



# REIDVALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

## Membership Policy

Policy Approved	26 May 2021
Due for Review	May 2024
Author	Interim Director

## POLICY SUMMARY

<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this policy is outline how we will promote membership of the Association to our tenants, owner occupiers and other parties who have an interest in our activities. To provide details of eligibility, how to apply to for membership and the benefits of being a member of the Association.
<b>Legislation/Guidance:</b>	The Association is a company under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, and a company regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). The Association must administer its membership in accordance with our Rules, which are based upon the SFHA Model Rules 2020
<b>Regulatory Compliance</b>	<p><b>Regulatory Standard 1</b> – The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.</p> <p><b>1.6</b> – Each governing body member always acts in the best interests of the RSL and its tenants and service users, and does not place any personal or other interest ahead of their primary duty to the RSL.</p> <p><b>Regulatory Standard 2</b> – 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. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.</p> <p><b>2.3</b> – The governing body is open and transparent about what it does, publishes information about its activities and, wherever possible, agrees to requests for information about the work of the governing body and the RSL.</p> <p><b>Regulatory Standard 6</b> – The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective</p> <p><b>6.4</b> – The RSL encourages as diverse a membership as is compatible with its constitution and actively engages its membership in the process for filling vacancies on the governing body</p>
<b>Linked policies</b>	Equality & Diversity Rules
<b>Financial Impact</b>	Low
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Low
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	May 2021
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Reidvale Housing Association is Community based Charitable Housing Association and under the terms of our Rules has membership criteria for Shareholders. We believe it is important to encourage a broad and representative membership of the Association and will actively encourage membership to those meeting the criteria.
- 1.2 We are accountable to the community we serve and we will seek to ensure a balance of representation in our general membership and on our Management Committee from tenants, owner-occupiers and other interested parties to ensure that no individuals or group has undue influence. The Members of the Association are those persons who hold a share in the Association and whose names are entered in the Register of Members which will be available for inspection.
- 1.3 The Association operates in the Reidvale area of Glasgow, however membership is open to anyone individual who is committed to the overall aims and objectives of the Association or who may be affected by our activities.
- 1.4 Members have a right and are encouraged to participate in our activities, in particular members are advised of their right to attend the Annual General Meeting and stand for election to the Management Committee.
- 1.5 This policy document should be read in conjunction with the Association's Rules

## 2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The aims and objectives of the policy are to ensure membership of the Association is administered in accordance with our Rules and the membership is open, inclusive and representative of our local communities ensuring wide representation
- 2.2 The Association aims to establish a wide and active Membership by recruiting people and organisations who:
  - Are committed to supporting our work.
  - Will serve the best interests of the Association and its tenants.
  - Live, work or have another connection with the communities we operate within.

### 3. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 Reidvale Housing Association is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, a registered social landlord and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).
- 3.2 We administer our membership in accordance with our Rules, which are based upon the SFHA Model Rules 2020. The Rules set out who is eligible to become a shareholding member, the process for this and the process for becoming a member of our Governing Body, referred to as our Management Committee.
- 3.3 We are regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). Their Regulatory Framework sets out seven Standards of Governance and Financial Management. Relevant to this Policy are particular elements under these Standards:
- **Regulatory Standard 1** – The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.
  - **Regulatory 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. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.
  - **Regulatory Standard 6** – The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective.

### 4. PROMOTING MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 We will actively promote membership opportunities, including membership of the Management Committee, in a number of ways which ensures people have the opportunity to become a member. We will actively promote membership to:
- Tenants
  - Factored owners
  - Other service users
  - Active members of local communities
  - Those who can fill identified skills gaps on the committee
- 4.2 This will be done, for example, by promoting membership at the point of signing a tenancy agreement, and through the use of leaflets, newsletters, our website, social media and our ongoing contact with residents.

4.3 We will ensure membership information is available in the most appropriate format and other languages on request. This will ensure membership is accessible to everyone who may be interested in becoming a member.

## **5. ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP**

5.1 Membership of Reidvale Housing Association is open to anyone who is over the age of 16 and:

- Wishes to contribute to Reidvale Housing Association
- Is committed to the overall aims and objectives of Reidvale Housing Association
- Meets the criteria set out on our Rules.

## **6. APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

6.1 Anyone wishing to apply for membership with the Association is required to complete an application form which is available to download from our website or by contacting our office. Completed application forms should be signed and returned to our office along with a one-off payment of £1.

