



Membership Policy

25 October 2006

**Clydesdale Housing Association Limited is a Registered Scottish Charity
(SCO34228)**

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1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 Clydesdale Housing Association (hereinafter referred to as the 'Association') is committed to ensuring that it has a broad based membership that reflects the communities served by the organisation. This Membership Policy details how the Association will achieve this.
- 1.2 The Association has developed this policy document in accordance with the requirements of the following legislation, regulatory standards and best practice:
 - Section 79 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
 - Performance Standard 4.1 relating to Independence and Constitution (Communities Scotland/COSLA/SFHA – 2001).
 - Clydesdale Housing Association's Rules (2005).
 - Raising Standards in Housing Chapter 4: Governance and Accountability (SFHA 1999).
 - Draft Regulatory Code of Governance (Communities Scotland - July 2006)
- 1.3 The Membership Policy is consistent with the Association's Tenant Participation Strategy and current Service Plan.

2. Policy Objectives

The Association's Membership Policy objectives are:

- 2.1 To promote the good governance of the Association;
- 2.2 To ensure that there is proper accountability of the Association's Management Committee;
- 2.3 To promote take-up of membership by members of our community;
- 2.4 To ensure that the membership of the Association represents our community as fully as possible;
- 2.5 To empower members to participate in and contribute to the Association's Activities;
- 2.6 To be consistent with the Association's Rules and to clarify aspects not dealt with in detail in the Rules.

3. Promotion of Membership

- 3.1 The Association will promote membership throughout its community, especially from its tenants.
- 3.2 The Association will promote membership through:
 - a) Encouraging membership take-up through the Tenants' Handbook;
 - b) Including articles on membership in tenants' newsletters;
 - c) Providing membership application forms to new tenants at tenancy sign-up stage;
 - d) Inviting organisations and individuals with necessary skills to apply for membership;

- e) Distributing membership leaflets;
- f) Advertising membership in the local media;
- g) Developing strategies to communicate with potential members and to overcome literacy and language barriers.

4. Membership

- 4.1 The members of the Association shall be those people who hold a share in the Association and whose names are entered in the Register of Members referred to in Rule 67. (Rule 7)

5. Applications for Membership

- 5.1 Those wishing to apply for membership must send a completed membership application form and one pound to the Association's offices (applications should be marked for the attention of the Secretary). The Association can offer assistance with the completion of the application form if required.
- 5.2 The Association's Management Committee will consider new applications at its next available meeting or as soon as possible after that.
- 5.3 The Association will refund the one pound to applications that have not been approved by the Management Committee.
- 5.4 Applications for membership will not be considered by the Management Committee within the 14 day period before the date of a general meeting.
- 5.5 Applications approved will have their name entered on to the Register of Members within seven working days and one share certificate containing the seal of the Association will be issued to the new member.
- 5.6 Those who are a representative of an organisation which is a member of the Association cannot be a member as an individual. Those who are already individual members when they start to represent an organisation which is a member will have their individual membership suspended until such times as they are no longer a representative of that member organisation.
- 5.7 Applicants must be at least 18 years old to apply for membership unless they are already a tenant. Tenants can apply for membership from the age of 16.
- 5.8 No member can hold more than one share in the Association.
- 5.9 Members that change their address should advise us and write to the Association's Secretary within three months of moving. Association tenants moving to another Association house will have their membership records updated automatically by us.

6. Processing Applications

- 6.1 All applications will be checked by the Secretary to ensure that the applicant fulfils the membership criteria previously mentioned within this document.
- 6.2 Applicants may be asked to present documents in order to validate details contained within the application form.

7. Application Rejection and Appeal

- 7.1 The Association has the right to refuse an application for membership if it feels the application does not meet the criteria within this policy or the Rules.
- 7.2 A rejection decision is only likely where the Management Committee agrees that the granting of membership would likely compromise the interests or independence of the Association.
- 7.3 Rejected applicants will receive a written explanation of the Management Committee's decision from the Secretary within seven days of the Committee meeting at which the decision took place. The applicant will be advised of their right to appeal the decision – such appeals must be lodged within 14 days of receipt of the decision. The Association can assist applicants in completing their appeal submission if assistance is required.
- 7.4 Three members of the Association's Management Committee will consider appeals lodged. Meetings to consider appeals will take place within 14 days of the appeal being lodged, or at an alternative time agreed with the applicant. The applicant will have the right to attend the appeal meeting and be accompanied by a representative to present their case.

