Developing a stand alone website which was launched on the 12th May and I was a member of the website working group.
- Held a network committee event for all the networks in July 2008 in Glasgow which brought together all the committee representatives for the first time the then Minister for Communities, Mr Maxwell, attended and outlined the Governments commitment to working in partnership with the networks and providing support to networks to help them grow and develop.
- The New Minister for Housing and Communities, Mr Alex Neil, attended a further network committee event which I chaired and helped plan along with other representatives from the regional networks.
- Chairpersons/ Secretaries meeting to be held 4 times a year to share information and discuss key national housing issues. We have developed and agreed a protocol for the selection of network reps on Scottish Government national working groups.

Jim then gave details of how the committee and the networks have been working with the Scottish Government. Over the year, the networks have been involved in policy development on a number of issues.

These issues have fed into the Housing Bill and we will be working closely with Government teams on how these are taken forward including:

- Modernising the Scottish Housing Regulator and
- Reform of the right to buy

Finally Jim gave some thoughts on what the priorities for the committee for the coming year would be. These included:

- Improving communication with RTOs
- Getting involved in the Housing Bill consultation
- And we would like your thoughts on the work of the network

**BEEM (BORDERS, EAST LOTHIAN, EDINBURGH, MIDLOTHIAN)
REGIONAL NETWORK, AGM
HELD IN THE HILTON GROSVENOR HOTEL, EDINBURGH
ON 30 MAY 2009 AT 11.00 am.**

MINUTES

Jim then thanked the committee for their support and hard work over the first year and handed over to the Treasurer, Harry Sunderland. Harry said that his report would be very brief as the committee were currently in the process of setting up a bank account for the BEEM network and he would provide a full report next year. At the current time the Scottish Government was dealing with all the committees' expenses.

Both the chairpersons and treasurers reports were proposed and seconded as a true record:

Proposer: Tina Beattie
Seconded: Cathie McArthur

5. ADOPTION OF 2008 AGM MINUTE AND BUSINESS ARISING

Jim then proceeded with the adoption of the 2008 AGM minute and matter arising from it. Jim asked the members who had attended to check the accuracy of the minutes. There were no matters arising and the minutes were duly adopted as a true record:

Proposer: Jeanette Boyd
Seconded: Lillias Reid

6. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Gerry Moss. Vice chairperson was then introduced and explained that he would be taking the members through the proposed constitutional amendments. Gerry explained that it was one member one vote. The member was the RTO so in effect each RTO had one vote. Gerry explained that each RTO had 2 voting cards one to use to vote for the amendment and one to vote against it. He said that he represented Waverley Tenants Organisation on the BEEM committee and he was privileged to be here.

Amendment 1 point 5.7 be amended to read: take a minute of all meetings which will be publicly available. James Bennett objected to this as this did not consider those who were unable to connect to the internet. Matt Wheatley agreed that communication was very important. Harry Sunderland replied that there were various means of making minutes available. Tina Beattie proposed that the

**BEEM (BORDERS, EAST LOTHIAN, EDINBURGH, MIDLOTHIAN)
REGIONAL NETWORK, AGM
HELD IN THE HILTON GROSVENOR HOTEL, EDINBURGH
ON 30 MAY 2009 AT 11.00 am.**

MINUTES

wording be changed to include, "by all means available" Sheila Rutherford McCallum seconded the proposal. A vote was conducted with 11 voting in favour of the proposed amendment and 2 voting against it.

Amendment 2 point 6.6 to be amended to read, nominations to be received no less than 15 working days in advance of the AGM.

James Bennett asked for clarification on what the nominations were. Jim Maryniak clarified that these were nominations for the committee. James expressed the view that this was a short period of time and would exclude people. Gerry Moss asked James for a suggestion regarding the number of days. James suggested 30 days. This proposal was put before the members and rejected by 12 votes to 3. The original proposal was then voted on. 12 voted in favour of this and 3 against. The original amendment was carried.

Amendment 3 section 8, conduct. 8.1 after considerable debate a member should be defined throughout sections 8.1 to 8.7 as "a member group, an individual of a member group or a committee member." 13 voted in favour of this change to the amendment and the adoption of 8.1 to read;

- 8.1 Where a **member group, an individual of a member group or a committee member** acts in a way which is detrimental to the aims of the network, the Committee will have the right where there is good and sufficient reason to suspend membership. Such a suspension shall in all circumstances be subject to a right of appeal.

8.2 12 voted in favour of its adoption to read;

- 8.2 Where a decision to suspend a **member group, an individual of a member group or a committee member** is agreed by the Committee, the Committee Chair shall present a report to the next scheduled meeting of the Network for its consideration.

