

annual report



2014/15

The TDS Charitable Foundation was registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 23 October 2013 (Registration Number: 1154321). Its head office (and its registered office) is at Unit 1, The Progression Centre, 42 Mark Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 7DW.

What does **the TDS Charitable Foundation** do?

The TDS Charitable Foundation exists to raise standards in the private rented sector (mainly through the promotion of education in rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants) and to promote the wider use of Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms and to deal with tenant and landlord disputes.

The Foundation's aims are:

- 1.** To advance education about housing rights and obligations in general, and in particular about:
 - (a) best practice in the management of private rented housing;
 - (b) legal rights and obligations which are of particular relevance to those who are involved in the provision or management of private rented housing or who hold tenancies within the private rented housing sector; and
 - (c) use of alternative dispute resolution processes for the more efficient and effective resolution of disputes between landlords and tenants".
- 2.** To advance conflict resolution through promoting the use of alternative dispute resolution processes for the more efficient resolution of disputes between landlords and tenants within the private rented housing sector.

Governance

The TDS Charitable Foundation is run by a Board of Trustees.

Three are appointed by The Dispute Service Ltd.

The remaining Trustees are appointed by the Board as independent Trustees. The maximum size of the Board is nine Trustees and Trustees are appointed on three year terms of office.

The Trustees as of 31 March 2015 are:

- Professor Martin Partington* CBE QC - Chair
- Martin Blakey
- Peter Bolton-King
- David Cox (appointed 2 October 2014)
- Stephen Harriott*
- Shelia Manchester
- Colum McGuire
- Nick Hankey*
- Mark Hayward (resigned 2 October 2014)

*nominated by The Dispute Service Ltd



Professor Martin Partington,
CBE, QC – Chair

Martin has been Chair of **The Dispute Service** since May 2010. A leading authority in housing law, Martin worked as a Law Commissioner for England and Wales until 2008 and is an Emeritus Professor at Bristol University.



Steve Harriott
Trustee

Steve is the Chief Executive of **The Dispute Service**, the UK's only not for profit provider of tenancy deposit protection. He has worked as chief executive of three housing associations, and is currently Chair of the Boston Mayflower housing association, Chair of the Waterways Ombudsman Committee and Vice Chair of Chatham Maritime Trust.



David Cox
Trustee

David Cox joined the **Association of Residential Letting Agents** (ARLA) as Managing Director in June 2014. He has a strong policy and stakeholder engagement background, having held previous senior policy roles at the National Landlords Association (NLA) and the International Union of Property Owners (UIPI). A trained barrister, David has also acted as Parliamentary Advisor to a well-known backbench MP.



Peter Bolton King
Trustee

Based at RICS headquarters at Parliament Square, Peter is the Global Property Standards Director. A regular media commentator, he joined RICS in 2012 and is a well-known and highly respected figure throughout the property industry.



Colum McGuire
Trustee

Colum McGuire was until July 2015, the Vice President (Welfare) at the National Union of Students, where he was a representative for the 7 million students across Further & Higher Education in the UK. Colum also served for two years as Vice-President (Welfare) for the University of Kent Union.



Sheila Manchester
Trustee

Sheila is Joint Managing Director and Editorial Director at Propertydrum Ltd., publisher of Propertydrum and The Negotiator magazines. Her property career spans 20 years, initially within a lettings group, then publishing magazines for ARLA, NAEA, ICBA and NAVA for many years before launching PropertyDrum in 2009.



Martin Blakey
Trustee

Martin Blakey has worked in student accommodation for over 20 years. As Chief Executive of the student housing charity Unipol, Martin has helped develop a portfolio housing 3,000 students in Leeds, provides services to around 15 HEIs, accredits just over 220,000 bed spaces and operates the main training programme for those involved in student accommodation.



Nick Hankey
Trustee

Nick is the Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) of **The Dispute Service**. Nick is a qualified accountant who joined TDS in September 2011. He has held a number of senior finance director posts in the private sector.

Decision taking

The TDS Charitable Foundation is primarily a grant giving charity and each year the Trustees decide the core themes for funding and invite bids from suitable organisations and individuals to address the core themes.

In terms of resources the Trust seeks to allocate in the region of £125,000 in grants each year if there are suitable projects to fund.

