

Policy Name	Membership Policy
Policy Category	Corporate
Policy Number	C1
Officer Responsible	Chief Executive
Date to Board	December 2018
Next Review Date	December 2023

1. Accountability

The Association strongly believes that it has a responsibility to account for itself to our members, tenants and sharing owners, the wider communities in which we work, the local authority, our regulators and funders. There are numerous ways in which the Association seeks to demonstrate openness and accountability, such as:

- (i) Production of an Annual Report and Financial Statements;
- (ii) Development of a robust and meaningful Tenant Participation Strategy;
- (iii) Publication of an Annual Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter to the Scottish Housing Regulator and Tenants
- (iv) Annual Returns to Regulators;
- (v) Complying with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management;
- (vi) Adopting a Policy for the promotion of Membership;
- (vii) Having open and clear policies for dealing with complaints;
- (viii) Recruiting tenants and other service users to the Board;
- (ix) Conducting Customer Satisfaction Surveys;
- (x) Engaging with Community Councils and other community partners.

2. Membership of the Association

Scottish Housing Associations are membership based organisations. Members may be either individuals or community groups. Lochaber Housing Association is a community based housing association, seeking to ensure that our membership is diverse and adequately reflects the broad spectrum of local community and interest groups we serve, including Community Councils, other local community and minority groups as well as our tenants and sharing owners. In encouraging the establishment of a wide and diverse membership, the Association publicises opportunities to apply for membership through our Tenants

Newsletter and in our dealings with the communities in which we operate. Accordingly, membership is available to tenants, individual members of the public and community organisations, as well as to other stakeholders and partners.

All Community Councils in Lochaber are invited and encouraged to become members of the Association. However, the Association also seeks to develop growth in membership from individuals and organisations who have the aims and objectives of the Association as their prime motivation for joining and who are also able to make a positive contribution to the furtherance of the Association's objectives. As a community based housing association, this membership base is important for the governance of the Association as it roots us in our Lochaber communities. The key strengths that flow from this status are:

- Our community governance structures: our Members are the pool from which we can elect members to our Board of Management;
- We are embedded in our local communities: our members and our Board are also members of local communities throughout Lochaber, enabling us to engage in cross-sector partnerships; and
- Our strength of relationship with our tenants (in particular, tenant members) has the potential to add to our presence and credibility within communities.

Information on how to become a Member is available to members of the public and community organisations at the Association's offices or on its website, together with an application form. The Association maintains a Register of Members, which is available for public inspection. The Association's Rules 6 - 11 regulate the processes of becoming a Member of the Association and of ceasing Membership. Prospective Members will be asked to complete and sign a standard application form giving the reasons for wishing to become a Member. They will also be required to submit a membership fee of £1, and, in return, will be issued with one share in the Association. This means that each member of the Association, whether they be an individual member or a corporate member, has an equal stake in the Association. Members enjoy the following benefits:

- Attendance at our Annual General Meeting
- A copy of our Annual Report and Financial Statements
- The right to vote in relation to resolutions at the AGM
- The right to vote for the appointment of the Association's Auditor
- The right to stand for election to membership of the Board and to vote for the election of others to the Board

The Board will consider applications for membership at the meeting following receipt of the application, or as soon as possible thereafter. The Association welcomes and encourages applications for individual aged 16 years or above or corporate membership from:

- Tenants or service users of the Association;
- Any other individuals who support the objects of the Association;
- Organisations sympathetic to the objects of the Association

The Association will inform the applicant of the Boards decision within 5 working days of the meeting at which the application was considered. Under the Rules the Board has absolute discretion in deciding on applications for membership.

3. Data Protection

The Association will treat Members and prospective Members personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own data protection policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in the LHA Group's Member & Board Member privacy notice.