8.3 13 voted in favour of its adoption to read;

- 8.3 **Member groups, individuals of a member group or committee members** adjudged to have breached the constitution by indulging in improper conduct during a meeting shall be warned by the Chair of the consequences arising from such an action and asked to apologise to the meeting.

**BEEM (BORDERS, EAST LOTHIAN, EDINBURGH, MIDLOTHIAN)
REGIONAL NETWORK, AGM
HELD IN THE HILTON GROSVENOR HOTEL, EDINBURGH
ON 30 MAY 2009 AT 11.00 am.**

MINUTES

8.4 14 voted in favour of its adoption to read;

- 8.4 Where a **member group, an individual of a member group or a committee member** refuses to apologise he/she shall be suspended by the Chair from taking any further part in the meeting. Failure to accept the Chair's ruling shall result in the **member group, an individual of a member group or a committee member** being instructed to leave the meeting immediately.

8.5 13 voted in favour of its adoption to read;

- 8.5 No **member group, individual of a member group or committee member** who has been expelled from membership shall be readmitted except by a resolution being endorsed by two thirds of the membership at any General Meeting.

8.6 15 voted in favour of its adoption to read;

- 8.6 As soon as elected at an AGM Committee Members are required to sign a Committee code of conduct. This requirement extends to each time someone is elected to the Committee.

8.7 12 voted in favour of its adoption to read;

- 8.7 If a member of the Committee refuses to comply with the Constitution, they may be expelled on a **two-thirds** majority vote of the full Committee. Any such committee member will have the right to appeal within **21** working days of the expulsion. The appeal shall be heard by the Committee, at a meeting called specifically for that purpose.

7. ADOPTION OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Jim then proceeded with the adoption of the draft communication strategy. He said that a copy had been sent to every RTO in the region along with a feedback form and the committee had received no suggestions or amendments to the document. There then followed a vote on its adoption. All member RTOs in attendance voted in favour of its adoption.

**BEEM (BORDERS, EAST LOTHIAN, EDINBURGH, MIDLOTHIAN)
REGIONAL NETWORK, AGM
HELD IN THE HILTON GROSVENOR HOTEL, EDINBURGH
ON 30 MAY 2009 AT 11.00 am.**

MINUTES

8. ELECTIONS TO THE REGIONAL NETWORK COMMITTEE

Jim explained that all existing committee members held their positions for a further 2 years. There were currently two vacancies on the committee. There was one vacancy for the Borders and one for Edinburgh. A nominations and elections process took place to fill these vacancies. In the Borders there was one nomination received from Peggy Ferguson, Eildon Tenants Organisation. Peggy was elected uncontested. In Edinburgh two nominations for the one vacancy were received therefore a postal election involving all RTOs in Edinburgh took place. Jim asked Michael Boal from the Tenant Priorities Team in the Scottish Government to read out the result.

Michael read out the following statement:

BEEM RTO REGIONAL NETWORK –EDINBURGH BALLOTS

The report of voting for the above election, which closed at 5pm on Thursday 28th May 2009, is as follows:-

Edinburgh Area

Number of eligible voters	64
Total number of votes cast	17
Number of votes found to be invalid (blank/spoilt)	2
Turnout	27%
Total number of valid votes to be counted	15

Result (1 to elect):

BENNETT, James..... 4
Rutherford McCallum, Sheila..... 11 **ELECTED**

The vote was verified by Lillias Reid from Midlothian Tenants Forum and Jim Maryniak, Eskview T&R Association

This election was conducted using the first past the post electoral system. The election material will be stored for a period of 6 months and then securely destroyed.

**BEEM (BORDERS, EAST LOTHIAN, EDINBURGH, MIDLOTHIAN)
REGIONAL NETWORK, AGM
HELD IN THE HILTON GROSVENOR HOTEL, EDINBURGH
ON 30 MAY 2009 AT 11.00 am.**

MINUTES

Jim welcomed both Peggy Ferguson and Sheila Rutherford McCallum to the committee and then asked the delegates to make their way for lunch. Peggy and Sheila then both signed the committee code of conduct.

9. PRESENTATION BY TESSA BROWN ON THE DRAFT HOUSING BILL

Tessa provided an overview of the consultation paper that is seeking views on proposals for a Housing (Scotland) Bill that the Government plans to introduce in the Scottish Parliament in 2010. She explained that the proposals aim to help reinvigorate social housing by safeguarding it for future generations and improving the value that tenants and taxpayers get from it. Part of the consultation paper describes how the Government proposes to achieve the former by reforming the Right to Buy social housing. The second part of the consultation paper describes how the Government intends to achieve the latter aim by modernising the way social housing is regulated. The main proposals are:

- End RTB on new supply social housing
- Ending RTB for new tenants
- Reforming pressured area designations
- Developing guidance for Registered Social Landlords seeking extensions to the ten year suspension on RTB
- Revising guidance on landlords' continuous occupation discretionary powers.
- Introducing a Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Modernising the Scottish Housing Regulator
- Introducing safeguards for Registered Social Landlords and their tenants

Tessa concluded that the consultation was tenant's opportunity to influence the plans to reinvigorate the sector and she explained there was a questionnaire that comes with the consultation paper. Tessa encouraged those attending to respond to the issues they were interested in and that the deadline for responses was the 14th August 2009.

