

Southside

HOUSING ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP POLICY MAY 2015

First Approved:	February 1997
Reviewed:	May 2015
Reviewed:	October 2018
Next Review Due:	October 2021

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Southside Housing Association is a charitable housing association serving communities throughout the south side of Glasgow including Pollokshields, Shawlands, Cardonald and Halfway. Our shareholders (described as “members” in this Policy) are local residents who have taken a £1 share in the Association.

1.2 The Membership Policy describes:

- How we will promote membership to our customers and others;
- How we will manage membership applications and meet the various administrative requirements relating to membership set out in the Association’s Rules.

2.0 LEGAL AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

2.1 The Association is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Our Rules set out the constitutional arrangements that apply to membership, including the Management Committee’s duty to set, review and publish a membership policy for admitting new members.

2.2 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator have both approved the Association’s Rules. The Rules and this Policy ensure that we meet the Constitutional Requirements that have been set by the SHR.¹

3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 The Association will promote membership in a way that reflects our commitment to local control and accountability. Our Rules:

- State the Association’s intention to encourage shareholding membership;
- Do not unreasonably restrict who can become a member;
- Ensure community ownership of the Association and its assets, through the rights vested in the membership and the democratic principle of “one member, one vote”.

3.2 The Association wishes to achieve **a broad based membership that is representative of the communities we serve**. Membership is open to all sections of the community, and we are particularly keen to encourage shareholding membership by:

- Southside Housing Association tenants and other customers (e.g. sharing owners and factored owners)
- People from groups who are currently under-represented within our shareholding membership in the areas where we are active.

4.0 ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION

Applications by Individuals

4.1 Prospective members must be aged 16 years or over. People in the following groups shall be eligible to be considered for membership:

¹ Scottish Housing Regulator, Regulatory Framework, Chapter 5, Constitutional Requirements for RSLs (items 26 to 28 cover the membership of RSLs)

- Tenants of the Association;
 - Other customers of the Association;
 - People who live permanently in the same household as a tenant or other customer;
 - Other persons who support the objects of the Association.
- 4.2 We expect that the vast majority of applicants will live in the areas served by the Association. We will also consider applications from individuals living outside these areas if the Management Committee agrees that an applicant is sympathetic to our objects and that their membership would be of benefit to the Association.
- 4.3 Employees of the Association or any of its subsidiaries shall not be admitted to membership. If a new member of staff is already a member of the Association, their membership shall be terminated.

Applications by Organisations

- 4.4 Organisations wishing to apply for membership must be formally incorporated (e.g. under charity law or the Companies Acts) and be sympathetic to our objects. Examples of potential organisational members include:
- The local authority or other statutory bodies;
 - Other partner agencies of the Association;
 - Voluntary organisations.

5.0 PROMOTING MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION

- 5.1 We will use a range of methods to promote membership, including:
- The Association's newsletter and other communications with customers;
 - Contact with new customers;
 - Activities that are part of our tenant participation and community involvement strategies;
 - General promotion of the Association's objectives and activities.
 - Using targeted communication channels to promote membership of the Association from groups currently under-represented within our membership

6.0 APPLYING FOR MEMBERSHIP

- 6.1 The Association will send a Membership Application Form and Monitoring Form to people or organisations expressing an interest in membership. Completed forms should be returned to the Association's Secretary, along with £1.00.
- 6.2 We will ensure that applications are legitimate and are made by individuals rather than organised groups:

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- We will record and number application forms when we issue them.
 - We will not accept block applications (i.e. the return of more than two applications in the same envelope by post or by handing in at our office). The only exceptions are applications submitted simultaneously by members of the same household.
 - We may validate applications, by contacting the person in whose name a
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membership application has been submitted or by seeking proof of identity.

- We will notify the Police where appropriate if we suspect that applications are false or fraudulent.
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6.3 If an application is from an organisation, it must state the name of the person appointed by the organisation to be their representative along with evidence of the appointment decision. For example, a letter from the organisation's chairperson or chief executive.

