

Unipol Student Homes

# ANUK Working Group Report

As Approved by the Steering Group Meeting  
25th April 2007



## **A Working Group has met to:**

- **review the role and structure of the Steering Group**
- **take a strategic overview of the purpose of ANUK and its governance structure**
- **undertake a business plan for ANUK.**

The membership of the Group was:

Tom Toumazou (Chair)

Martin Blakey

Abby Davies

Caren Green

Neil Marsden

Richard Price.

The Group met on Tuesday 23rd January 2007 and Richard Price kindly hosted the meeting at the offices of the National Landlords Association on the Albert Embankment in London. The Chair had prepared a paper in advance detailing some initial proposals.

The Group reached a conclusion on the following issues:

- i) ANUK's main purpose was as a national forum for the interchange of ideas and good practice within the sector. Although there were regional groupings, none of these acted as a national UK focus for accreditation.
- ii) The current Steering Group had an ambiguity in its purpose. Aspects of the Steering Group's work related to the day to day management of the organisation which was of only limited interest to those who were not officers, whilst other items of business concentrated on "big picture" issues which sought to co-ordinate, support, and partly regulate developments throughout the UK in accreditation.
- iii) The current officerships within the Steering Group needed greater clarity and those officers needed to assume clearer responsibility for the areas they were responsible for. ANUK had moved beyond its initial development phase, where a few individuals undertook what could be described as "founders work" and needed input and assistance from a wider range of supporters.
- iv) In order to address some of the problems identified then, changes should be required to the current ANUK Constitution that was last reviewed on 31st May 2002.

## **Proposals as Approved**

*i) ANUK's main purpose was as a national forum for the interchange of ideas and good practice within the sector.*

The main function of ANUK was identified as:

Facilitating an expanded high quality private rented sector through the use of accreditation that seeks to raise management standards and increase professionalism within the sector and recognise achievements to that end.

In furtherance of these aims to:

- maintain and promote national models in respect of Model Accreditation Schemes (both local and regional) and training (including the provision of central training resources) whilst recognising the importance of local needs and diversity
- identify and promote best practice within accreditation
- promote networking between landlords, tenants, Local Authorities, pressure groups and the voluntary sector, disseminate information about accreditation
- support the development of accreditation at all levels, local, regional and district and seek particularly to promote greater co-operation through regional networking
- act of the focal point for lobbying about the important role accreditation has in housing policy at national level
- identify needs in accreditation and respond to them
- seek to maintain the integrity of accreditation schemes by ensuring they meet minimum criteria

and offer proper mechanisms of accountability in their governance and complaints systems.

ii) *Aspects of the Steering Group's work related to the day to day management of the organisation which was of only limited interest to those who were not officers, whilst other items of business concentrated on "big picture" issues which sought to co-ordinate, support, and partly regulate developments throughout the UK in accreditation*

and

iii) *The current officerships within the Steering Group needed greater clarity and those officers needed to assume clearer responsibility for the areas they were responsible for. ANUK had moved beyond its initial development phase, where a few individuals undertook what could be described as "founders work" and needed input and assistance from a wider range of supporters.*

The Group agreed with a number of proposals put forward by the Chair, after consultation with others.

a) ANUK would rename "The Steering Group" as "The ANUK National Forum" which would have the following terms of reference as:

To act as the focal forum for all of those involved, or wishing to become involved (as members and supporters of ANUK), in the development, promotion or administration of accreditation within the United Kingdom and to:

- ensure information of interest is exchanged
- present and highlight initiatives and developments relating to accreditation
- take an overview of past, current and future developments in accreditation
- organise a regional conference (on a rotational basis between the regions) annually.
  
- meet a minimum of twice a year
- have a quorum of six
- co-opt other members (individual co-options with the consent of the Executive)
- to set up Groups, as required, to discuss particular issues and initiatives.

The membership would be:

two representatives (named representatives to be chosen by regions with the consent of the Executive).  
from each of -

- the English regions
- Wales
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland.

one representative from each of the nominated organisations (named representatives to be chosen by organisations with the consent of the executive).

