



RUTHERGLEN & CAMBUSLANG HOUSING ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP POLICY

ALL OF THE ASSOCIATION'S POLICIES AND PUBLICATIONS CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE IN LARGER PRINT, AUDIO FORM, BRAILLE OR OTHER LANGUAGES AS REQUIRED AND APPROPRIATE.

For further details please contact the office on 0141 647 4917 or by email at info@randcha.co.uk

Purpose	To demonstrate the Association's commitment to promote good governance and a diverse membership. The policy outlines how applications will be sought and processed.
Regulatory Guidance	Guidance 6.4: The RSL encourages as diverse a membership as is compatible with its constitution and actively engages its membership in the process for filling vacancies on the governing body.

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INTRODUCTION

Rutherglen and Cambuslang Housing Association is committed to promoting meaningful and positive engagement with its services users and the communities it operates within. The Association therefore offers a range of ways interested parties can participate in, and influence, the decision-making process. Membership of the Association is recognised as a key part of this approach.

The Association sees itself as part of the wider communities it services and therefore wishes to attract a wide and active membership from the residents living in our areas of operations as well as other individuals with an interest in the work of the Association.

The Association's Membership Policy is intended to demonstrate how we are going to fulfil our commitment and clarify the rules and processes that govern membership of the Association.

1.0 LEGAL & REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Regulatory Standards

The Scottish Housing Regulator's standards and guidance requires that a landlord **"encourages as diverse a membership as is compatible with its constitution and actively engages its membership in the process for filling vacancies on the governing body"**

2.2 The Association's Rules

The Association must administer its membership in accordance with its Rules which are based on the SFHA Model Rules 2020.

2.0 POLICY OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the Membership Policy is to promote good governance of the Association by having a membership that widely reflects the communities it services.

To achieve this objective the policy aims to;

- Promote the benefits of membership
- Ensure that membership is open and inclusive
- Recruit members that have an interest in the Association and supports its aims, values and ethos
- Support an informed and active membership
- Attract membership from people with the knowledges and skills that can positively support the work of the Association

- Ensure that information on membership is made widely available
- Provide information on eligibility for membership and the application process
- Put in place a framework that ensures applications for membership are processed in a fair and consistent manner
- Ensure that the Association complies with legislation, regulatory requirements and its own Rules and objectives

3.0 DEFINITION

As a membership organisation, members are individuals or organisations that hold a £1 share in the Association and are recorded in the Register of Members.

4.0 BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Members of the Association are entitled to;

- Attend the Association's Annual General Meeting (AGM) and any Special General Meetings called
- Vote on any amendments to the Association's Rules
- Nominate and elect members to the Management Committee
- Stand for election to the Management Committee
- Vote on the appointment of the Association's auditor
- Appoint a representative to cast their votes by proxy

Membership of Rutherglen and Cambuslang Housing Association does not give an individual any additional help or priority in being offered a tenancy with the Association or receiving repairs or other services.

The Association wishes to ensure that its members are informed and can actively participate in the organisations' activities. To this end the Association will;

- Invite members to Annual General Meetings, giving at least 14 days notice
- Make every effort to hold general meetings at times and in locations that are suitable for the membership and in venues that are accessible
- Actively promote opportunities to serve on the Management Committee
- Keep members informed of the Association's performance and major activities through newsletters, annual reports etc as appropriate
- Provide information to allow members to make informed decisions at general meetings
- Make every effort to provide, or support the provision of, information in the format or language required by an individual member

5.0 ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

Membership of Rutherglen and Cambuslang Housing Association is open to;

- Tenants, service users and individuals over the age of 16 who support the aims and objectives of the Association
- Representatives of organisations that are sympathetic and/or share the objectives of the Association
- Local councillors or elected members of the Scottish or UK Parliament

No one individual can hold more than one share in the Association and that share cannot be jointly held with another individual.

Employees of the Association cannot be members. New members of staff that are already members will have their membership terminated upon permanent appointment.

6.0 REPRESENTING AN ORGANISATION

Organisations that are members of Rutherglen and Cambuslang Housing Association can nominate any individual that it considers suitable to act as its representative. That individual will represent the organisations rights and powers at general meetings.

The organisation must confirm the identity of the representative in writing by providing the Association with a copy of the authorisation or appointment of the individual nominated.

An organisation can change its representative at any time by writing to the Association to withdraw the previous nomination's authority and confirming the identity of the new representative.

Representatives of organisations that members of the Association cannot hold membership as an individual. Where this is the case, the individual membership will be suspended until such times as the individual no longer acts as the organisation's representative.

7.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Membership is open to all eligible individuals regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or beliefs, sex or sexual orientation.

In order to ensure everyone has equal and fair access to membership, the Association will produce information material in a range of appropriate languages and formats as required.

8.0 PROMOTING MEMBERSHIP

The Association wishes to achieve a wide and diverse membership from its communities and services users to ensure that all sections and groups are represented, particularly those that have historically been under-represented and/or difficult to engage with.

