



**SHETTLESTON
HOUSING
ASSOCIATION**



Membership Policy

**Approved: September 2022
V 9.0 (Code: Gen 03)**

Membership Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 The Association's Rules (Sections 6-12) set out in detail the requirements in relation to membership. The Procedure document at **Appendix 1** summarises these provisions and sets out how they will be implemented in relation to: membership applications and other related matters.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 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** map extracted from the Associations Rules. The aim of the membership policy is to achieve a wide-ranging, diverse and representative membership made up of tenants and local residents who wish to participate in the running of the Association.
- 2.2 The Association believes that a healthy membership base is essential to the ongoing viability of the Association as a community based organisation and necessary to ensure a good ongoing supply of new Board Members and future leaders of the Association.

3. Promotion of Membership

- 3.1 The Association will actively promote membership opportunities to tenants and other potential members throughout the communities it serves.
- 3.2 This will be done in a variety of ways including the following:
 - All Newsletters to tenants will contain membership material and there will be social media campaigns from time to time.

- 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.
 - Make every effort to hold general meetings at times and locations suitable for membership, and which is accessible to all.
- 3.3** The Board will set ambitious but realistic annual targets in relation to membership numbers and representativeness and monitor progress against these.

4. Opportunities for active involvement

- 4.1** The success of this Policy will be judged however not just by the progress in boosting numbers but also by the extent to which members are actively involved in some way.
- 4.2** The Association recognises that the ultimate level of participation for its membership is through involvement in the Board of Management. Members shall be encouraged to stand for election to the Board of Management. As well as utilising other promotional opportunities outlined above, the Association will promote Board membership through the Newsletter and social media and specifically through the annual invite to members to stand for election to the Board that is issued in the lead up to the AGM.
- 4.3** However, Board Membership requires a very significant commitment and time input. This is likely to be attractive to a relatively small proportion of the membership and it is important that there are other meaningful and accessible opportunities for tenants and members to become involved.
- 4.4** For tenants, as consumers of the Association's services, we will set out a range of available levels of involvement within the Association's Tenant Participation Strategy and annual Engagement Plan.
- 4.5** Beyond this role as consumers, we will also seek to develop opportunities for share-holding members to learn about and help shape the more general role and running of the Association.

- 4.6** All members are entitled to attend the Annual General Meeting. We will aim to make this as interesting and accessible as possible, given the requirement to deal with essential constitutional business.
- 4.7** During the course of the rest of the year we will look to offer other opportunities for interested members, such as:
- More regular targeted bulletins about important Association business.
 - A mid-year informal meeting for members to share proposals in relation to the future Business Planning of the Association.
 - Opportunities to attend scheme openings and other events.

5. General provisions

5.1 Compliance

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 Business Plan.

5.2 Equal Opportunities

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.

5.3 Access To Policy Information

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.

5.4 Tenant Involvement and Consultation

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.

5.5 Policy Monitoring

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 Board, customer/tenant feedback surveys, and regular consultation with tenant/resident groups.

5.6 Risk Management and Assessment

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.

5.7 Training

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

6. Policy Review

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

Appendix 1

Procedures

The Association's Rules (sections 6-12) set out in detail the requirements in relation to membership. This procedure note summarises the Rules to some extent and sets out how these Rules will be implemented.

Applications for membership

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.

4. The Association's Board will consider any application for membership at its next meeting or as soon as possible after that. The Association will refund the one pound if the application is not approved.
5. 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.

Refusal of membership

6. Whilst it is the Association's intention to encourage membership, the Board has absolute discretion in deciding on applications for membership and section 7 of the Association Rules sets out grounds for refusal of an application for membership:-
 - Where membership would be contrary to the Association's Rules or policies; or
 - Where a conflict of interest may exist which, even allowing for the disclosure of such an interest, may adversely affect the work of the Association; or
 - Where the Board considers that accepting the application would not be in the best interests of the Association.
7. Where an application for membership is unsuccessful, the applicant will be given the reasons for refusal in writing within seven days.
8. The written communication will also outline the opportunity for the applicant to appeal against the decision. 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. The appeal will be considered by the Board at its next scheduled meeting or not less than 28 days following notification of appeal.

The Board has the power in its absolute discretion to accept or reject the application.

Ending a membership

9. Your membership of the Association will end and the Board will cancel your share and record the ending of your membership in the Register of Members if:-
 - You resign your membership giving seven days' notice in writing to the Secretary at the registered office; or
 - For five annual general meetings in a row you have not attended, submitted apologies, exercised a postal vote or appointed a representative to attend and vote on your behalf by proxy; or
 - The Association receives a complaint about your behaviour and two-thirds of the Members voting at a special general meeting agree to end your membership.
 - 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 out-with 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 three months of their move.

Register of Members

- 10.1** 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.
- 10.2** 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.
- 10.3** 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.
- 10.4** 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.