8. Membership Criteria

- 8.1 The Association seeks a balanced representative membership, with no particular group having an undue influence.
- 8.2 The membership shall comprise of persons who have, in a personal or professional capacity, the requisite knowledge, skills and experience, or a community of interest in housing and the care of people with housing needs, appropriate to achieving the Association's objects as defined on Rule 2.
- 8.3 Tenants of the Association will normally be considered to have the relevant community interest.
- 8.4 The Association seeks to achieve equality of opportunity. As a result, membership is open to all sections of the community regardless of colour, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, disability, age or sexuality.
- 8.5 The Association welcomes applications for membership from those who have, in a personal or professional capacity, experience of or a personal interest in:
 - a) Housing, social work or health;
 - b) Finance, law, business or commerce;
 - c) Voluntary organisations or academic institutions.
- 8.6 Membership is open to nominees of unincorporated bodies, societies and companies. A corporate body may appoint a deputy to exercise its rights and powers at any general meeting of the Association.

9. Members' Responsibilities

- 9.1 The main role of the Association Member is to advance good governance of the Association and to ensure that the Management Committee is accountable for its acts or omissions.
- 9.2 Members' powers are usually exercised at general meetings mainly by scrutinising the Annual Accounts and Balance Sheet, the appointment of the Auditor, the election of the Management Committee, the allocation of surpluses for particular purposes, the amendment of the Rules and the dissolution of the Association.
- 9.3 In addition, the requisite number of members may apply to the Financial Services Authority to appoint an accountant or actuary to inspect the Association's books, appoint an inspector to report on the affairs of the Association or to call a Special General Meeting.
- 9.4 It shall be the responsibility of Members to tell the Secretary when they no longer meet the membership criteria and will no longer be members.

10. Benefits of Membership

- 10.1 Members are entitled to be given 14 days notice of, and to be present and vote at any General Meeting of the Association.
- 10.2 Members will also receive an invitation to any other Association meetings of a general interest which may be held over the course of the year.
- 10.3 Members have the opportunity to stand for election to the Management Committee under the terms of the Association's Rules.
- 10.4 Members shall receive a copy of the Association's Annual Report and Accounts and relevant newsletters.

11. Ending Membership

- 11.1 Membership of the Association can be ended by the Member providing one month's notice in writing to the Secretary.
- 11.2 Following agreement by the Management Committee, the Association will end a membership where the member has changed address and has failed to inform us as set out in Rule 11. The value of the share of that member will then belong to the Association from the date of that Committee meeting. The ending of that membership will be recorded in the Register of Members.
- 11.3 The Association may also end a membership where a complaint is received regarding the behaviour of that member and two-thirds of the members voting at a special general meeting agree to this. The following conditions apply to this procedure:
 - a) The members can vote in person or through a representative by proxy.
 - b) The complaint must be in writing and must relate to behaviour which could harm our interests.
 - c) The Secretary must notify the member of the complaint in writing not less than one calendar month before the meeting referred to in Rule 13.1 takes place;

- d) The Member will be called to answer the complaint at the meeting. The members present will consider the evidence supporting the complaint and any evidence introduced by the Member; and
 - e) If the Member receives proper notice but does not go to the meeting referred to in Rule 13.1 without providing a good reason, the meeting may go ahead without that Member.
- 11.4 Those expelled from membership immediately cease to be a member of the Association from the date that that resolution to expel them was passed.
- 11.5 Memberships terminated in this way will require to be approved by a two-thirds majority of those voting at a general meeting if a further application for membership is lodged within five years.

12. Performance Monitoring

- 12.1 The Association shall monitor its membership annually to establish the extent to which its membership criteria are being met.
- 12.2 The Association will monitor the following aspects of its membership by asking applicants to complete an application form to give information on:
- a) Age, gender, ethnicity and disability;
 - b) Profession, trade, etc. and involvement in voluntary work;
 - c) Other skills and experience that could be of benefit to the Association.
- 12.3 The information supplied will be collated and used to address skills gaps for Management Committee membership, to assess the effectiveness of the promotion of membership to the Association and how representative the membership is of the local community. The Association will include an analysis of membership within the annual report, including the number of new members approved, the number resigned and the number expelled.

13. Consultation & Review

- 13.1 The Association's membership was consulted in the preparation of this policy.
- 13.2 Future reviews of the policy will involve the membership and any registered tenant organisations that exist.
- 13.3 The membership Policy shall be reviewed every five years.
- 13.4 The Management Committee shall receive an annual report on the operation of the policy.

<i>Approved by the Committee of Management on:</i>	
<i>Signed:</i>	<i>Signed:</i>
<i>Secretary/Chairperson</i>	<i>Staff Member</i>