6.2 The membership application will be considered promptly, normally at the next Management Committee meeting or as soon thereafter as is practicable. An application for membership will not be considered by the Management Committee within the fourteen day period before the date of an Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Management Committee has the power in its absolute discretion to accept or reject the application.

6.3 Once approved by the Management Committee, applicants will immediately become a member and their name and other necessary information will be entered into our Register of Members. Applicants who have been accepted as members will be notified within seven working days of the decision of the Management Committee and will receive a £1.00 share certificate and a copy of our Rules.

6.4 If the application is refused, the applicant will not be given a reason for refusal but applicants will be entitled to request a review of the decision.

6.5 Any member who changes his/her main residence is required to advise the Association in writing as soon as possible thereafter, unless he/she is a tenant who has moved home as a result of a transfer of tenancy or a mutual exchange.

## **7. REFUSAL OF MEMBERSHIP**

7.1 Whilst it is the Association's intention to encourage membership, the Management Committee has absolute discretion in deciding on applications for membership and can refuse an application of membership for the following reasons:

- Where membership would be contrary to the Association's Rules or policies
- Where conflict of interest may exist which, even allowing for the disclosure of such an interest, may adversely affect the work of the Association
- Where the Management Committee considers that accepting the application would not be in the best interests of the Association.

7.2 In exceptional cases, where a membership application has been refused, the applicant will be advised in writing of the reason for the decision within seven working days. A refund of the £1.00 paid will be given.

## **8. GENERAL MEMBERS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

8.1 General Members are entitled to vote at General Meetings, to nominate and vote on membership of the Management Committee and are eligible to be nominated to membership of the Management Committee. Responsibilities are limited to ensuring they do nothing to bring the Association into disrepute and to exercise their constitutional rights in support of the Association's purpose and objectives. General Members agree to their names being included on a public register.

## **9. PARTICIPATION**

9.1 When membership applications have been approved and a share certificate issued, a member can become more involved in the Association's work. All members are invited to the Association's AGM, where there is the opportunity to review the annual accounts and appoint the Association's external Auditors. We expect our members to attend our AGM to ensure that a quorum is achieved and we are able to carry out our legal obligations.

9.2 Members can stand for election to the Management Committee at the AGM and/or take part in the election of members to the Management Committee.

## 10. MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

- 10.1 We will from time to time carry out a review of our Membership to determine how representative it is of the local community and of the Association's client groups. Steps will be taken to encourage new Members in order to redress any imbalances identified.

## 11. REGISTER OF MEMBERS

- 11.1 We will keep a Register of Members in accordance with our Rules. A copy of the Register of Members is be available for inspection by any member or person with an interest in the Association.

## 12. ENDING MEMBERSHIP

- 12.1 Membership will end if a member:

- Resigns by giving seven days written notice to the Secretary.
- Fails to attend or submit apologies for five consecutive AGMs or do not exercise a postal vote or appointed a representative to attend and vote on their behalf by proxy.
- Is expelled and membership revoked in accordance with the Associations' rules.
- Changes address but does not notify the Association of their new address within three months, unless the new address is also a tenancy with us.
- Dies.

- 12.2 The Association may end a membership if we receive a complaint about a members' behaviour and two-thirds of the members voting at an annual or special general meeting agree to this. More information is available regarding this procedure in our Rules, a copy of which is available from the Association. If a membership is ended this way, any further application for membership by the member in question will need to be approved by two-thirds of members voting at a general meeting.

## 13.MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- 13.1 Our Management Committee has the important responsibility of directing and controlling the business of the Association. As a registered social landlord and a Scottish charity, it is essential that the Association has people with the right skills, knowledge, objectivity and experience to carry out this role. As we are a community based housing association with strong links to the Reidvale community local knowledge and an appreciation of our role within our community are also very important.
- 13.2 We recognise that having a mix of established and new members on the Management Committee is key to achieving good governance, the Association benefiting from both experience and new ideas. The in-depth knowledge and understanding of experienced members is vital, however, new members can bring essential objectivity and independence to familiar practices and thinking. We must therefore aim for a reasonable turnover of the membership of the Management Committee over time.

