

Residents' Associations

Setting Up a Residents Association (RA)

For an RA to be recognised by the council it has to fulfill certain conditions to ensure it is democratic and representative of its community i.e.:

- holding an inaugural public meeting when all residents are invited
- adopting a recognised community group constitution
- adopting the council's equal opportunities policy
- holding an annual general meeting to which all members are invited
- electing a committee

The Council offers help through each step of setting up and establishing an RA. They are encouraged to adopt a committee structure, where members are nominated for key posts such as chair, secretary and treasurer. A number of 'ordinary members' can also be elected although this is not always necessary.

In regard to the Rural West Villages, the Council is currently looking for volunteers who are willing to get involved and set up RAs in those communities.

Funding

Recognised RAs receive a support grant to pay for running costs such as meeting room hire, newsletters and stationery, a yearly estate improvement grant and a small training budget to send members on external training courses. The amount of those grants depends on the number of tenants in the RA area.

CYC Support

The Council supports the work of RAs in a number of ways. For example, it produces a bi-monthly magazine 'Working Together' containing news about residents' associations and training opportunities that residents and tenants might benefit from. Some of that training is free or is offered at a subsidised rate.

The Council's neighbourhood management officers also helps to identify issues in an area and come up with solutions that can be implemented. Councillors, council officers, estate managers and the safer neighbourhood police team will often attend meetings (when invited) to aid RAs in their consideration of those issues.

York Residents' Federation

York Residents' Federation is an umbrella group for Residents' Associations (RAs) in York. It aims to represent the interests of residents and to promote their right to be involved in developing policies on housing and other issues. It gives help and support to RAs as well as encouraging the establishment of new associations. It also works as a sounding board for service improvements and encourages local initiatives.

The Federation holds formal public meetings on the 3rd Thursday of each month starting at 7pm, and meets informally on the 1st Thursday of each month. Any resident can attend the formal meetings. Although the meetings are mainly about issues of concern to council tenants, there are often guest speakers talking about more general topics. For example, recently there have been topics on cold calling zones and the work of the Older Citizens Advocacy York.

The Federation raises issues of common concern across RAs. It also helps to identify training needs among RA members and works with other local, regional and national organisations to provide external training and education to meet those needs.