



# EDINBURGH TENANTS FEDERATION

## *Annual Report 2021-2022*

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## Welcome from the Federation's Executive Committee

The Federation's Executive Committee (EC) is delighted to share news of our work over the last year in our 2021 / 22 Annual Report.

As the umbrella organisation for tenants and tenants' and residents' organisations across Scotland's capital city, it gives us great pleasure to work with the City of Edinburgh Council and our partner organisations to ensure tenants' voices are at the heart of the decision making that affects us all.

The EC and our members work tirelessly to ensure we know and understand what is important to our members, Council and Housing Association tenants living in our varied communities.

Through participation in national housing consultations, training, and events we also ensure the Scottish Government is aware of what is important to tenants living in Edinburgh.

Our website, blogs, *Tenants Voice* magazine, *Federation Matters* and E-Newsletter ensure we keep everyone up to date on our work and important housing and community issues of the day.

The EC meets monthly to deliver the plans within our Service Level Agreement with City of Edinburgh Council and participate in numerous subgroups, meetings, and events to ensure the Council and others know about and listen to tenants' voices. Read on for more highlights of our work as well as our local groups.

As we have gradually moved out of lockdown, we are using our recently acquired skills to develop a new approach to our meetings, including continuing some online, a return to in person meetings and some blended meetings and events, giving our members the best of both worlds.

Thank you for taking the time to read our Annual Report.

*ETF Executive Committee*



EDINBURGH TENANTS  
FEDERATION

### Executive Committee

<b>Convenor</b>	Betty Stone: Birnies Court Tenants Association
<b>Vice Convenor</b>	Paul Vaughan: Gateside Tenants and Residents Association
<b>Secretary</b>	Davie Thomson: Redbraes Residents Association
<b>Treasurer</b>	John Aitken: North Sighthill Residents Association
<b>Member</b>	Christine Hudson: Laichfield Community Association
<b>Member</b>	Robyn Kane: Moredun Multis and Maisonettes Residents Association
<b>Member</b>	Irina Lazarenko: Minorities Initiatives Residents Association
<b>Member</b>	Terry Kirby: Wharton Square Residents Group
<b>Member</b>	Damien May: West Cromwell, Persevere and Citadel Courts Residents Association

This year the staff team, Mary Callaghan – Office Manager and Mark Henry – Development Worker continued to work in partnership with Ilene Campbell and Sharon Donohoe from TIS.

## Maud Wylie

During the last year, the sad passing of Maud Wylie our Vice Convenor, affected us all. Maud was an ETF stalwart, having been with us for many years, performing many duties and holding many positions within the EC. Firstly as a member, then Secretary and finally as Vice Convenor. Maud was a dedicated community activist, who championed the rights of tenants within her local community of Hailesland Park, Wester Hailes, across Edinburgh as part of ETF and nationally through her partnership work with other tenants to influence the Scottish Government. As one of ETF's first Tenant Led Inspectors, her dedication ensured this kind of activity was recognised as "good practice" in scrutiny work by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Maud was extremely kind, well liked and hugely respected by ETF members as well as CEC staff and Councillors. She is sadly missed by all who knew her.



Maud Wylie

## Our New Home...

Following working from home during the Covid 19 Coronavirus Pandemic, we took the opportunity to review our office requirements, and are delighted to have moved to a bright new office within Norton Park Business and Conference Centre. A move to the second floor has ensured we have a fully equipped office, a small meeting space, and all-important tea and coffee making facilities within the beautifully refurbished Centre. We can also host larger meetings within the excellent conference centre facility.



## Partnership Working

At ETF we are delighted to work in partnership with a fantastic array of organisations to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Edinburgh and beyond.



## Locality Meetings

Locality Meetings with senior CEC officers, in their own communities, as well as joint estate walkabouts, ensures EC members are kept up to date with local housing service plans, services and issues and allows officers to find out more about the work of ETF and local groups.

Our local member groups continue to support their neighbours, provide services and advice, and highlight and seek solutions to local issues and developments. Here's a flavour of what's going on across the city....