- Association of Tenancy Relations Officers
- British Property Federation
- Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
- Chartered Institute of Housing
- Communities and Local Government
- The Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACoRS)
- National Association of Letting Agents (NALS)
- National Energy Action/ Energy Savings Trust
- National Federation of Residential Landlords
- National Landlords Association
- National Union of Students
- Residential Landlords Association
- Shelter
- Unipol Student Homes

Members of the Executive.

b) As referred to earlier, ANUK would establish an Executive Committee which would have the following

terms of reference as:

To take responsibility for running ANUK and being authorised to make decisions in furtherance of ANUK's aims and objectives including to:

- maintain and develop the National Model Schemes
  - organise the national conference
  - set an annual budget and undertake regular monitoring
  - recruit members and maintain a membership database and website
  - develop regional representation within ANUK
  - promote training and develop core training materials
  - liaise with national Government to promote accreditation
  - be represented on all Governance systems for the Approved Codes Under Section 233 of the Housing Act 2004
  - facilitate the meeting of the National Forum and report to it at each meeting
- 
- meet a minimum of twice a year
  - have a quorum of four
  - to co-opt up to four members and invite observers and visitors, as necessary
  - to make changes to the constitution (subject to the consent of the members)
  - to set up Groups, as required, to discuss particular issues and initiatives.

The membership would be (to be approved in the first instance by the Steering Group):

Chair - to give leadership to the organisation, call meeting of the Forum and the Executive and chair both, ensure business is discussed in an orderly and correct way and that outcomes are properly actioned.

Secretary - to oversee the procedures for all meetings, to ensure that proper records are kept of meetings and sent to relevant participants and to assist the Chair in maintaining the governance structure of the organisation.

There would then be the following Vice Chairs:

*One regional vice chair from each of the existing regions:* the East Midlands, London and the North West and other areas when they develop full regional structure - to develop of regional representation, co-ordinate, harmonise, service and integrate national and regional activity

*Membership* - recruit and increase membership and oversee the administration of the membership database

*Training* - to develop and promote training materials and ensure existing documentation is kept up to date

*Information* - to distribute information to the membership and external agencies and ensure the production of a regular newsletter and oversee the development and maintenance of the website

*Conference and Events* - to oversee the setting of an agenda for the national and regional conferences and to liaise with speakers for these events and to oversee and co-ordinate the administration of those events

*Finance* - to produce an annual budget and monitor the progress of that budget to outturns, to ensure adequate resources for activities undertaken and to co-ordinate the generation of resources for national activities

*National Code of Practice* - to oversee and maintain the national accreditation systems and to represent ANUK on governance bodies in respect of those Codes

All members of the Executive would provide information and content for the newsletter and the web site.

It is suggested that one Working Group should be established forthwith called The Landlord Development Manual Working Group to undertake the revision of this manual annually, to ensure it is correct and up to

date with a membership of one representative each from the NFRL, NLA, RLA, Local Authorities and Scheme Operators.

*iv) In order to address some of the problems identified then changes should be required to the current ANUK Constitution that was last reviewed on 31st May 2002.*

The thrust of the changes in the constitution give the Executive power to run the day to day operations, moving this away from the Steering Group, redefining the role of the Forum as providing active membership input.

The existing constitution foresaw that members would be elected to the Steering Group by an Annual Conference which took place every two years. In reality, ANUK has never followed this process, but has instead held itself accountable by seeking consent for actions and elections through mailing existing members and via a report given to the membership annually at the Annual Conference.

To reduce unnecessary governance processes, it is RECOMMENDED here that election to the Executive (where individual members are standing as Chair, Secretary and Vice Chairs, should be by postal assent and if there are more candidates than seats then an election would take place by postal ballot. This would remove actual elections from any AGM context. It is also suggested that these elections should take place every three years and between those dates the Executive should have powers to elect replacements so that a single election takes place every three years.

The accounts and budget and day to day operations would then be a matter for the Executive.

In implementing these proposals it is proposed that, following the approval of the ANUK Steering Group, such an election and approval of the new Constitution should take place by postal affirmation and shall, in the first instance, last for two years from the date of agreement and be on a three year cycle thereafter.

### **Conclusion**

This review represents a major overhaul of ANUK's operational and governance structure which was established in 2002. It is designed to respond to the expansion of regional initiatives and to enable maximum use of the Forum by the membership, whilst tightening the day to day running of the organisation.

## **CONSTITUTION (proposed Revision April 2007)**

### **NATIONAL ACCREDITATION NETWORK for private rented residential accommodation**

#### **1. Name**

1.1 The name of the organisation shall be the 'NATIONAL ACCREDITATION NETWORK' for private rented residential accommodation, (hereinafter called 'the Network')

#### **2. Mission Statement**

2.1 To facilitate an expanded high quality private rented sector through the use of accreditation that seeks to raise standards and increase professionalism within the sector and recognise achievements to that end.

#### **3. Aims**

3.1 To promote a clear understanding of the wide range of issues associated with accreditation schemes.

3.2 To share information, skills, experience and ability gained from developing and operating accreditation schemes.

3.3 To support the development of accreditation at all levels, local, regional and district and seek particularly to promote greater co-operation through regional networking.

