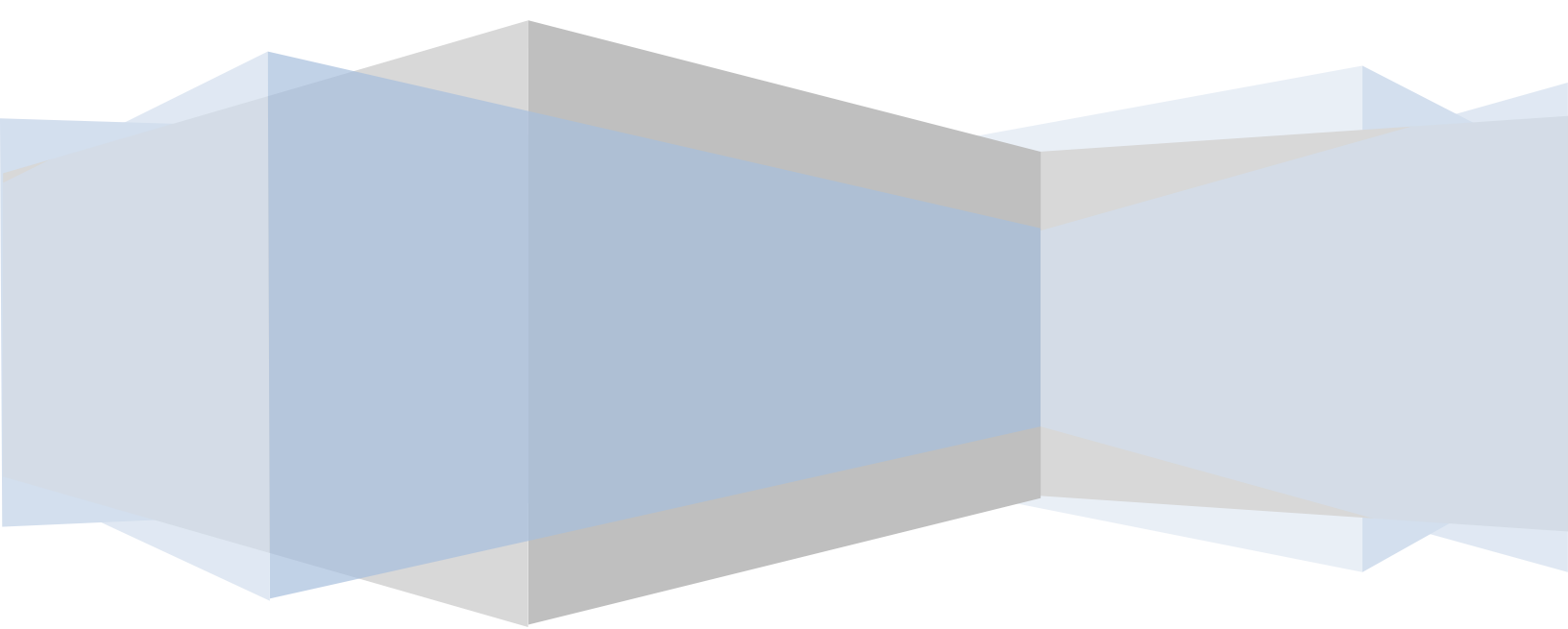




MEMBERSHIP POLICY

March 2020



All Policies are available on tape, in braille and in translation in to most languages. Please ask a member of staff if you would like this policy in a different format

Date of Policy Review: March 2020
Date of Committee Approval: 21 April 2020
Date of Next Review: March 2023

SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR STANDARDS	<p>STANDARD 1: The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.</p> <p>STANDARD 2: The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. Its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.</p> <p>STANDARD 4: The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice, and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.</p> <p>STANDARD 5: The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.</p> <p>STANDARD 6: The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective.</p>
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Introduction

This policy intends to comply with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management first published in February 2012 and revised in 2019.

The Management Committee shall encourage applications for share membership from all sectors of the community served by the Association subject to compliance with the Rules of Cathcart & District Housing Association (CDHA) (Based upon SFHA Charitable Model Rules (Scotland) 2013). The objectives of this policy are therefore to:

- Positively involve and empower residents in the Association's area of operation through various forms of participation
- Encourage people to become members of the Association, to participate in General and Special meetings in order to vote on key issues and to stand for election to the Association's Management Committee.

Membership

Subject to the provisions of Rule 7.2 of CDHA's Rules, the following shall be eligible to become Members:-

- Tenants of the Association;
- Other persons who support the objects of the Association
- Organisation's sympathetic to the objects of the Association.

Membership of the Association is open to anyone aged 16. It is open to everyone in the community regardless of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, disability or illness, age (provided the minimum has been reached), religious or political belief, or sexuality. We will actively encourage applications from under-represented groups. CDHA has to reserve the right to refuse membership to any applicant who might bring the Association into disrepute or otherwise harm the Association.

Regular analysis of our membership will be carried out to monitor and address under representation of certain groups.

The membership of the Association will also be reviewed at reasonable intervals to ensure that it is representative of the interests the organisation seeks to serve and can thereby properly fulfill its task of electing the Committee.

The membership of the Committee itself will also similarly be considered in the light of possible co-options or the filling of casual vacancies, to ensure both that it can represent the interests of the Association that it seeks to serve and that it contains sufficient expertise to handle its duties and control the affairs of the organisation.

The Association accepts applications from organisations as well as individuals, in accordance with the rules relating to representing an organisation.

