



Nomination Form

Outstanding Contribution to Tenant Participation **Frances Nelson MBE**

TIS National Excellence Awards 2024

The **TIS National Excellence awards** recognise and celebrate housing organisations, staff, volunteers, tenants, residents, and community groups **who are leading the way and making positive change in the Scottish social housing sector.**

Categories honour excellence in everything **from partnership working, tenant participation and scrutiny practice, to digital creativity and innovation.** Hotly anticipated, the awards offer a seal of approval for the most outstanding work.

Finalists are selected by an expert and independent judging panel, and **winners announced at an awards ceremony on Thursday 7th November 2024 at the Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow.**

The closing date for applications is 5:00pm on Thursday 11th July 2024. TIS accepts submissions in more than one award category.

Category Overview

The **Outstanding Contribution to Tenant Participation** award recognises an inspiring, individual tenant who has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to driving tenant participation practices forward to achieve great practice that others can learn from.

Submissions must evidence how **the individual has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to adding value to their local area and improving community spirit,** empowered other tenants, residents, and communities to influence housing policies, services, and standards, explored innovative new ways to get people involved, strengthened relationships and communication, and **championed tenant participation practices.**

Who you can nominate

This award is open to an individual tenant.

About you

Please note information about the individual, organisation, or group submitting the application:

Name	Max Scotto
Position	Lead Customer Engagement Officer
Organisation	Kingdom Housing Association
Email address	maxscotto@kha.scot
Telephone number	07920 765170

About the nominee

Please note information about the individual you are nominating:

Name	George Duncan
Position	Scrutiny Panel Member
Organisation	Kingdom Housing Association
Email address	gdscotjazz@hotmail.com
Telephone number	

Background

Maximum 250 words

Please outline background information about the individual that you are nominating.

For example, detail:

- The background of the individual.
- The specific role they undertake.
- When and why the individual first got involved in tenant participation.

This application seeks to recognise the work of three very committed individuals of our Scrutiny Panel, who are also well known in the TP sector, and who have never received an award: George Duncan, Peter Gibson and John Mathieson.

It is difficult for us to individualise their contributions as they work together as a team. Therefore, most of the achievements apply to the 3 of them. However, individual aspects of their own journeys into volunteering along with their tenacity in overcoming challenges are outlined below.

This application focuses on George Duncan.

George sustained a car accident 30 years ago and had a major spinal injury leaving him disabled. In time he made a good recovery and as soon as he was able, George started volunteering.

He joined the **Samaritans** 20 years ago to help people who were struggling with suicide and mental health issues, becoming a call handler, trainer, and finally as a Board member.

George also joined the **Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court's Witness Service**. This involved attending the court 3 times a week, for over 20 years. The service provides emotional support as well as training to people who are called to Court as witnesses.

He loves music and for the last 20 years he volunteered with the **Scottish Jazz Orchestra** as a concert compare and a Board member.

George became a Kingdom tenant in 2015 and when we advertised our aim to recruit tenants to form a scrutiny group, George was the first one to respond to the calling.

Together with other tenants, he established our **Scrutiny Panel** in 2016 and went through the CIH Accredited Stepping up to Scrutiny programme. He then completed their a CIH Level 3 awards in Resident Scrutiny.

Actions

Maximum 500 words

Please outline specific actions of the individual that demonstrate an exceptional commitment to driving tenant participation practices forward.

For example, outline:

- How the individual has gone above and beyond in championing tenant participation practices.
- How the individual empowered other tenants, residents, and communities to influence housing policies, services, and standards.
- How the individual explored innovative new ways to get people involved.
- How the individual has championed tenant participation practices.
- The work involved and their overall aim.

George goes above and beyond to maximize the opportunities to participate and is an active promoter of engagement. He attends conferences and takes part in every opportunity that Kingdom offers, gatherings, study visits, consultations, etc. He participates in training sessions alongside staff members to learn more about the different areas of the Association's business. He does all that while also volunteering in other projects.

In 2017, George worked as part of our Scrutiny Panel to review our landscaping services. Staff worked alongside the Panel to interview contractors, tenants and staff. Estate walkabouts were also pivotal to this inquiry. The review also involved studying records of complaints against services and conducting comparisons with other organisations. This shows how George can use his listening skills and adapt to a variety of research methods. While supported by staff members, he always shows initiative and thinks of innovative ways that the Panel can implement scrutiny activities.

The Covid-19, presented a big challenge for George whose digital skills were limited. However, once he was provided with a laptop by Kingdom, he worked hard to master the art of video calling. He participated in three online policy consultations and, as a members of the Panel, started a virtual inquiry into our repairs service. This shows how he has embraced major change so that he can continue to work as part of our Scrutiny Panel and improve the lives of others

Outcomes

Maximum 700 words

Please outline positive outcomes the individual has achieved as a result of their commitment to empowering tenants, residents, and communities.

For example, detail the impact on:

- The delivery of housing services.
- The improvement of satisfaction levels.
- Adding value to their local area and improving community spirit.
- Communication, strengthening relationships, and partnership working.
- The inclusion and lasting benefits of tenants, residents, and communities.
- The skills and knowledge of other tenants, residents, and communities.
- How others can learn from the individual's good practice now and in the future.

