

THE CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson is the person who makes sure things get done – not the person who does everything.

There are two basic jobs the chairperson should do:

- guide the association to achieve its aims
- chair the meetings of the association

Some of the duties of the chairperson are:

- know the constitution
- liaise with the secretary on the agenda and meeting arrangements
- welcome members and introduce guests
- ensure fair discussion
- stop anyone taking over, dominating discussions
- sum up problems, points, decisions
- keep order/ensure a chance for all to have their say
- get through the agenda on time
- help prepare agendas
- ensure decisions are carried out

THE SECRETARY

A secretary must be reliable and efficient. He/she will pay strict attention to matters of details and ensure prompt replies to letters coming in.

It is important that the secretary's name, address and telephone number are well publicised with organisations that want to contact the committee.

Before a meeting:

- an agenda for the meeting should be prepared in consultation with the chairperson
- a suitable venue for the meeting should be arranged
- a notice of the meeting and agenda should be sent to all committee members so that they will receive them at least a week before the meeting is arranged
- The secretary must keep a complete up to date set of minutes
- Ensure that all correspondence has been dealt with, and when necessary, obtain replies for the next meeting

- Keep an accurate filing system

At the meeting:

- Keep a record of everyone attending the meeting. Apologies for absences should also be recorded
- Read the minutes of the previous meeting (unless already sent out) and obtain the chairperson's signature for the official copy
- Read out all correspondence received and report any action taken since last meeting
- Ensure that the chairperson is supplied with all the necessary papers and information relevant to the meeting

THE TREASURER

Associations should make sure a treasurer is appointed to handle the money coming into and going out of the group.

- The treasurer should keep a clear and accurate book-keeping system and should be able to handle figures
- The treasurer is responsible for the proper handling of the finance of the organisation, but not the actual raising of money
- The treasurer will be one of three officers of the committee authorised to draw out money

Normally two out of three of these signatures are required when money is withdrawn

Before the meeting:

- The treasurer should prepare a financial report before each meeting
- The treasurer should ensure all approved bills are paid

At the meeting:

- The treasurer should present a report of money paid into the account
- The treasurer should bring all the account books to the meeting so that he/she can answer any questions
- The treasurer should advise on the amount of money available for the group's work and warn of excess expenditure
- The treasurer should prepare a statement for audit prior to the AGM
- The treasurer should present the balance sheet and financial statement at the AGM after they have received the audited accounts

The Committee

Committees are simply ways for bringing people together to consider problems and make decisions.

It is elected by the members of the residents' association to carry out the work of the association. The committee organizes general meetings of all its members, and the group's Annual General Meeting, and must carry out the decisions made at these meetings.

The committee has delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the group, it is important that these decisions get reported back to the full membership. This can be done in a variety of ways including newsletters, members' meetings, and public meetings.

Role of Committee Members

A committee member may not have any special title or task, but their presence on a committee is just as important as that of the office bearers. Some duties of the ordinary members are as follows:

- Attend meetings
- Support the work of the association & committee
- Act on tasks given to you
- Vote on issues
- Assist with projects, fund raising etc
- Abide by the decisions of the group
- Encourage membership
- Listen to each other
- Feedback to the committee
- Aim towards constructive discussion and decisions
- Help with advertising, distributing pamphlets etc
- Put forward ideas