Benefits of Membership

The benefits of membership include having a say in key constitutional issues, being able to vote for Committee members, and being able to stand for election to the Committee at the Annual General Meeting.

Promotion

The Association will promote membership by circulating information on membership to tenants and other customers, local community and representative groups, local authority departments and housing advice agencies. All new tenants will be advised of the benefits of membership as part of the tenancy sign-up process and will be encouraged to join.

Information on membership will be disseminated periodically through newsletters, through our website at www.cathcartha.co.uk and via our Facebook and Twitter newsfeed.

Procedure

1. A member of staff will give anyone wishing to apply for membership the appropriate share membership application form. Assistance in completing the form is available if required and a copy can be provided in another language or format upon request. On completion and return to the Association, staff members will pass same to the Secretary who will in turn present the application at the next full Management Committee meeting. (All applications must be accompanied by the £1.00 cost of the share membership).
2. The application will be considered at said meeting and either accepted and approved or rejected for a bone-fide reason.
3. If accepted, the share certificate will be drawn up and signed by the Secretary and two other Committee members. In the absence of the Secretary another Committee member shall be appointed to sign the certificate.

Once approved, the Association will, within seven working days, write to the new member to confirm their membership, and issue them with a Share Certificate, a copy of the Association's Rules and details of how members can participate in the organisation, including the AGM and how to stand for election to the Committee of Management.

Members will receive an annual report and regular newsletters.

4. The share certificate shall then be logged in the Share Register.
5. In the unusual event of an application being refused, the Association will refund the £1.00 and the reason for refusal will be given to the applicant, in writing, within seven working days. The applicant will then have one further opportunity to appeal against the original decision and give reasons why the decision should be changed. The Management Committee will consider the reasons at its next meeting, and its decision on that occasion will be final.

Membership Participation

The Association wishes to ensure its members are informed and can actively participate in the organisation. The Association will therefore ensure that: -

- General meetings are publicised within the timescales detailed within the Association's rules
- Circulate information to members so they can make informed decisions at the general meeting. Where information in particular format or language is required, the Association will provide this
- Make every effort to hold general meetings at times and locations suitable for membership and in venues, which are accessible to all
- Keep members informed on all major developments affecting the Association through publication of its Annual Report and Newsletters.
- Actively promote the opportunities that exist, through election, for serving on the Management Committee

Opportunities for Involvement

Members are entitled to:

- Attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and any other general meetings of the Association
- Elect Management Committee members at the AGM
- Stand for election to the Management Committee
- Appoint the Association's external independent auditors at the AGM
- Request co-option to the Management Committee or any Sub-Committee of the Association out with the AGM if there are places available
- Review the Annual Accounts at the AGM

Termination of Membership

In line with the Association's Rules, membership ceases when a member:

- Resigns by giving written notice to the Secretary
- Misses 5 AGM's in a row without submitting apologies
- Becomes an employee of the Association
- Is expelled in accordance with the Rules
- Changes address but does not notify the Association of their new address within three months, unless the new address is also a property of the Association
- Dies

The £1 membership fee is not refundable or transferable on termination.

Membership of the Management Committee

We have a strong track record and reputation in the community with customers and partners and intend to build on this with our clear, ambitious vision and plans for the future. However none of this can be achieved without the commitment of an experienced voluntary Committee of Management to provide leadership and guidance, working with the Senior Staff to determine the future direction and monitor the performance of the Association.

The Association will seek to attract from within its membership, persons (16 years of age and over) with the requisite abilities to oversee the efficient running of a Housing Association. The Management Committee will annually, or at earlier intervals if necessary, review its own membership within the context of the following objectives: -

- To achieve balanced representation within the geographical area of operation of the Association.
- To achieve the broadest range of relevant skills and expertise (e.g. Housing management and maintenance, human resources, strategic planning, finance, legal, business, wider role, etc.).
- To use co-options as a method of introducing specialism or expertise.
- The Association will plan effectively to achieve the appropriate and effective composition and profile of governing body members through ongoing performance evaluation and active succession planning. We will ensure that that any member seeking re-election after nine years' continuous service can demonstrate their continued effectiveness.

Should demand outstrip the number of available places on the Management Committee, applications will be prioritised as follows: -

- 1) An application from a CDHA tenant where the number of CDHA tenants on the Management has fallen below 9
- 2) An application from a shareholder from an under represented geographical area and who is able to bring a particular area of skill/expertise lacking on the Management Committee
- 3) An applicant who is able to bring a particular area of expertise to the Management Committee
- 4) An application from a shareholder from an under represented area
- 5) Date Order

Should membership of the Management Committee at any point dip below 10, then the Association should embark on a recruitment drive via shareholder communication, local press or SFHA news to enlist new members/potential Management Committee members. An assessment of key skill requirements should be carried out and included in the advertisement.

Equal Opportunities

Our commitment to equal opportunities and fairness will apply irrespective of factors such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage, and civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Monitoring Membership

Annually the Association collates various pieces of information relating to membership. This information outlines:

- a) Whether there has been an increase or decrease in the Association's membership;
- b) Percentage of people who attended the last Annual General Meeting in comparison to total membership.

From time to time the Association may undertake a membership survey which asks existing members various questions regarding their membership to ensure that it is meeting their expectations and identifying any gaps within our existing membership, for example, underrepresented groups, accessibility of AGM, quality of written communication materials etc.

Policy Review

The Membership Policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier as required at the request of the Management Committee.