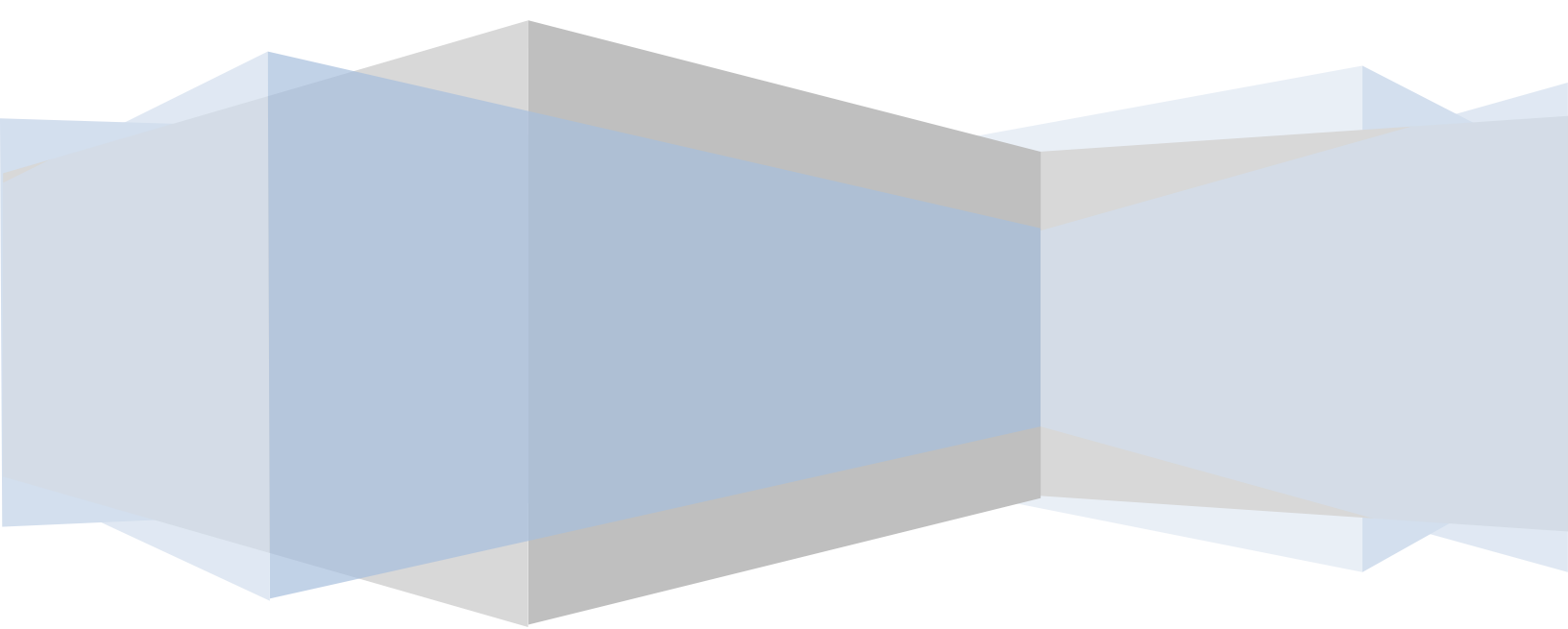




# **MEMBERSHIP POLICY**

**March 2023**



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

Date of Policy Review: March 2023  
Date of Committee Approval: 21 March 2023  
Date of Next Review: March 2028

<b>SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR STANDARDS</b>	<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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<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
Introduction	1
Membership	1
Who cannot join?	2
Benefits of Membership	2
Promotion	2
Procedure	3
Membership Participation	3
Opportunities for Involvement	4
Termination of Membership	4
Membership of the Management Committee	5
Equal Opportunities	6
Monitoring Membership	6
Policy Review	6
Equality Impact Assessment	7

## **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) 2020). 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;
- Service users of the Association;
- Other persons who support the objects of the Association
- Organisations sympathetic to the objects of the Association.

Membership of the Association is open to anyone aged 16 and over. It is open to everyone in the community regardless of age (provided the minimum age has been reached), disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. 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.

Membership of the Association shall be held in only one of the following categories:

### **Cathcart Members**

Membership in this category will be open to those people who hold a share in the Association and who have their only or principal home within the area outlined in Appendix 3 of the Rules.