7.0 DECIDING MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

7.1 The Management Committee shall decide all applications for membership at the next committee meeting after receipt or as soon thereafter as practical. The Management Committee will not consider applications for membership within the period of 14 days before the date of a general meeting of the Association.

7.2 The Membership Policy involves a presumption that applications will generally be approved, other than in exceptional circumstances. In this regard, the Rules give the Management Committee absolute discretion in deciding applications for membership, including the following grounds for rejecting a membership application:

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- Membership would be contrary to the Association's Rules or other policies;
 - Approving an application would create a conflict of interest that, even if disclosed, might adversely affect the Association's work;
 - The Committee considers that accepting an application would not be in the Association's best interests.
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7.3 Based on these principles, the following examples illustrate circumstances in which an application may be refused:

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- The applicant is an employee or board/committee member of another organisation that is effectively a competitor of the Association.
 - The applicant is involved in activities that the Committee considers to be detrimental to the governance or operations of the Association or the best interests of tenants as a whole.
 - The applicant is involved in legal proceedings against the Association.
 - The applicant has committed acts that are at odds with the values and objectives of the Association, for example sectarian or racist behaviour.
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7.4 We will write to all applicants as soon as possible, following the Management Committee's consideration of membership applications:

- Applicants who have been accepted as members will receive a Share Certificate and a copy of the Association's Rules.
- If the Management Committee has rejected an application, we will advise the applicant of the reasons for our decision and return the applicant's £1.00 payment.

- 7.5 We recognise that the refusal of membership applications must be managed in an accountable way and should not be used to undermine attempts to make the Association locally accountable and representative. If an application is rejected, we will offer the applicant one further opportunity to request membership, and to give reasons why the Committee's decision should be changed. The Management Committee will consider the applicant's response at its next practical meeting, and its decision on that occasion will be final.

8.0 RIGHTS OF MEMBERS AND MEMBER PARTICIPATION

- 8.1 The Association's members have important constitutional rights, set out in the Rules. These include rights to:

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- Attend general meetings of the Association;
 - Vote at general meetings;
 - Elect the Association's Management Committee members;
 - Be nominated for election to the Management Committee;
 - Nominate other members for election to the Management Committee;
 - Appoint the Association's auditor, and receive the annual accounts and any annual reports;
 - Vote on changes to the Association's Rules.
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- 8.2 The Association will take the following steps to ensure that members are well informed and can actively participate in the Association's affairs:

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- Provide all members with an annual report;
 - Publicise general meetings at least 14 days before the day of the meeting;
 - Provide information that allows members to make informed decisions at general meetings. Where information in a particular format or language is required, the Association will make all reasonable efforts to provide this;
 - Make efforts to hold general meetings at times and locations that are accessible to all;
 - Promote opportunities for serving on the Management Committee.
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9.0 DISPUTES AND TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- 9.1 Disputes regarding any aspect of this Membership Policy or the Rules shall be dealt with in accordance with the Rules. If a member (or someone who has been a member in the previous six months) wishes to challenge the application of this Policy by the Association, he/she will be invited to write to the Management Committee setting out their concerns. Submissions shall be considered and decided by the Management Committee. This shall be the final decision-making stage within the Association.

- 9.2 Membership will be ended when a member:

- Resigns by giving written notice to the Secretary; or
- Fails to attend or be represented at five consecutive annual general meetings or does not submit apologies for absence; or

- Is expelled in accordance with the Rules; or
- Changes address but does not notify the Association of their new address within three months (not applicable if the new address is also a property owned by the Association); or
- Dies, subject to the provisions outlined in section 17.1 & 17.2 of the Rules.

9.3 The Membership Register will be updated at least annually, to reflect cases where membership has ended. The £1.00 membership fee is not refundable on termination of membership.

10.0 EQUALITY

10.1 The Association wishes to ensure that our membership is representative of the communities we serve. We welcome membership applications from all sections of the community who meet the qualifying criteria for membership, regardless of age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief.