3.4 To identify and promote best practice within accreditation and to identify needs in accreditation and respond to them.

3.5 To maintain and promote national models in respect of Model Accreditation Schemes (both local and regional) and training (including the provision of central training resources) whilst recognising the importance of local needs and diversity.

3.6 To disseminate information about accreditation.

3.7 To undertake an Annual Conference.

3.8 To run and maintain a Website

3.9 To seek to maintain the integrity of all accreditation schemes within its ambit by ensuring they meet minimum criteria and offer proper mechanisms of accountability in their governance and complaints systems.

3.10 To promote networking and partnership between landlords, tenants, Local Authorities, pressure groups, the voluntary sector and other private rented sector stakeholders.

3.11 To act as the focal point for lobbying about the important role accreditation has in housing policy at national level and to influence national policies and strategies relating to accreditation schemes.

3.12 To contribute to the development of good property management practices and support responsible landlords and tenants.

3.13 To develop training for accreditation stakeholders.

3.14 To promote and encourage better living conditions for people living in privately rented accommodation.

#### **4. Membership**

4.01 Membership is open to any individual or organisation that has an interest in the private rented sector and supports the aims of the Network and joining the organisation.

4.02 Details of membership will be held on a computerised database and will be a public record.

4.03 Membership shall be open, regardless of nationality, political party, race, disability, religious opinion or sexuality, to all organisations and individuals that support the aims of the network.

4.04 The Executive Committee may refuse or terminate the membership of any individual or organisation whose new or continued membership would, in the view of the Executive Committee, not be consistent with the aims of the Network, (but only after notifying the member concerned in writing and considering the matter in the light of any written representation which the member puts forward within 28 days after receiving the notice).

### **5. The Executive Committee**

5.01 An Executive Committee shall be formed to take responsibility for running ANUK and being authorised to make decisions in furtherance of ANUK's aims and objectives including to:

- maintain and develop the National Model Schemes.
- organise the national conference.
- set an annual budget and undertake regular monitoring
- recruit members and maintain a membership database and website
- develop regional representation within ANUK
- promote training and develop core training materials
- be represented on all Governance systems for the Approved Codes Under Section 233 of the Housing Act 2004.

and it will:

meet a minimum of twice a year, have a quorum of four, can co-opt up to four members and invite observers and visitors, as necessary, make changes to the constitution (subject to the consent of the members) and is empowered to set up Groups, as required, to discuss particular issues and initiatives.

5.02 The membership will be:

A Chair - to give leadership to the organisation, call meeting of the Forum and the Executive and chair both, ensure business is discussed in an orderly and correct way and that outcomes are properly actioned.

A Secretary - to oversee the procedures for all meetings, to ensure that proper records are kept of meetings and sent to relevant participants and to assist the Chair in maintaining the governance structure of the organisation.

a number of Vice Chairs, as follows:

*One regional vice chair from each of the existing regions:* the East Midlands, London and the North West and other areas when they develop full regional structure - to develop of regional representation, co-ordinate, harmonise, service and integrate national and regional activity

*One vice chair for Membership* - to recruit and increase membership and oversee the administration of the membership database

*One vice chair for Training* - to develop and promote training materials and ensure existing documentation is kept up to date

*One vice chair for Information* - to distribute information to the membership and external agencies and ensure the production of a regular newsletter and oversee the development and maintenance of the website

*One vice chair for Conference and Events* - to oversee the setting of an agenda for the national and regional conferences and to liaise with speakers for these events and to oversee and co-ordinate the administration of those events

*One vice chair for Finance* - to produce an annual budget and monitor the progress of that budget to outturns, to ensure adequate resources for activities undertaken and to co-ordinate the generation of

resources for national activities

*One vice chair for the National Code of Practice* - to oversee and maintain the national accreditation systems and to represent ANUK on governance bodies in respect of those Codes

5.03 Members will be elected to the Committee as outlined under Section 6.

5.04. Decisions will be taken, where possible, by consensus, but where there is a division of opinion, a vote of Committee members shall be decided by a simple majority and the chair shall have both an original and a casting vote.

## **6. Elections to the Executive Committee**

6.01 Elections to the Executive Committee will be by postal vote and, in the first instance, that election shall take place at the same time as assenting to this Constitution and Officers elected will be elected for two years.

6.02 On all future occasions, elections to the Executive Committee will be by postal vote and officers will stand for three years, in the first instance.

6.03 In holding an election, a Returning Officer will, be appointed by, in the first instance, the Steering Group and thereafter by the National Forum.

