



Southside Housing Association

Membership Policy

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MEMBERSHIP POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Southside Housing Association (SHA) is a housing association, and a registered Scottish charity 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 and other stakeholders as set out at section 7.1 of the SHA Rules, who have taken a £1 share in the Association.

1.2 The SHA 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 SHA Rules.

2.0 LEGAL AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

2.1 SHA is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. The SHA 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 set out at section 7.1 of the SHA Rules.

2.2 Rules 6 to 11.2 of the SHA Rules set out our obligations in terms of membership, and rules 13 to 17.3 sets out our obligations in terms of shareholding arrangements.

2.3 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator have both approved the SHA 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 SHA will promote membership in a way that reflects our commitment to local control and accountability. Our Rules:

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

3.2 SHA 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:

- SHA tenants and other customers (e.g. sharing owners and factored owners);

¹ Scottish Housing Regulator, *The Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland: Our Framework*, Chapter 3, Constitutional Requirements for RSLs (items 26 to 28 cover the membership of RSLs)

- 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 SHA

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:
- Tenants of SHA;
 - Other customers of SHA;
 - People who live permanently in the same household as a tenant or other customer;
 - Other persons, or organisations who support the objects of SHA.
- 4.2 We expect that the vast majority of applicants will live in the areas served by SHA. 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 SHA.
- 4.3 Where an applicant for SHA membership is a joint tenant of SHA, applications will only be accepted on an individual basis. SHA will not accept joint applications for membership.
- 4.4 Employees of SHA or any of its subsidiaries shall not be permitted to hold shareholding membership. If a new member of staff is already an SHA member, their membership shall be terminated.

Applications by Organisations

- 4.5 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 SHA;
 - Voluntary, and third sector organisations.

5.0 PROMOTING MEMBERSHIP OF SHA

- 5.1 We will use a range of methods to promote membership, including:
- SHA's newsletter and other communications with customers;
 - Encouraging shareholding membership from new customers, including promotion of membership at tenancy sign up with new tenants;
 - Activities that are part of our tenant participation and community involvement strategies;
 - General promotion of the SHA's objectives and activities,;
 - Promotion of membership to organisations and agencies who are active within the communities in which SHA operates, and;
 - Using targeted communication channels to promote membership of the SHA from groups currently under-represented within our membership.

6.0 APPLYING FOR MEMBERSHIP

6.1 SHA will accept membership applications from people or organisations expressing an interest in SHA membership. Completed application and monitoring forms should be returned to the SHA Secretary, along with a £1.00 payment.

6.2 We will ensure that applications are legitimate and in line with the requirements of the SHA Rules and:

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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 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 received 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.

6.4 An individual who has been designated as a representative member of an organisation cannot also be a member of SHA as an individual. In the event that a representative designated by an organisation member also holds membership of SHA as a private individual, SHA will suspend their individual membership for the length of period that they remain as a representative of an organisation member.

7.0 DECIDING MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

7.1 The Management Committee shall decide on all applications for membership at the next committee meeting after receipt of an application, 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 an annual general meeting, or a special general meeting of SHA.

7.2 Applications for membership will generally not be unreasonably rejected, 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 SHA Rules or other policies;**
 - **Approving an application would create a conflict of interest that, even if disclosed, might adversely affect the work of SHA;**
 - **The Committee considers that accepting an application would not be in the**
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SHA's best interests.

7.3 Based on these principles, the following examples illustrate circumstances in which an application may be refused:

- **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 SHA or the best interests of tenants and other customers;**
 - **The applicant is involved in legal proceedings against SHA or its subsidiary;**
 - **The applicant has committed acts that are at odds with the values and objectives of SHA, 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, a copy of the SHA Rules, details of members obligations, and how they may participate in the work of and decision making of SHA.

7.5 When an application has been approved, we will enter the member's name in the SHA Register of Members. In accordance with SHA Rule 81 a copy of the Register is kept at the SHA main office which is available for inspection by a member, or anyone having a financial interest in SHA. To inspect the Register, a member or eligible person must submit a written request to the Secretary of SHA. Arrangements for access to inspect at the SHA main office in the presence of an SHA employee will normally be made within seven days of receipt of any request.

7.6 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.

7.7 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 SHA 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 SHA's members have important constitutional rights, set out in the Rules. These include rights to:

- Attend general meetings of the Association;
 - Vote at general meetings;
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- Elect the SHA'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 external auditor, and receive the annual accounts and any annual reports;
 - Vote on changes to the SHA's Rules and other matters at general meetings.
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8.2 SHA 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 date 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, SHA 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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8.3 Members have an obligation to notify SHA of any change of address in writing within three months of the change occurring. Failure to do so may result in membership being terminated.

8.4 SHA tenants who are also member and who move home by way of internal transfer to another SHA property will automatically have their membership address updated by SHA.

9.0 DISPUTES AND TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

9.1 A dispute regarding how this Membership Policy has been administered by SHA shall be considered under the SHA Complaints Handling Procedure.

9.2.1 A dispute in relation to the SHA Rules, or their interpretation by SHA shall be dealt with in accordance with the SHA Rules set out at rule 82. If a member (or someone who has been a member in the previous six months) wishes to challenge the Rules or their interpretation by SHA, he/she will be invited to write to the Management Committee setting out their concerns. Reasonable adjustments will be made where a member is not able by way of a physical or mental impairment to raise their dispute in writing.