10.2 Any person attending events such as general meetings must always show respect towards others. We will not tolerate behaviour that is at odds with our commitment to equality.

11.0 POLICY REVIEW

11.1 The Management Committee will review periodically the results achieved in promoting membership and the profile of the membership. Where appropriate, the Management Committee may decide actions to be taken, for example to promote membership from groups that are currently under-represented.

11.3 Prior to each Annual General Meeting, the Management Committee shall receive a report on compliance with Rules 62 to 67, including the requirements relating to the Register of Members that are set out in Rules 64 and 65.

11.4 The Membership Policy will be reviewed in 3 years time., or sooner in the event of significant legislative or regulatory developments which affect this Policy.

APPLYING FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION

Background

Southside Housing Association is a charitable housing association, working mainly in Pollokshields, Shawlands, Cardonald and Halfway. We are a not for

profit organisation whose shareholders are the members of the Association.

We have an **open membership policy** and welcome membership applications from all sections of the community.

We are especially keen to promote membership to our tenants and to groups who are currently under-represented in the areas where we work.

Applicants for membership must be aged 16 years or over. Membership is open to Southside tenants and other customers; other people living in the areas we work in; and to other individuals and organisations.

All applicants for membership must agree to **support the Association's aims and objectives**. These are shown below:

At Southside Housing Association we want

- All our homes to be popular and affordable;
- All our customers to be delighted with the service they receive;
- All our staff to be well trained, highly motivated and professional;
- Strong engagement and participation from the communities we serve;
- To achieve excellent performance outcomes;
- To have sound governance arrangements and to be well resourced and financially robust.
- To be respected by all who work with us.

Sending your application

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Your name

Address

You should send your completed application form with £1.00 to the address shown on the form.

Please note:

- We only accept **applications from individuals**. We will not accept bulk applications from organised groups.
- When applying, you should **use the form you got from us** rather than a photocopy. This helps us make sure your application is valid.
- Remember to fill in our **application monitoring form** too, and return this with your membership application.

What happens next

Applications for membership will be considered at the Association's next Management Committee, or as soon as possible thereafter.

If your application is approved:

- You will become a member with immediate effect, and your name will be entered in the Register of Members.
- Your Membership Certificate, and a copy of the Association's Rules, will be sent to you shortly afterwards.

Membership entitles you to vote at annual or special general meetings of the Association's members. Votes take place to elect the Management Committee and on any other matters set out in the Association's Rules.

Once you become a member, you are also eligible to stand for election to the Management Committee, or to nominate other members for election.

[Redacted]

Date of Birth

[Redacted]

**Contact telephone number or
email address[†]**

[Redacted]

**Please say briefly why you
wish to become a member of
the Association**

[Redacted]

**How do you think your
membership would benefit the
Association's work?**

[Redacted]

**Please tick this box to confirm
that you agree to support our
aims and objectives, as set
out in our membership leaflet**

Signature

[Redacted]

Date

[Redacted]

Please return this application, with £1.00, to:

**The Secretary
Southside Housing Association
Southside House
135 Fifty Pitches Road
Glasgow G51 4EB**

[†] We will only contact you if we have any queries about your application

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

(Applications from organisations)

ORGANISATION NAME

ADDRESS

NATURE OF ORGANISATION

Is your organisation formally constituted? (provide brief details)

Who would act as your organisation's representative?

Tick to confirm you have enclosed evidence of authorisation of your proposed representative (e.g. letter from chairperson or CEO)

Please describe briefly why your organisation wishes to become a member of the Association

Please say briefly how your organisation's membership would benefit the Association's work

Please tick the box opposite to confirm that you agree to support the Association's aims and objectives

SIGNATURE

DATE

**Please return this application, with £1.00, to:
The Secretary, Southside Housing Association, Southside House, 135 Fifty Pitches
Road Glasgow G51 4EB**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION MONITORING FORM

Southside Housing Association wants to meet our aims and commitments to Equality set out in our Equality Policy. This includes monitoring the make-up of our membership. To help us understand the profile of our membership, target areas of under-representation and to ensure that we are not discriminating, please complete and return this confidential questionnaire along with your membership application form.

