



**SHETTLESTON
HOUSING
ASSOCIATION**



Membership Applications Policy

**Approved: December 2015
V.08 (Code: Gen 03)**

Membership Applications

1. Introduction

Shettleston Housing Association operates in accordance with;

- Statutory requirements,
- The standards set down in the Scottish Social Housing Charter,
- The requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator, in the formulation and implementation of all its policies.

SHA seeks to fulfil its Corporate aims through the development and implementation of its policies and all SHA's policies operate to achieve its Strategic Objectives as set out in its Internal Management Plan.

2. Equal Opportunities

- 2.1 SHA is committed to recognising diversity and ensuring equality to all persons or groups within its area of operations in every aspect of its activities. In operating this policy SHA will endeavour to ensure equality of service for all at all times and in all circumstances. In line with this commitment to equality, this policy and any summary or information leaflet can be made available free of charge in a variety of formats including large print, translated into another language or on audio tape.

3. Access To Policy Information

- 3.1 SHA will ensure that its policies are made fully available to all tenants, applicants, members, persons or groups within its areas. Every effort will be made by SHA to support access and promote awareness of its policies by developing summaries, guidance and information leaflets as appropriate.

4. Tenant Involvement and Consultation

- 4.1 SHA is committed to meeting the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 in all of its policies. It will involve tenants in the development of its policies and seek feedback in appropriate circumstances. It will ensure at all times that any material change to services affecting tenants in this and other policies will be the subject of consultation.

5. Policy Monitoring

- 5.1 SHA is committed to ensuring that adequate monitoring of the implementation of its policies is undertaken. This will be achieved through regular review by the Management Committee, customer/tenant feedback surveys, and regular consultation with tenant/resident groups.

6. Risk Management and Assessment

- 6.1** SHA has a detailed Risk Management Policy in place and it will assess the risks to the Association in the implementation of each of its policies as part of its risk management strategy.

7. Procedures

- 7.1** SHA will develop a detailed set of back up procedures identifying actions, roles and responsibilities in implementing its policies. These procedures will be subject to regular review and audit.

8. Training

- 8.1** SHA will ensure that its staff are properly trained in terms of their knowledge and understanding of statutory requirements and Performance Standards pertaining to its policies. It will ensure that appropriate staff are kept up to date with all procedures pertaining to the implementation of policies. The Management Committee and Sub-Committees will have access to training to ensure that they can maintain a sufficient overview of the policy and procedures.

9. Policy Aims

- 9.1** Shettleston is a community based housing Association whose membership is open to anyone over 18 years of age living within the Association's area of operation. The Association is committed to the involvement of tenants and local residents in the running of its affairs and to consultation with tenants and local residents over those actions or policies which may affect them.
- 9.2** The Association's Tenant Consultation and Participation Strategy outlines a clear strategy on promoting tenant participation as well as ensuring that openness, equality and accountability are of the core of its dealings with tenants and other service users.
- 9.3** The Association also seeks to establish a wide and active membership by recruiting as members individuals with an interest in the work of the organisation and to make effective use of the skills, experience and views of its members.

10. Aims and Objectives

- 10.1** The Association will consider membership applications from anyone over 18 years of age living within the Association's area of operation as set out in the attached extract from the Associations Rules. The aim of the membership policy is to encourage as many tenants and local residents to join the Association and participate in the running of the Association.

- 10.2** The Association recognises that the ultimate level of participation for its membership is through involvement in the Management Committee. However, the Association's Tenant Consultation and Participation Strategy seeks to facilitate participation in the running of the Association by its members and tenants at a range of available levels of involvement.

11. Promotion of Membership

- 11.1** The Association will actively promote membership opportunities to tenants and other potential members throughout the communities it serves.

- 11.2** This will be done in a variety of ways including the following:

- All Newsletters to tenants will contain membership material.
- All new tenants will be introduced to membership when the Tenancy Agreement is signed and subsequently in any "settling in" visit.
- All tenants who are not already members will be contacted directly at least once every three years with the specific purpose of encouraging them to join the Association.
- The Association will hold at least one open day/evening event each year with a view to encouraging tenants, residents and others to consider membership and involvement in the work of the Association.
- New members will receive a Members Information Pack outlining the Association's aims and how the new member can contribute to the development of the Association.
- Members shall be encouraged to stand for election to the Management Committee. As well as utilising other promotional opportunities outlined above, the Association will promote Management Committee membership through the Newsletter and specifically through its 'Notice of Committee assessment and election requirements' published in May each year.
- Make every effort to hold general meetings at times and locations suitable for membership, and which is accessible to all.