### **General Members**

Membership in this category will be open only to organisations or to their representatives, or individuals who have the knowledge, experience, skills or expertise complementary to, and be compatible with, the objects of 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.

### **Who Cannot Join?**

Membership will not be granted to the following categories of applicants:

- The person is under 16 years of age
- Where membership would be contrary to the Association's rules or policies
- Where a conflict of interest may exist which, even allowing for the disclosure of such interest, may adversely affect the work of the Association
- Where the Committee considers that accepting the application would not be in the best interests of the Association.

### **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](http://www.cathcartha.co.uk) and via our Facebook page 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 a 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 the

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 will cease where any of the following applies:

- The member resigns by giving seven days notice in writing to the Secretary
- The Committee reasonably believes that the member has failed to tell the Association of a change of address
- For five annual general meetings in a row, the member has not attended, submitted apologies, exercised a postal vote or appointed a representative to attend and vote on their behalf by proxy
- The member has become an employee of the Association
- The member is expelled in accordance with the Rules
- The member has died.

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, governance, 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 any member seeking re-election after nine years of 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 Cathcart member where the number of Cathcart members on the Management Committee has fallen below 8.
- 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

The Management Committee will have a minimum of 7 and a maximum (including co-optees) of 15 Members. The Management Committee cannot act for longer than 2 months if its Membership falls below 7. Should membership of the Management Committee at any point dip below 10, then the Association should embark on a recruitment drive via shareholder communication, newsletters, 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 that 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 five years, or earlier as required at the request of the Management Committee.



**Cathcart & District Housing Association  
Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment**

<b>Name of policy to be assessed</b>	Membership Policy	<b>Is this a new policy or a review?</b>	Review
<b>Person completing the assessment</b>	Emma Connelly, Corporate Services Officer	<b>Date of Assessment</b>	13/02/2023

1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives, and purpose of the policy	The Rules state “the Committee shall set, review and publish its membership policy for admitting new Members”. The purpose of the policy is to describe the requirements for those wishing to become Members of the Association and outlines the reasons why membership may be refused or cancelled.
2. Who is intended to benefit from the policy? (e.g. staff, applicants, tenants, staff, contractors)	Tenants, owners, committee, and anyone with an interest in the work of the Association
3. What outcomes are wanted from this policy? (e.g. benefits to customers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positively involve and empower residents in the Association’s area of operation through various forms of participation</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• To ensure our membership reflects the community we serve.</li> </ul>

<p>4. Which protected characteristics could be affected by the policy (tick all that apply)</p> <p>Minority Ethnic:   X  Gender:  Disability:           X  Sexual Orientation:  Marriage/civil partnership:</p> <p>Age:  Religion/belief:  Transgender:  Maternity/Pregnancy:  Socio-economic status:</p>		
<p>5. If the policy is not relevant to any of the protected characteristics listed in part 4. State why and end the process here.</p> <p>The Association promotes membership to all tenants, owner-occupiers, local residents and anyone else who is committed to the aims and objectives of the Association. Therefore, the policy is wholly inclusive to all groups. However, there may be problems with completing a share membership application form or receiving shareholder communication.</p>		
<p>6. Describe the likely positive or negative impacts the policy could have on the groups identified in part 4.</p>	<p><b>Positive Impacts</b></p>	<p><b>Negative Impacts</b></p>
		<p>Minority Ethnic – The share membership application form and shareholder communication (newsletters, annual performance reports, AGM agenda and minutes etc) are written in English and could be restrictive for those where English is not the persons first language.</p> <p>Disability – The share membership application form and shareholder communication (newsletters, annual performance reports, AGM agenda and minutes etc) are written in English and could be restrictive for those with learning disabilities or visual impairments.</p>
<p>7. What actions are required to address the impacts arising from this assessment?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A member of staff will explain the application form and assist with completion where needed</li> <li>2. Offer translated versions of the shareholder application form and communications where needed</li> </ol>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Offer other formats of the shareholder application form and communications where needed</li><li>4. Offer interpreter and translation services where needed</li><li>5. Add members preferred method of contact to our housing management system</li><li>6. Offer assistive technology on our website e.g., accessibility toolbar which offers a screen reading tool, translation and language tools and the ability to change font size etc.</li></ol>
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Signed: Emma Connelly

Date: 13/02/23