The Data Protection Act 2018 has specific provisions for how an organization can handle 'special category' personal data. 'Special Category' data includes sensitive personal data about a person's race, ethnic origins, religious belief, health or sexual orientation. We collect this kind of personal data in relation to your membership application for monitoring purposes only and we do not share this kind of information with any third parties. We need your explicit consent to collect and process this kind of data.

I consent to Southside Housing Association collecting and processing my selected special category data below for monitoring purposes

Please tick to confirm consent

Age

16-24 25-34 35-45 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+

Gender

Man	<input type="checkbox"/>
Woman	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intersex	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-Binary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer to use own term	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ethnicity

Please **choose one section** A to G, then **tick one box** which best describes your ethnic group or background

A. White	
1. Scottish	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Other British	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Gypsy/Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Polish	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Any other white ethnic group, please write in what this is	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	
7. Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups, please write in what this is	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	
8. Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Other, please write in what this is	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. African, Caribbean or Black	
13. African, African Scottish or African British	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Other, please write in what this is	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Caribbean or Black	
15. Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Black, Black Scottish or Black British	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Other, please write in what this is	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Other ethnic group	
18. Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Other, please write in what this is	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. Prefer not to say	
20. Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you consider yourself to have a disability or health condition?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
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No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sexual Orientation

Heterosexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gay woman	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gay man	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer to use own term	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is your religion or belief?

None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Church of Scotland	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roman Catholic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Christian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/>
Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sikh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Housing Circumstances

Tenant of Southside Housing Association	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sharing Owner in a Southside Housing Association Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tenant of another Housing Association	<input type="checkbox"/>
Council Tenant	<input type="checkbox"/>
Owner Occupier	<input type="checkbox"/>
Owner Occupier in a Development Factored by Southside Housing Association	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private Tenant	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homeless	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Internal Compliance Checklist on Membership (from SHA Rules)

Rule	Action Required by SHA
7, 8	Membership application forms collect information about applicant age (must be 16+) and applicant type (tenant, other customer, other individual or organisation supporting SHA aims) [Rules 7.1 and 8]
7	New members added to the Register of Members within 7 working days of approval (Rule 7.4)
10,11, 16, 17	New member correspondence should draw attention to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to notify any change of address, if not an SHA tenant (Rule 10) • Criteria for ending membership (Rules 11.1, 11.2 and 16) and for transferring shares (Rule 16 and 17.1)
11	Membership records updated before each AGM to remove lapsed members (non attendance/failure to submit apologies or be represented at 5 AGMs in a row) (Rule 11.1.3)
40.2 27.6 22	All members notified of proposed date of AGM at least 28 days in advance and nominations invited (for return at least 21 days before the AGM date) If there is to be an election, ballot papers issued to members not less than 14 days before the AGM. Date and formal notice of AGM or any other general meeting notified to all member at least 14 days in advance (Rule 22.2)
27.1	All members advised of their right to apply to appoint a representative/proxy at general meetings (Rule 27.1) and, not less than 28 days before the date of the AGM, of the nomination procedures for the election of committee members (Rule 40.2)
64, 65	Membership Register content requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each member's name, address and (where provided) email address • Statement of the share held by each member and the amount paid for the share • Date membership was entered in the Register and (where applicable) date membership was ended • Names and addresses of SHA Office Bearers, their positions, and when they took/left office • A second copy of the Register of Members
82	Disputes involving SHA members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures in place for handling any disputes between SHA or the MC and a SHA member (current or a member in the previous 6 months)
85	Copies of SHA Rules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available on request and at no charge to any SHA member who has not previously received a copy • Available on request to any other person for a charge set by SHA and not exceeding the amount set by law (currently, this is £5.00)