

newsletter issue 1

january 2016

ETHICAL LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION

...because it's a home, not just a property

QUAKERS ESTABLISH NEW LANDLORD INITIATIVE

Ethical Landlords Association set up following concerns of national body

British Quakers have established a new initiative which seeks to promote higher standards among private landlords—the Ethical Landlords Association (ELA).

The move follows concerns about inequality in the UK, of which housing inequality is seen to be a part. These were a major focus of attention at Britain Yearly Meeting, the national gathering of Quakers, in May 2015.

The ELA will bring together people who share a concern to reduce inequality in relation to private rented housing. Central to this is the recognition that a rental property is home for the tenant and their family, as well as being

an investment for the owner.

Sarah Fishpool from Birmingham is one of those behind the initiative: “I am a small private landlord myself, with three



houses. At Britain Yearly Meeting I had to ask myself if I was part of the problem, or if I could be part of the solution?”

“Knowing that good private landlords are needed in the housing market, we’ve decided to work with others to develop practice that is ethical, and goes beyond legal requirements.”

The next step for the new body is to develop a set of standards to help landlords provide a good service to tenants, while generating a reasonable income.

Alastair Cameron from Edinburgh is another of the founders: “We look forward to presenting our ideas to Quakers at Yearly Meeting in May 2016. It’s important to us to show that practical action follows from our discussions.”

draft aims & objectives

AIM

Recognising the significant role of private landlords in providing vital rented accommodation, the Ethical Landlords Association operates to support private landlords who are concerned to behave ethically towards their tenants.

OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve this aim, the Association will:

- ◇ Provide the opportunity for landlords and letting agents to commit to Charters of Ethical Practice
- ◇ Promote the provision of secure and affordable tenancies
- ◇ Develop and trial good practice, and thereby provide models for private landlords
- ◇ Model the type of regulation we would like to see enacted by all
- ◇ Cooperate with other organisations who have similar principles
- ◇ Support organisations who assist tenants to secure their legal rights

Consultation on charter

The first step of the ETHICAL LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION is to agree a set of standards, to which landlords will be invited to subscribe. These will go beyond the basic legal minimum—the aim is to ensure a sector in the private rented market that provides tenants with a better than typical experience.

Following consultation with projects elsewhere, including

Acorn in Bristol, a draft charter has been produced. This sets out possible Silver and Gold standard levels, recognising that landlords may need to work gradually towards their chosen standard level.

The draft charter covers issues such as landlord/tenant relations; security of tenure; rent levels and additional charges; agreeing inventories; quality of property

and contents; and tenancy endings, including references and dispute resolution.

We are looking for comments on the current draft, particularly from the points of view of both current tenants and landlords. To get a copy of the draft, please email Sarah Fishpool (details below).

Sarah will also be leading a workshop at the London Quakers event on 20 February—see right.

event

Housing and Inequality – What canst THOU do?

Saturday, 20 February 2016; 10 am-4 pm

London Quakers have organised a day conference for all in Britain Yearly Meeting.

General sessions will set out the context, and particular concerns about extending the right to buy.

The afternoon will include a workshop led by Sarah Fishpool of the ETHICAL LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION, seeking views on the draft charter (see left).

Attendance is free, but register in advance at www.londonquakers.org.uk

Help needed

ETHICAL LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION is a new initiative, and we are building up a database of interested and supportive people. Please let Sarah Fishpool know if you would like to keep in contact.

We particularly need people with specific skills, initially a web designer who can help us design a basic site as we get started. Again, please contact Sarah if you can help: sarahfishpool@yahoo.co.uk.

Homeless Sunday

Homeless Sunday is coming up on 24 January 2016.

Organised by Housing Justice and Scottish Churches Housing Action, it is an opportunity for people in churches of all traditions to listen to what God has to say about homelessness—and to look at what action we can take.

This is summed up in the 2016 theme of **connect, challenge and commit**.

Homelessness affects people across the UK—Homeless Sunday encourages churches to hear their stories and respond in love.

Find out more at www.homeless-sunday.uk or on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/homeless-sunday).

contacts

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