6.04 The Returning Officer will ensure that there will be a call of nominations to the Executive Committee and minimum a period of 10 days will be allowed for nominations to be submitted to the Returning Officer in writing. Nominations must be made and seconded by existing members

6.05 In the event of an uncontested election, those nominated will be returned by the Returning Officer as members of the Executive at the close of nominations and the membership informed.

6.06 In the event of a contested election the Returning Officer will arrange for those nominated to be allowed to circulate the membership with a manifesto not exceeding 300 words, which will be distributed to the members together with a ballot form. The successful candidate will be elected by in a "first past the post" system. The election period from the close of nominations to the election will be not less than 14 days. Following the election those nominated will be returned by the Returning Officer as members of the Executive and the membership informed.

6.07 If a member of the Executive resigns during the period of office, nominations will be sought (as above) for a replacement member but, in this instance, the Executive Committee itself will form the electorate. The same timescales will apply for nominations (as in 6.04) and if the election is contested, the same timescales shall apply (6.06) and the National Forum will appoint a Returning Officer to oversee the process in the same manner (6.03).

## **7. The ANUK National Forum**

7.01 A National Forum will be established to act as the focal forum for all of those involved, or wishing to become involved (as members and supporters of ANUK), in the development, promotion or administration of accreditation within the United Kingdom to:

ensure information of interest is exchanged  
present and highlight initiatives and developments relating to accreditation  
take an overview of past, current and future developments in accreditation  
organise a regional conference (on a rotational basis between the regions) annually  
appoint a returning officer (by simple majority voting) for elections held to the Executive Committee.

7.02 The National Forum will meet a minimum of twice a year and have a quorum of six and can co-opt other members (individual co-options with the consent of the Executive) and set up Groups, as required, to discuss particular issues and initiatives.

7.03 The membership will be:

Two representatives (named representatives to be chosen by regions with the consent of the Executive).

from each of the English regions, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

One representative from each of the nominated organisations (named representatives to be chosen by organisations with the consent of the executive): ATRO, the British Property Federation, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the Chartered Institute of Housing, the Department of Communities and Local Government, the Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACoRS), NEA/EST, the National Federation of Residential Landlords, the National Landlords Association, the National Union of Students, the Residential Landlords Association, Shelter and Unipol Student Homes.

The Chair, Secretary and Vice Chairs of the Executive shall also be full members of the Forum.

### **8. Conference**

8.01 A National Conference will be held at least once per year. The Conference will include an Annual Report of the activities of the Network and the Agenda for the Conference shall be approved by the Executive Committee.

8.02 A report on the organisation's finances will be presented and available at the annual meeting where questions can also be asked to officers

### **9. Finance**

9.01 There will be a charge for membership of the Network that will contribute towards operational costs of the organisation.

9.02 Income for the operation of the Network will be derived from any source that is deemed by the steering group to be appropriate and including sponsorship of the Network by suitable organisations.

9.03 Charges shall be made to cover the estimated costs of each conference in accordance with a decision made by the Executive Committee. Members will receive a discount on the full conference price.

9.04 All monies raised by or on behalf of the Network shall be used to further the aims of the Network and for no other purpose.

9.05 A proper record of the finances of the Network shall be kept and the Executive Committee will approve an annual budget.

9.06 No individual or member shall make any personal financial or material gain from the Network's funds. Only legitimate expenses will be met.

### **10. Establishment and Change of Constitution**

10.1 This constitution replaces that previously agreed on 31st May 2002 and will be affirmed by the current membership of ANUK by postal communication and assent based on a recommendation from the Steering Group. The membership will be consulted for a period of 28 days after which either this constitution shall come into force or, if assent has not been forthcoming, a special conference will be called at which changes will be discussed and decided upon. The quorum for such a conference will be 10.

10.2 The Steering Group will cease to exist from the time of the assent of this Constitution by the membership and be replaced by the Executive Committee and the National Forum.

10.3 This constitution can only be changed by the assent of the membership, following the procedure outlined above. Change can be initiated by: a simple majority of the Executive Committee voting that a change be made, a two thirds majority of the National Forum voting that a change be made or a petition from 50% of the membership voting that a change be made.

### **11. Dissolution**

11.01 The Network can only be dissolved at a special conference called for that purpose.

11.02 Notification must be given to members at least two months prior to the date for that Conference. A quorum of 50 members or 20% of the membership, whichever is Greater, will be required to dissolve the Network and a proposal to dissolve the Network shall take effect only if agreed by two thirds of the

members present at the meetings. Any assets remaining after the payment of proper debts shall be transferred to a charitable institution or voluntary agency with similar objectives to the Network.

**Date adopted:**

**XXX May 2007**

**Signed on behalf of the Network:**

**Chair: Tom Toumazou**