12. Application for Membership

- 12.1** Individuals must be at least 18 years old to apply for membership unless already an Association tenant. If the applicant is a tenant, membership can be applied for from the age of 16.

- 12.2** To apply for membership, a notification of interest form (available from the Association's offices and publicised in Newsletters etc.) must be sent to the Secretary at the Association's offices.

12.3 On receipt of a notification of interest the Association will forward an application form to the person at the address set out in the notification of interest. This form will have an identifiable number on it and the original form together with one pound must be returned to the Secretary at the Association's offices.

12.4 For the purposes of verification, the Association will take the following steps to ensure that all applications have been submitted by the person named on the form:

- Where the applicant is a tenant, a signature check will be made against existing records.
- Where an applicant is not a tenant he or she will be asked to sign the document in the presence of an Association witness and to provide proof of eligibility and specifically of residence.
- This proof can take the form of two from any of the following:
 - Passport
 - Driver's License
 - Utility Bill

Applicants who have disabilities, are elderly or infirm may request a home visit by Association representatives for the purpose of application verification.

12.5 The Association's Management Committee will consider the application at its next meeting or as soon as possible after that. The Association will refund the one pound if the application is not approved.

12.6 If an application is approved, then the applicant will immediately become a member of the Association and their name will be included in the Association's "Register of Members" within seven days. One share in the Association will then be issued.

12.7 The Association seeks to ensure broad representation in its membership of the groups and communities it serves and that all sections of the community are represented. Membership is open to all sections of the community regardless of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, disability, age or sexuality.

13. Refusal of Membership

13.1 The Association reserves the right to refuse an application where there is agreement that Membership would compromise the interests or independence of the Association.

14. Appeal

- 14.1** Where an application for membership is unsuccessful, the applicant will be given the reasons for refusal in writing within seven days.
- 14.2** The written communication in 6.1 will also outline the opportunity for the applicant to appeal against the decision.
- 14.3** In normal circumstances the appeal should be in writing. However, where the applicant has literacy difficulties, visual impairment or other disabilities that prohibit an appeal in writing, arrangements will be made for an advocate to make appeal representations.
- 14.4** The appeal will be considered by the Management Committee at its next scheduled meeting or not less than 28 days following notification of appeal.

15. Ending Membership

- 15.1** Membership can be ended by the member giving the Secretary of the Association one month's notice in writing.
- 15.2** Membership will also be ended if the Management Committee is satisfied that:
- The member has failed to let us know of a change of address within three months, provided that change of address still falls within the Association's area. Members should note that transfers of tenancy within the Association's housing stock do not require separate notification.
 - The member moves to an address which falls outwith the Association's area and they became a member after 2nd June 2005. Members from prior to that date may retain their membership so long as they notify the Association within 3 months of their move.
 - A membership may also be ended if the Association receives a complaint about a member's behaviour and two-thirds of the members voting at a Special General Meeting agree to this.
- 15.3** In the circumstances outlined above, as well as membership being ended the member's Share will be cancelled. The value of the Share will then belong to the Association with effect from the date of a Management Committee resolution to that effect. The ending of a membership will be recorded in the Association's Register of Members.

16. Register of Members

- 16.1** The Association will keep a Register of its office including the following details
- The names and addresses of the members
 - A statement of the Share held by each member and the amount each member paid for it.
 - The date each person was entered in the Register as a member and the date at which any person ceased to be a member of the Association.
- 16.2** The inclusion or omission of the name of any person for the Register of Members shall, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, be conclusive that the person is or is not a member of the Association.
- 16.3** Access to the Register is limited to those who have a financial interest in the Association ie the shareholding members, and anyone holding security against the Association's property.
- 16.4** Requests for access to the Register will be subject to the following conditions:
- Requests to inspect the Register must be made in writing stating the reason for the inspection.
 - Access to the Register will be granted within seven days for the purpose of inspection. Copying the Register, in whole or part, is not permitted.
 - Inspection must take place in front of Association Committee or staff.
 - Failure to agree to these conditions will result in access being refused.

17. Review

This Policy will be reviewed at least once every three years.