Funding community innovation

For example, George, alongside some other Panel members and tenants, engaged in an estate walkabout, finding some evidence to suggest that the contractor providing landscaping services was not meeting their required specifications. This was put to the Association who responded by increasing the supervision of contractors by creating a new seasonal post of an Estate Supervisor to cover the summer months. This review has also had an impact on budgets and the implementation of innovative actions, such as the introduction of participatory budgeting in the organisation. This led to the development of our participatory budgeting scheme, Choices.

Estate Management

George remains very involved in this process and his ideas have helped to make the scheme accessible to other tenants. For example, this has so far led to 8 tenant-driven projects, which have involved:

- installing picnic benches
- landscaping areas
- creating communal gardens
- transforming communal gardens into private gardens
- funding community projects

A further recommendation from the Panel was that Kingdom should consider taking on landscaping services rather than subcontracting this service. After considering the viability of this recommendation and comparing it with other approaches, earlier in 2024 the organisation decided to take its own gardening team. This has improved the performance and customer satisfaction in this area.

Procurement

As part of the Panel, George encouraged the involvement of tenants in the assessment of tenders and suggested that this approach be extended to other areas of service. Following this we have included tenants in our procurement processes and in staff recruitment. For example, one of our tenants with a particular interest in the performance of the landscaping contractors was used to assess tender submissions alongside managers and an independent consultant. A group of tenants

have also been involved in reviewing the quality and specification of maintenance components for new kitchens. Again, it is of no surprise, that George took part in both of these exercises.

Improve consultation processes and accountability

George was involved in assessing rent consultation processes to ensure that future rent levels remain affordable. In line with this, the Panel suggested that “fixing the rent increase over a period of years was sensible both for tenants and the organisation.” This option, along with other increase levels, was then put to tenants in the 2019 rent consultation. Feedback from the rent consultation then contributed to an increase of 2.25% per year being fixed for the next two years. This increase was the first that meant rents would be set at a level lower than the one predicted in our 30 year business plan.

Improved communications

George, amongst others, also recommended that “social media could be used more effectively to facilitate discussions among harder to engage groups.” The Association therefore launched a Facebook group called ‘Our Kingdom’ for tenants to share their views. This generated an additional 276 comments, as 93 tenants joined in a virtual discussion surrounding rents. These discussions also influenced the final rent increase survey issued to all tenants which, in turn, received a response rate 6% higher than the previous consultation, with a record of 7.5% responses.

Proactive engagement

Another key recommendation from George for overcoming the apathy to participate, was involving families at community fun days and events. Since 2016 we have held annual Summer Gatherings, with Winter Gatherings starting in 2018. At these events we offer activities that can be enjoyed by families and people of all age groups while we promote participation activities. Some of these events have seen than 400 customers attending!

From 2019, we began holding tenant roadshows where we travelled to housing estates and promoted participation along with other services.

What makes this nominee stand out from the rest?

Maximum 100 words

Please provide a short testimonial on why this individual deserves to win.

George is a very caring and committed individual who works tirelessly for the benefit of others. Over the years he has become a friend of his peers and staff members and during difficult times, he supports and encourages other scrutiny panel members to stay on. For example, he arranges to meet for a coffee every week with some Scrutiny Panel members and is a good listener.

He is also honest and able to tell us when he get things wrong.

Despite reaching his 80s and having to slow down in some areas, George is a great example of somebody who is always ready to go the extra mile, offering his help with practical arrangements such as providing transport to his fellow Panel members, or assisting with reception and sign-up duties at events.

We would love if Geroge along with his friends George Gibson and John Mathieson would receive some recognition from TIS, as he is reaching the end of his career and has already stepped down from his voluntary work with the Samaritans and Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court. We know that he would love and feel most encouraged by receiving an award or mention from TIS, an organisation that George very much admires.

Declaration

X As the proposer I have completed this nomination form to the best of my knowledge, and the information provided is a true representation of the nominee's achievements.

Name	Max Scotto
Signature	Max Scotto
Date	1 August 2024

Thank you for taking the time to complete this nomination form.

Please submit your nomination by **5:00pm on Thursday 11th July 2024** to TIS by email at: **info@tis.org.uk** or by post to: **TIS – Clockwise Offices, 77 Renfrew Street, Glasgow, G2 3BZ.**

Next steps

- **All applications will be acknowledged on receipt by TIS.** If you do not receive acknowledgement within 3 working days, please contact us to ensure your application has been received.

- An **independent judging panel** will rate your application against the award criteria. The panel will consist of representatives from organisations across the Scottish social rented sector.
- Your award submission will provide the basis for both the shortlist and final decision of the winning entry.
- **TIS welcomes applications in more than one award category.**
- Please ensure you answer all questions as fully as possible and keep the content of your nomination focused – avoid exceeding the suggested word count.
- **TIS will inform all proposers of the outcome of their application Thursday 29th August 2024.**
- Finalists will be invited to the **TIS National Excellence Awards Ceremony**, as part of the TIS National Housing Conference and Exhibition, on **Thursday 7th November 2024** at the Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow.