



## Tenants and Residents Organisation of England (TAROE)

TAROE exists for tenants and is run by tenants. It aims to represent the views and concerns of tenants in housing associations and local authorities to government, housing policy makers and the housing profession. It does this by lobbying, promotion and representation on a number of government advisory bodies.

This project has three parts: a database, video links and a website. The database breaks new ground as it brings tenants and residents representatives in both housing associations and local authorities. This does not exist anywhere else. The project also wants to link busy volunteers across the country through a video network to save time and money. The website will provide information directly out to tenants, so that they are well informed. This project represents long-term investment in a national tenant's organisation so that it can strengthen its core membership. The video links will allow volunteers - already active in their own communities and areas - to make decisions together and so steer a national tenants' body to the next stage of its development. TAROE is already undergoing a thorough review of how it works and this project will build on the lessons learnt to be self-sufficient in three years.

This project is innovative as it will assist tenants to speak to each other across the country and so support each other. The website will create a place for exchanging views, good practice, policies and experience. It will be an organisation that will explain what options and rights tenants and residents have in each situation and also offer advice on what the impact of the changing environment might be. This will be invaluable as tenants become more directly involved in management through Arms Length Management Organisations, tenant management, stock transfer organisations and best value. 'We have the opportunity to become the trustworthy, knowledgeable, uniquely tenant-led and tenant-focussed source of information and advice for tenants' (from TAROE development weekend, February 2002).

At present, the bulk of TAROE's memberships are federations of local authority tenants. The project will provide information, advice and guidance for tenants directly from other tenants. This is an opportunity for tenants to learn from

others' experience as they face common issues such as Best Value reviews and inspections, options studies for stock transfers, the development of tenant federations and how to spend major repairs allowances. Training courses and tenants conferences have shown that direct links between tenants is the best way tenants learn.

TAROE Executive see this project as a way of strengthening the membership, expanding services to members and creating the basis for an expanding organisation, so it is a very high priority.

**Progress:**

The website has been designed and the video links established in four areas around the country. These were launched by Yvette Cooper, Housing Minister at the CIH's conference in Harrogate in 2005.

The website address is: [www.taroe.org](http://www.taroe.org)

TAROE are implementing the final phase of the project which is the creation of a database of all tenants groups in the country. This is ongoing.

Further information can be obtained from:

Martyn Kingsford  
TAROE  
41/42 Estate Buildings  
Railway Street  
Huddersfield  
West Yorkshire  
HD1 1JY

Tel: 01484 223466