## Birnies Court Tenants Association

The regeneration work going on in the North is keeping me exceptionally busy. Gunnet Court is complete and looking good and May Court will be finished soon.

A lot of people have been in touch, concerned about their fuel bills and rent payments. I have given advice and details of where to get the help required. In the first instance, I recommend people contact their local housing officer who can assist or point them in the right direction.

*Betty Stone*

## Wharton Square Residents Group

We are a Hillcrest Homes recognised group, consisting of social and mid-market rent tenants.

We are only a stone's throw away from the Meadows where we can enjoy the great outdoor space. On display at present are a pride of 24 bronze lion sculptures, which will be on display for three months, this is part of a wildlife charity's touring art exhibition entitled Born Free.

During the past year we successfully applied for £8,500 from the Hillcrest Foundation to lease, insure and maintain a wall mounted Defibrillator. A contribution of £500 from our group funds will support training for some of our tenants on how to use it.

The children's gardening club was delighted with its first harvest of beetroot and as a result they plan to plant more root vegetables. This was all made possible by a grant from Hillcrest Therapeutic Gardeners.

*Terry Kirby*

## Gateside Tenants and Residents Association

We are working with the Council's housing service and others to address local housing and community issues. One of our great achievements is the fun activities we organise for local children and young people to celebrate all events in the annual calendar.

Also, as a new member of ETF I have learnt a lot over the last year or so. I thought this was just a normal community group but how wrong was I? I never realised just how strong ETF is in covering all aspects of council services, with the main ones for me being the rent increase and the repairs issues.

People are struggling financially at the moment and need all the help they can get. ETF is a very friendly group and puts tenants at ease if they are coming to meetings for the first time. ETF staff are very helpful and assist all groups develop, learn and grow.

If you are not yet a member, get in touch and come and join us...

*Paul Vaughan*



# Local Group News

## Moredun Multis and Maisonettes Residents Association

It's been a busy and exciting year for us. As well as continuing to work with the Housing Service to get improvements to our flats, and address repairs issues, we are thrilled to see progress on our work to retain and improve our local green space.

Work has now started on improvements to our allotments and we have been working with a community artist, landscape architects, officers, Elected Members, ETF and TIS to seek ideas from the wider community on how the green space could look in the future and what equipment and activities it could be used for. Some amazing ideas are being considered in the mix and once we know how much all the ideas will cost and what funding is available, we will be back out seeking views of our community to agree what happens next.

*Robyn Kane*

## A year in the life of ETF...

2021 / 22 has been a very busy and productive year for ETF, and the following gives a flavour of what we have been involved in, both locally and nationally.

### ETF Members' Meetings

ETF ensures tenants are at the heart of everything we do. This year, we hosted meetings and discussion events to find out, gather and report on tenants' views on:

- CEC's Repairs Service
- The work of Penumbra
- Looking to the Future: Priorities for tenants living in Edinburgh, post COVID-19.



### ETF Repairs Subgroup

ETF members have continued to meet CEC officers to learn all about the Council's repairs service developments, raise issues and concerns and give our views on how the service could be improved.

### ETF High Flats Subgroup

These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss the unique experiences of tenants living in the high-rise blocks. We recently met with the Leader of the Council, Councillor Cammy Day and Councillor Jane Meagher, Convenor of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee to find out more about plans for these homes.

### Executive Committee Review Day

One of our first face-to-face meetings, since the March 2020 lockdown, was an excellent opportunity for the EC and staff to take stock of the challenges, achievements and successes of the last year and identify housing and related issues and priorities for the year ahead.

*Some of the key Federation successes identified included:*

- A successful transition from in-person to online meetings and activities
- Increased digital skills for the Executive Committee and Federation Members
- Continued meetings to influence CEC's Housing Services
- Participation in the development of CEC's Annual Rent setting paperwork which is sent to all tenants
- Continued communication with tenants, CEC Officers, Elected Members and the Scottish Parliament via newsletters, Annual Report, Annual General Meeting, Open Meetings, as well as digital engagement methods.

