

Case Study

Poynders Gardens

Tenants and Residents Association (TRA)



Meet the Chair

Name: Lynn

Volunteer hours per week: 13

Unofficial roles: Social worker, caretaker, event organiser, fundraiser, youth worker, midwife.

Tell me about where you live

There are 282 flats here and we have a great community. It's family-oriented. The young ones have grown up together, some have got married. Around Christmas this year, someone's benefits had been stopped. We did a whip-round and got £50 for his electric. I refer vulnerable people to the social services as well.

I've delivered two babies on this estate. Nine deaths I've found, too. It's not always easy.

How did you get involved with the TRA?

I was involved with setting it up thirteen years ago. People saw that I was active on the estate, meeting up with the cleaners, and so on, so one year at an Annual General Meeting I was nominated to be Chair. I nearly fell through the floor, I was so embarrassed!

How do you keep people involved and informed?

Emails and some door knocking—people knock on mine as well! We'll do a Fun Day for kids and while we have the parents there we'll have the Annual General Meeting. Our secretary, Ron, goes to the London Tenants Federation meetings on our behalf – we're a good team.

I only got email three years ago. Before then I'd use so many stamps!

What is your relationship with your landlord like?

I have a good relationship with the housing officers, I've seen many of them come and go. I'm helpful. A cleaner will report a blocked drain to me and I'll report it to the council – it speeds the process up.

What's been your greatest achievement?

Getting the playground up and running. It was derelict. We got the kids to design it themselves. They'd look after it really well – too well, in fact. I used to get a knock on my door, 'Lynn! Have you got a broom? Someone's made a mess down there'.

What makes it all worthwhile?

I just like helping people out. Knowing that you've done something for someone.