Jim thanked Tessa for her presentation and asked if there were any questions from the members.

A number of questions were raised including how the consultation process had developed, concerns about councils and self regulation, private landlords needing to face the same scrutiny as social landlords, how the Scottish Government was going to consult more effectively with equalities groups and how to ensure that tenant participation is properly implemented.

**BEEM (BORDERS, EAST LOTHIAN, EDINBURGH, MIDLOTHIAN)
REGIONAL NETWORK, AGM
HELD IN THE HILTON GROSVENOR HOTEL, EDINBURGH
ON 30 MAY 2009 AT 11.00 am.**

MINUTES

Tessa raised the point that the consultation paper was written with both RSLs and local authorities facing the same regulatory structures however COSLA did not want the Scottish Housing Regulator to be responsible for regulating and inspecting councils. The overwhelming consensus amongst the audience was that councils should come under the same scrutiny as other social landlords.

10. DISCUSSION ON ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE TO PURSUE

The members then had a short discussion on specific issues the committee could consider at future meetings. The following topics were suggested:

- Communication
- Equal opportunities particularly to enable disabled people to fully participate
- Involving non registered groups
- Allocations including choice based lettings and its impact on tenants
- Service charges , supporting people issues for sheltered tenants.

11. CHAIRPERSONS CLOSING REMARKS

Jim then thanked all the BEEM Committee members over the last year and also gave a warm welcome to the new committee members joining us.

Jim concluded that BEEM was still a young organisation and was taking time to establish itself. He said that the first year had not been without its challenges and recognised the need to communicate more effectively with our members and ensure that the committee accurately reflect the views of the communities they represent. He finally thanked everyone for coming and supporting the network and encouraged the members to keep in touch with the committee via the new website.

The AGM and members meeting closed at 3.00pm.

Appendix 1 - Attendees

Area	RTO	Attendee
Borders	Bannerfield Tenants & Residents Association	Kath Beaton
Borders	Bannerfield Tenants & Residents Association	Ethel Munro
Edinburgh	Craigmillar / Peffermill Court Tenant Group	James Bennett
Edinburgh	Craigmillar / Peffermill Court Tenant Group	Ronnie Anderson
Edinburgh	Craigmillar / Peffermill Court Tenant Group	Reg Chalmers
Edinburgh	Craigmillar / Peffermill Court Tenant Group	Jacki McDonald
Edinburgh	Craigmillar / Peffermill Court Tenant Group	Eric Tough
East Lothian	East Lothian Tenants & Residents Panel	Catherine McArthur
Edinburgh	Edinburgh Tenants Federation	Harry Sunderland
Borders	Eildon Tenants Organisation	Peggy Ferguson
East Lothian	Eskview Tenants & Residents Association	Jim Maryniak
Edinburgh	Hailesland Park Neighbourhood Council	Glynis Rintoul
Edinburgh	Hailesland Park Neighbourhood Council	Maud Wylie
Midlothian	Midlothian Tenants Forum	Elaine Ferguson
Midlothian	Midlothian Tenants Forum	Lillias Reid
Midlothian	Midlothian Tenants Forum	Ellen Robertson
Midlothian	Midlothian Tenants Forum	Alex Robertson
Midlothian	Midlothian Tenants Forum	Pauline Simpson
Edinburgh	Nicholfield Tenants & Residents Association	M. Dunn
Edinburgh	Nicholfield Tenants & Residents Association	Matt Wheatley
Edinburgh	North Bughtlin Tenants Association	Tina Beattie
Edinburgh	North Bughtlin Tenants Association	Sandy Cruikshank
East Lothian	Nungate Tenants & Residents Association	David Barrie
Edinburgh	Ratho Station Residents Association	Leslie Rutherford
Edinburgh	Ratho Station Residents Association	Sheila Rutherford-McCallum
Borders	Scottish Borders Tenants Organisation	Alex Beaton

Borders	Scottish Borders Tenants Organisation	Phae Turnbull	
Edinburgh	Viewpoint Tenants Representative Group	Ken McKay	
Edinburgh	Viewpoint Tenants Representative Group	Isobel Green	
Borders	Waverley Tenants Organisation	Gerry Moss	
East Lothian	Windsor Park Tenants & Residents Association	Jeanette Boyd	
	Scottish Government	Michael Boal	
	Scottish Government	Tessa Brown	