## Scottish Government's New Deal for Tenants: Rented Sector Strategy Consultation

Our response to the consultation advised Ministers:

- The use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless people and families in particular, should not be considered a housing option
- Rent affordability is crucial in any considerations for the future of Scotland's Housing, and should include all housing costs such as utilities and council tax as well as rent.
- The need for more affordable housing for rent across the city to be built.



## Scottish Housing Day

ETF members supported Scottish Housing Day with a discussion on sustainable housing, why it is needed, what it may look like and how it will be funded at a specially convened coffee morning. Knowing that almost 80% of homes that will be in Scotland by 2040 are already here, we know there is a real and urgent need to improve current housing to meet energy efficiency standards and net zero carbon emissions as well as build new homes to current and emerging standards.



## Meeting with the Scottish Parliament

ETF's Convenor Betty Stone recently gave evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Social Justice and Social Security Committee at the Scottish Parliament. The evidence session looked at issues relating to low income and debt. ETF participated in the session alongside representatives from other organisations such as Shelter Scotland, Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland and Aberlour. This was a great achievement for Betty and a fantastic opportunity to raise ETF's profile with our MSPs.

## City of Edinburgh's Tenant Participation and Scrutiny Framework Review

Tenants Information Service (TIS) facilitated a joint ETF & CEC review of tenant participation and scrutiny opportunities across Edinburgh. The rigorous review assisted us to agree what works well and what could be improved as well as consider some potential new developments. We look forward to working with the Council and TIS to implement the recommendations.

## City of Edinburgh's Rent Consultation 2022 / 23

Once again, we were pleased to work with Council officers to draft the annual rent consultation documents. In recognition of the financial climate, we welcomed the Council decision to freeze rents during 2022 / 23.

## City of Edinburgh Council's Stair Cleaning Project Board

ETF members involved in the Board continue to monitor the service provided by contractors; including meetings with the contractor in their Livingston Headquarters and conducting "spot checks" across the city. We have also suggested improvements for future contract specifications.

## City of Edinburgh Short Term Lets Consultation

Like many people living in Edinburgh, ETF is concerned about the number of short term lets, particularly whilst we do not have enough homes to allow tenants to move to more suitable housing or ensure homeless people have access to safe, affordable housing. We were therefore delighted to get involved in this consultation and took the opportunity to highlight:

- Concerns regarding antisocial behaviour in short term let properties, including excessive alcohol consumption, noise pollution and other activities detrimental to the safety and wellbeing of people in neighbouring homes. We also consider this can lead to the erosion of a sense of community and can change the character of neighbourhoods.
- Concerns that the rise in short term lets such as Airbnb, means that much needed long term private rented sector homes are being taken out of the market.

## Income and Expenditure for the year to 31 March 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
<b>Income</b>		
City of Edinburgh Council service agreement	241,083	241,083
Port of Leith Supporting Communities Funding	-	547
Other income	-	11,653
	<b>241,083</b>	<b>253,283</b>
<b>Less: Expenditure</b>		
Staff Costs	77,223	94,593
Tenants Information Service Fees	48,000	48,000
Support Costs	51,349	46,211
Port of Leith Supporting Communities Funding		580
Governance	4,944	4,339
	<b>181,516</b>	<b>193,723</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>59,567</b>	<b>59,560</b>
Actuarial loss on pension scheme	36,703	(3,127)
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>96,270</b>	<b>56,433</b>

## Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021

	2022	2021
	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible assets	2,506	3,390
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	577	917
Cash at bank and in hand	227,029	161,381
	<b>227,606</b>	<b>162,298</b>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>(40,187)</b>	<b>(26,027)</b>
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>187,419</b>	<b>136,271</b>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due greater than one year</b>	<b>(11,375)</b>	<b>(57,381)</b>
<b>Net liabilities</b>	<b>178,550</b>	<b>82,280</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>		
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds - unrestricted general	199,265	151,231
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds - pension	(21,224)	(69,460)
Edinburgh Tenants Federation funds - restricted	509	509
<b>Net funds</b>	<b>178,550</b>	<b>82,280</b>



## EDINBURGH TENANTS FEDERATION

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