To achieve this the Association will promote and encourage membership by;

- Utilising the Association's website and appropriate social media platforms to provide information on becoming a member
- Publishing information on membership in the Association's newsletters, annual reports and other appropriate publications
- Making information on membership and its benefits in the Association's office
- Providing information on membership to new tenants and factored owners
- Inviting applications from identified individuals with specific skills, knowledge or experience required to meet any highlighted skills gaps
- Promotion campaigns targeted at groups identified as being under represented in the membership
- Utilising opportunities to circulate information on membership to any other interested party, group or organisation, including owner occupiers, commercial factored owners, community groups, housing advice agencies and potential future residents

9.0 APPLYING FOR MEMBERSHIP

All parties expressing an interest in becoming a member of the Association will be provided with clear information on the process, the benefits of membership and their responsibilities as a member along with an application form.

All applications must be made in writing in the prescribed format and be submitted to the Association's office along with the £1.00 share fee.

The Management Committee will normally consider completed applications as soon as reasonably practical following receipt. However, applications for membership will not be considered with-in a 14-day period preceding the date of an Annual or Special General Meeting.

Where the Management Committee feel it appropriate, it can request an interview between the applicant and the Chair before making its final decision.

If approved, the applicant will immediately become a member and their details recorded in the Register of Members with 7 days. A share certificate signed by

the Secretary and 2 other Committee Members and a copy of the Association's Rules will be issued within 14 days of approval.

10.0 REFUSING A MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Whilst it is the Association's stated intention to encourage membership, the Management Committee has absolute discretion when considering applications. Applications will, however, only be refused in exceptional circumstances where;

- Membership would be contrary to the Association's Rules or policies
- A conflict of interest may exist which, even for allowing for disclosure, may adversely affect the work of the Association
- The Management Committee has grounds for believing that approving the application would not be in the Association's best interests
- The applicant is involved in legal proceedings against the Association
- The application is from a current member of staff or a member of staff that has left the Association's employment within the last 12 months

In the event an application is refused, the £1.00 share fee will be returned and written to advising them of;

- The Management Committee's decision
- The reason for the refusal
- Their right to appeal the decision
- The appeals process

An appeal must be submitted in writing within 14 days of receipt of notification of the refusal and will be considered by the Management Committee at its next meeting. The decision made will be final and the applicant advised in writing.

11.0 THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP

Members are required to;

- Inform the Association if they change address by writing to the Association's Secretary within 3 months of moving (**NB** – this requirement does not apply to tenants of the Association that have had an internal transfer to another property owned by the Association)
- Submit apologies or a proxy if they are unable to attend an Annual or Special General Meeting

12.0 ENDING MEMBERSHIPS

Membership of the Association will end and the share cancelled where the member;

- Gives the Association's Secretary 7-days written notice that they wish to end their membership
- Fails to advise the Association of a change of address as required under the Association's Rules and/or notice of the Annual General Meeting is returned marked 'gone away'
- Has not attended 5 Annual General Meetings in a row and has not submitted apologies or appointed a representative to attend and vote on their behalf

The Management Committee can cancel a membership where it receives a complaint about a member's behaviour and at least two-thirds of members present or voting by proxy at a Special General Meeting agree to end the membership.

Such complaints must be made in writing to the Association's Secretary and must relate to behaviour which could harm the interests or the reputation of the Association. Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Association's Rules.

Memberships ended by a vote at a Special General meeting will be ended immediately and any future application for membership from that individual will need to be approved by two-thirds of members voting at a general meeting.

When a membership is ended for whatever reason, the £1.00 share fee is non-returnable.

13.0 TRANSFERRING SHARES

Members cannot sell their share but can transfer if the management Committee agrees.

Members can also nominate a person to whom the Association must transfer their share when they die. The nominated person must be eligible to become a member under the Association's Rules and Membership Policy.

14.0 REGISTER OF MEMBERS

The Association will maintain a Register of Members in accordance with the Association's Rules.

For each member, the Register will record;

- Their name and contact details
- Date the membership was approved by the Management Committee
- Membership number
- The relationship with the Association (i.e. tenant, factored owner, interested party)
- Date the membership was ended and why (if applicable)
- Requirements for information and correspondence in other formats or language (if applicable)
- The name and contact details of the member's nominated person they wish to have their share transferred to (if applicable)

The Register will be made available for inspection by any member of the public upon request.

The register will be updated annually following the Annual General Meeting.

15.0 MONITORING MEMBERSHIP

In order to allow the Association to determine how representative the Association's membership is of its communities and service users, applicants will be requested to complete an equal opportunity monitoring form as part of the application process.

The information provided will be separated from the application immediately and will remain anonymous and confidential.

16.0 POLICY REVIEW

The Membership Policy will be reviewed in full by the Management Committee every 3 years. Elements may be reviewed within that period to reflect changes in relative legislation, regulatory requirements and/or good practice.