9.2.2 Submissions shall be considered and decided by the Management Committee. This shall be the final decision-making stage within SHA.

9.3 Membership will be ended when a member:

- Resigns by giving seven-days written notice of their resignation to the Secretary; or
- Fails to attend or be represented by way of appointment of a proxy in line with the SHA Rules at five consecutive annual general meetings, or does not submit

apologies for absence; or

- Is expelled in accordance with Rule 11.1.4; or
- Changes address but does not notify SHA of their new address within three months (not applicable if the new address is also a property owned by SHA); or
- Dies, subject to the provisions outlined in section 17.1 17.2 & 17.3 of the Rules in relation to transferring a share.

9.4 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 AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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 This policy reflects SHA's commitment to meeting our statutory Equality obligations in advancing equality, promoting good relations, and eliminating discrimination in the way we provide our services.

10.3 It also aims to reflect our commitment to considering the Equality and Human Rights impacts of what we do as a registered social landlord, including how we communicate with and provide access to information to our members, tenants, service users and other customers.

10.4 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed in relation to this Policy.

11.0 DATA PROTECTION

11.1 SHA handles the personal data we use in line with our obligations under data protection law and SHA's Privacy Policy and Data Retention Schedule. Information about how we handle personal data and the lawful basis for processing personal data, including in relation to SHA members and membership, is available through SHA's Fair Processing Notices.

12.0 POLICY REVIEW

12.1 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.

12.2 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.

- 12.3 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.

Appendix 1

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

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. Where you are an organisation seeking membership you must designate an approved representative.
- When applying, you should **use the form you got from us** rather than a photocopy. This helps us make sure your application is valid.

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.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Your name

Address

Date of Birth

Contact telephone number or
email address[†]

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

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

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

Signature

Date

Please return this application, with £1.00, to:

**The Secretary
Southside Housing Association
Southside House
135 Fifty Pitches Road
Glasgow G**

[†] 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

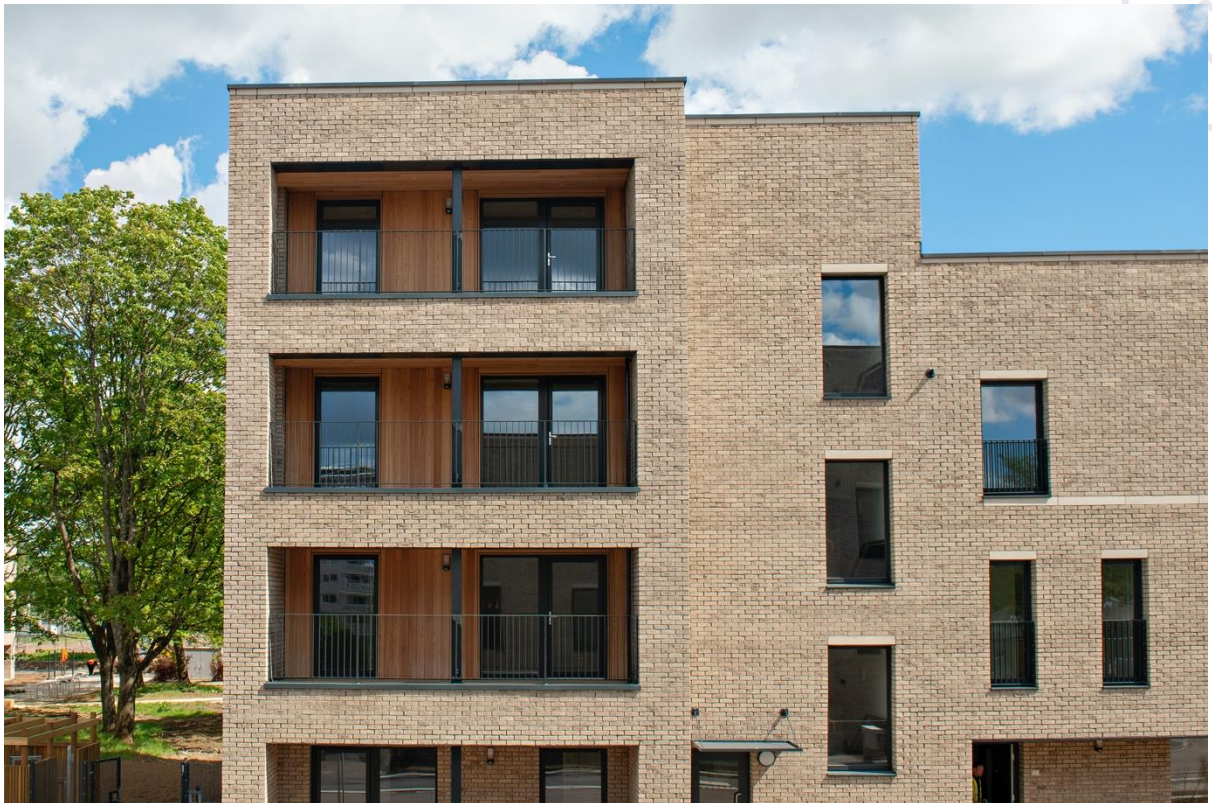
SIGNATURE

DATE

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

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, 17.2 and 17.3)
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	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)
23.1	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
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)



Southside Housing Association

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