## 14.ELIGIBILITY FOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- 14.1 General Members, aged 16 or over are eligible to join the Committee by election or invitation. Non-members may only join if co-opted by the Committee.
- 14.2 Any interested individual may be considered for membership of the Management Committee, with the exception of the categories, who are statutorily ineligible as detailed in the Association's rules (Rule 43).
- 14.3 An individual will not be eligible to join the Committee if he/she:
- Is declared bankrupt within the meaning of the Bankruptcy (Scotland) Act 1985;
  - is involved in an arrangement with their creditors;
  - is unable to attend Committee meetings for a period of 12 months;
  - has been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty which is not spent or an offence under the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005;
  - is involved in legal proceedings with the Association (this could mean being pursued through the courts for rent arrears);
  - is subject to a disqualification order (under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986);
  - has been removed from the committee of another Registered Social Landlord within the previous 5 years;

- has been removed from a charity under the provisions of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990 or the Charity and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005; and,
- has been disqualified as a company director under the Company Directors' Disqualification Act 1986.

14.4 Employees of the Association are not eligible to serve on the Committee.

## 15. RECRUITMENT OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

15.1 In order to ensure that we have the right mix of skills, knowledge, objectivity and experience on our Management Committee we will:

- Assess the existing skills and experience within our Management Committee as part of the annual appraisal of Management Committee members.
- Match these existing skills and experience against what we believe we need for the effective running of the Association in accordance with our Business Plan.
- Identify gaps between the skills and experience required and those currently held.
- Take steps to fill those gaps through a mix of –
  - Structured training and development for the existing Management Committee
  - Open and transparent recruitment of additional members for the Management Committee
- Develop a clear succession plan for the Management Committee to include office bearer roles
- Support the work of the Management Committee to ensure we make the most of the contributions made by voluntary Management Committee Members

15.2 When recruiting new members for the Management Committee we will look to identify individuals who can demonstrate:

- **Local Knowledge** eg awareness of housing and other needs in our area
- **Business skills** and knowledge eg business planning, HR, legal
- **Specialist skills** and knowledge eg housing management, regeneration, factoring, voluntary sector

- 15.3 All Members of the Association are entitled to seek election to the Management Committee at the AGM. We will publicise how and when members can stand for election as part of the preparations for the AGM and on our website.
- 15.4 In addition, where gaps in skills and knowledge are identified, we will seek to recruit new members to the Management Committee in accordance with our Rules. We will promote the opportunity to become a member of our Management Committee through a wide range of methods including advertising, information on our website, making use of our affiliate memberships and social networks. Adverts will highlight the particular skills and areas of experience where gaps have been identified but will invite applications from all interested parties.
- 15.5 We may also make direct personal approaches to individuals who we feel have the required skills and knowledge and invite them to apply to become a Member of the Management Committee.
- 15.6 All applicants will be issued with an information pack which will include:
- Our latest Annual Report
  - Our Committee Members Guide
  - Our Committee Members Role Description
  - Our Code of Conduct for Committee Members
  - An application form
  - Details of our recruitment and induction process
- 15.7 Eligible applicants will be invited to attend an informal meeting with the Chair and the Director to discuss their application and the applicant will be informed of the outcome of their application within 7 days or as agreed at the meeting.
- 15.8 Successful applicants may be invited to attend a meeting of the Management Committee as an observer before their membership of the Management Committee is confirmed.
- 15.9 If the application is refused, the applicant will not be given a reason for refusal but applicants will be entitled to request a review of the decision.
- 5.10 All new members of the Management Committee will be required to sign our Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members.

## **16.MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 16.1 All Committee members must complete a signed acceptance of the standards and behaviour set out in the Association's Code of Conduct for Committee Members and must comply with the Code at all times. Failure to do so may result in removal from the Committee.
- 16.2 The detailed responsibilities of a Committee member are set out in the Committee Member Role Description.
- 16.3 Committee will annually elect a Chair and Vice Chair in accordance with Standing Orders. The responsibilities of these offices are set out in the Chair and Vice Chair Role Description.
- 16.4 Committee members agree to their names being available on a public register.

## **17.EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

- 17.1 This Policy has been reviewed and complies with our Equality and Diversity Policy.

## **18.GDPR**

This policy is required to be published on our website under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. Information obtained by anyone who becomes a member of the Association or its Management Committee will be handled in compliance with General Date Protection Regulations and information on this can be obtained from our Privacy Policy.

## **19.POLICY REVISION**

The Association undertakes to carry out a comprehensive review of all aspects of this policy at least every three years. The review will take account of legislative changes, new policy guidance, best practice advice, the views of service users and our performance in managing complaints.