All bidders are asked to submit a detailed grant application form with a number of supporting documents to support the bids. All bids are considered by the Trustees at their meetings which take place 3 to 5 times a year, and the successful bidders are published on the website.

All bidders are required to provide a detailed report at the conclusion of the project setting out how the charity's money has been spent. Any outputs (such as a report we have commissioned for example) will be made available on the TDS Charitable Foundation website.



The numbers

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2015 £
Incoming resources			
Incoming resources from generated funds			
Voluntary income		375,000	375,000
Total incoming resources		375,000	375,000
Resources expended			
Charitable activities		(99,649)	(99,649)
Support Costs		(2,442)	(2,442)
Total resources expended	1	102,091	102,091
Net movement in funds			
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward		-	-
Total funds carried forward		272,909	272,909

All of the above amounts are derived from continuing activities.

What has the TDS Charitable Foundation done over the last year?

During 2014-15 the TDS Charitable Foundation
has provided 11 grants
totalling just under £100,000.

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We would like to thank the TDS Charitable Foundation for its support, and hope that it can be used as a model across the UK for supporting landlords and tenants

Caerphilly Borough
County Council

Details of the organisations to which grants were given are set out in the table below.

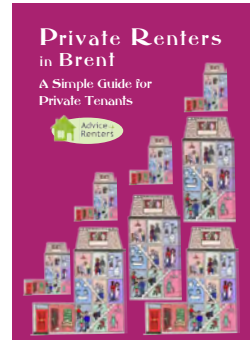
<p>National Union of Students Tenant training programme for students, rolled out through students' unions across the UK £20,000</p>		<p>City College Norwich Development of a full time and part time course in Residential Lettings Management to encourage school leavers and others into the letting agency sector £20,000</p>
<p>Chartered Institute of Housing Revamp of an online information service to cover the private rented sector aimed at tenants, particularly migrants, and their advisers £6,300</p>	<p>KIC FM Awareness campaign by a youth community radio station in the Wolverhampton area £6,000</p>	<p>Advice4Renters Education and leaflet for tenants on the new Brent landlord licensing scheme £6,460</p>
<p>Caerphilly County Borough Council Guidance publication including the Common Housing Register and equality laws, landlord and tenant case law examples £5,000</p>	<p>Generation Rent Production of an engaging "Know Your Rights & Responsibilities" poster and a guide to renters' rights and responsibilities £2,500</p>	<p>Law for Life A needs assessment report to identify gaps in provision and dissemination of information for tenants in the PRS £3,800</p>
<p>Designs on Property Funding for a series of research papers £14,939</p>	<p>Residential Landlords Association Adapting the ANUK handbook to a trainers' guide for local groups to deliver £7,500</p>	<p>Keyhouse Open door events in Keighley and Bradford for private landlords, to advance knowledge around housing rights and their obligations £3,650</p>

The TDS Charitable Foundation has received bid applications from across the country, with small independent groups seeking additional funding for existing projects and larger organisations and bodies requiring assistance to bring their ideas for improving the knowledge in the sector to life.

The types of projects which have been supported by The TDS Charitable Foundation range from flyers and guidance booklets to workshops and the powerful distribution of knowledge through social media.



One of the first successful applicants to complete their project was Advice4Renters. They applied for funding in order to produce an Information Booklet targeted at and directly handed to the estimated 3,000 private tenants in Willesden Green Ward in Brent. Producing the booklet stemmed from the fact that this particular area has more children in private rented homes than in the social rented sector. The organisation aimed to provide clear and concise information to tenants to give them an opportunity to make a positive contribution to improved standards, both within their own homes and across the neighbourhood.



During the year it became clear that there was a big demand from across England and Wales for local education workshops to be held for tenants' and landlord's groups. Trustees concluded that rather than funding a large number of individual workshops it would use its resources to design learning materials that could be made available free of charge for groups to use. This was the reason why the Residential Landlords Association was funded in 2015 to produce a training pack for landlord groups and tenants based on the ANUK Landlord's Guide.



Tenant pack providing information & exercises to promote tenant knowledge

Tenant's Obligations

- Why does your landlord want to do an inspection?
- What notice must they give you?
- Why do they fill in inspection forms?

Landlord pack underlining key elements of legislation, consequences of failure to comply and individual exercises based on scenarios

Landlord's Obligations

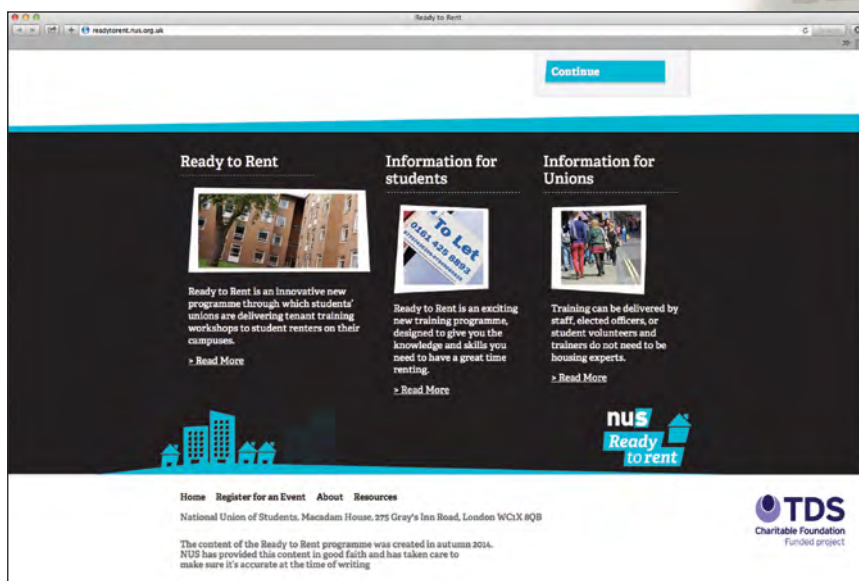
- To keep in repair the structure and exterior (including drains, gutter and external pipes).
- To keep in repair and proper working order installations for the supply of water, gas, electricity and sanitation (including basins, sinks, baths and toilets).
- To keep in repair and proper working order installations for space heating and heating water.



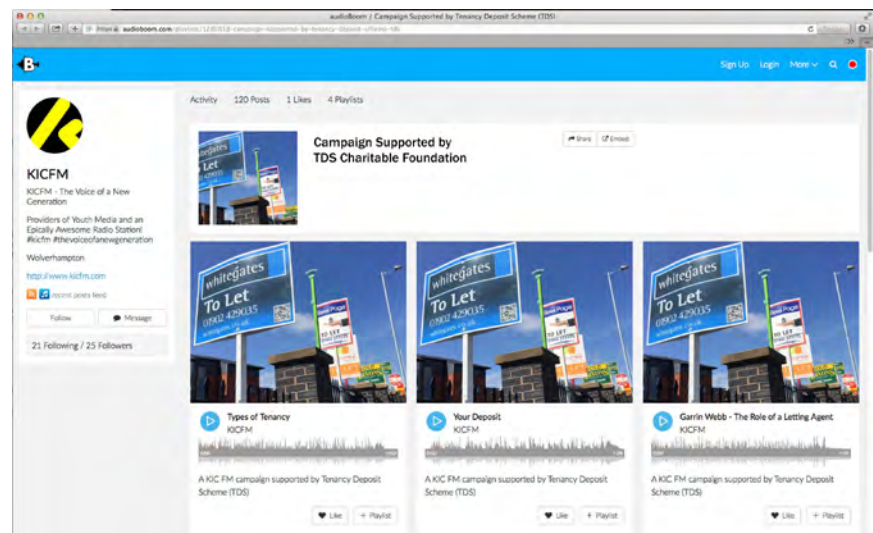
Developed in conjunction with Residential Landlords Association

A key element in the initial round of bids was education and this was a dominant concern within the student market, many of whom are first time renters.

The funding provided to the NUS was utilised in the form of a training programme tailored for the student renters under the **Ready to Rent** brand. This involved making training materials available to Student Union Officers, alongside a dedicated website. This has been disseminated to 73 students unions so far, with further workshops and training to be delivered in the up-coming academic year.



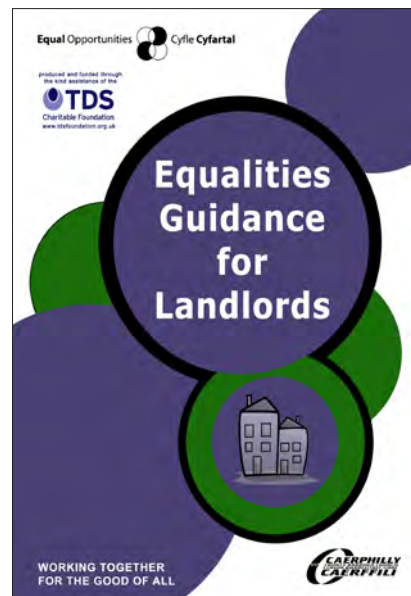
Innovative projects and fresh approaches to the promotion of knowledge was an aspect which appealed to Trustees and this was presented in the project received from the KIC campaign, an application funded in our second round. KIC have begun to publish media resources about rights and responsibilities through social media, including Facebook and Twitter and have reached over 12,000 people in the west Midlands.



A successful application from our first round of bid funding with a fully completed project is Caerphilly County Borough Council.

The TDS Charitable Foundation funded their project to produce a guidance booklet for landlords about how equalities legislation applies to lettings. The leaflet included guidance about relevant legislation, a case study, practical suggestions and links to local support and training

Following publication, a series of training sessions were arranged across the county for housing staff, social and private landlords, and letting agencies and an experienced Equalities trainer was brought in to deliver the sessions.



The Chartered Institute of Housing received bid funding

in order to progress a project which focusses on providing a new source of advice for migrants on their rights in the private rented sector.

The website averaged almost 12,500 visitors a month in 2014 and is used as a resource by bodies including Shelter, the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Migrant Rights Network as well as many small advice agencies.



A tenant tailored project was presented to the Foundation by Law4Life,

with their application proposing to design and produce a suite of resources to support the legal needs of private tenants. The first point of action within this project was to produce a 'needs assessment' in partnership with tenants' organisations.

The assessment provided a fascinating insight and allowed the organisation to identify significant gaps in the provision and dissemination of information for the private housing sector.



Resource Needs	
When asked about needs in specific types of resources, organisations gave some specific indications of what would be most useful, presented here in summary form.	
Printed Materials	Several groups reported creating their own materials for print and expressed a need for more support to do this. There was also a need expressed for easy, step-by-step guides to evictions, deposits, rent increases, minimum legal conditions, HMIs and mandatory licensing, and overcrowding. Groups also reported not having the funding to print materials themselves. In terms of presentation, simplicity and layout design for readers, not just banners and colourful graphics would be helpful. Organisations expressed a strong need for translated resources and those which are geared toward tenants who may have little or no legal knowledge.
Online Resources	Groups had little to say specifically about online resources, aside from giving a general indication that they make regular use of what is already available online. However, some reflected that available resources could be better maintained and kept up to date, and designed with the most basic user mindsets. It was also expressed that many communities which organisations support are themselves unable to access online resources. This is also reflected in the legal needs and capabilities report referenced above.
Multimedia Resources	Groups reported having very little access to multimedia resources, but also expressed that short and clear videos would be useful.
Training Resources	Aside from one-off trainings from local solicitors and, in one instance, a local council, groups expressed having no access to either training opportunities or resources. Groups suggested that training to develop skills and enable self-advocacy would be useful, but that these would need to be organised externally. Organisations also indicated that it would be useful to have more access to technical legal support for specific questions, particularly regarding new case law.
Skills Development	Organisations reported that there is generally a lack of emphasis on skills and attitudinal issues, aside from some new materials which emphasise getting organised. However, as groups are primarily to support also increase confidence amongst communities, more emphasis in this area would be warranted.
Engaging and Influencing	While organisations reported encouraging their communities to lobby Members of Parliament for reform, more support to get people involved locally would be helpful. Outside of specific resource need categorised above, organisations expressed a need for support with national level organising for tenants' rights, particularly the creation of a national tenants' union.
Survey-Conclusion	
The survey revealed that there is a discrepancy between available information and training resources and the practical access that tenants' organisations have to	

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