

Membership Policy

1. MEMBERSHIP POLICY

- 1.1 West Lothian Housing Partnership Limited (WLHP) is registered under the Companies Acts as a company limited by guarantee (company number SC188968). It is also a registered Scottish Charity (charity number SC031668) and a Registered Social Landlord with the Scottish Housing Regulator (landlord number 318).
- 1.2 Our objects are set out in our Rules. Our objects are:
- to provide for the relief of those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage through the provision, construction, improvement and management of land and accommodation and the provision of care; and
 - any other purpose or object permitted under Section 24 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 which is charitable both for the purposes of Section 7 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and also in relation to the application of the Taxes Acts.
- 1.3 We are a membership organisation and encourage applications for membership from (i) our tenants (ii) home owners who receive property management services from us, and (ii) those who are not tenants but who have relevant knowledge, experience, skills or expertise which are complementary to our objects.
- 1.4 This policy should be read in accordance with our Rules. In the event of any conflict between this policy and our Rules then the Rules will take precedence. A copy of the Rules can be obtained from our website or by writing to the secretary.

2. CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 The Members of the Association are those persons or organisations who hold a share in the Association and whose names are entered in the Register of Members. There are five categories of membership:
- i) **Tenants**
Membership within this category will be open only to individuals who are tenants of the Company. If a member ceases to be a tenant, they must inform us within 21 days.
 - ii) **Service users**
This membership category would be open to any person who is not a tenant but who receives a service from us.
 - iii) **Other persons who support our objects**
Membership within this category is open to individuals who have, in a personal or professional capacity, knowledge, skills or expertise to assist us.
 - iv) **Organisations sympathetic to our objects**
Membership in this category is open to representatives of corporate bodies. Corporate membership will be granted at the discretion of the Board where it can be demonstrated that the corporate entity and corporate representative have the knowledge, skills or expertise to assist us.
 - v) **Parent**
Our parent member is Wheatley Housing Group Limited.

3. BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

3.1 When you become a member you will:

- receive an invitation to attend our AGM to hear the chairperson's report and our annual accounts for the preceding year;
- be able to vote on matters such as appointment of auditors and election of Board members; and
- be able to stand for election to our management Board.

4. PROMOTING MEMBERSHIP

4.1 We will encourage membership applications, e.g. by regular advertising in newsletters, information in our offices, at events, on our website and in our tenants' handbooks. New tenants and transferring tenants will be encouraged to become members when they receive their new tenancies.

4.2 We aim to promote membership to all sections of the communities we work in. We seek to promote equality of treatment and opportunity and encourage a diverse membership. This means that we will seek to achieve equality of treatment and opportunity for all groups in society without discrimination or prejudice on any grounds. The Equality Act 2010 introduces the term "protected characteristics" to describe groups against whom any sort of discrimination is unlawful. The Act specifies nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Marriage and Civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Gender re-assignment
- Sexual orientation.

4.3 Where an individual possesses one or more of the protected characteristics, or belongs to a group not specifically mentioned in the act we will take all reasonable steps to ensure that no discrimination, whether deliberate or inadvertent, occurs. Particular efforts may be made to target groups that are currently (or historically) under-represented in our membership.

5. APPLYING FOR, GRANTING & REFUSING MEMBERSHIP

5.1 To apply for membership, a completed and signed application form (see Appendix 1) and the sum of one pound (which will be returned to you if the application is not approved) should be sent to the Secretary the Association's registered office, 8 New Mart Road, Edinburgh, EH14 1RL.

5.2 Applications shall be considered by the Board as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt by the Association. An application for membership will not be considered by the Board within the period of fourteen days before the date of a general meeting. If approved, the applicant will immediately become a Member and be entered into the Register of Members within seven working days. They will then be issued with one share in the Association.

5.3 Whilst it is the Association's intention to encourage membership, the Board has absolute discretion in deciding on applications for membership and the following shall constitute grounds for refusal of an application for membership:

- 5.3.1 where membership would be contrary to the Association's Rules or policies;
 - 5.3.2 where a conflict of interest may exist which, even allowing for the disclosure of such an interest, may adversely affect the work of the Association; and/or
 - 5.3.3 where the Board considers that accepting the application would not be in the best interests of the Association.
- 5.4 In such cases, reasons for the refusal will be given within seven days of the Board meeting along with information on the right to appeal to the Chairperson within 14 days of the date of the refusal. The Board will consider an appeal at its next meeting and reply within seven days; this decision being final.

6. MANAGING MEMBERSHIP

- 6.1 We will manage the number of members in each category. Members will have their share cancelled and will be removed from the register of members if:
- a) If a member whose category of membership is Tenant of Association ceases to be a tenant and does not apply to convert their membership;
 - b) The Board reasonably believes they have failed to tell the Association of a change of address;
 - c) They have failed to attend and submit apologies for five annual general meetings, in a row or submitted apologies, exercised a postal vote or appointed a representative to attend and vote on their behalf by proxy; or
 - d) Any grounds set out in the Rules from time to time for revoking membership apply.
- 6.2 If a member ceases to be a tenant, they must inform the Association within 21 days, at which point they are eligible to request their membership shall be categorised as General. Any request made within 21 days shall be considered by the Board at the next meeting after the transfer application is received or as soon as practicable thereafter. The Board's decision on any such application for transfer of membership is final.
- 6.3 In the event that the number of members in the general category exceed the number in the tenant category, the Board may cancel memberships to reduce the number of general members until such time the majority of members are tenants.

7. REGISTER OF MEMBERS

- 7.1 We are required to maintain a Register of Members which contains the following information:
- the names and addresses of the Members and where provided for the purposes of electronic communication, fax numbers and email addresses;
 - a statement of the share held by each Member and the amount each Member paid for it;
 - the date each person was entered in the Register as a Member and the date at which any person ceased to be a Member of the Association; and
 - a statement of other property in the Association, whether in loans or loan stock held by each Member; and
- 7.2 We are also required to maintain a second copy of the Register of Members which must be made available for viewing at our offices. The duplicate Register of Members will not contain any statement or shares and property.

APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FORM

Application Form for Membership of West Lothian Housing Partnership Limited

I wish to apply for membership of West Lothian Housing Partnership Limited. I enclose £1.00 payment for my membership share certificate and confirm I am aged 16 or over and:

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX

Tenant Member

Service User

An individual who has in a personal or professional capacity relevant knowledge, experience, skills or expertise which is complimentary to WLHP's aims, is not a tenant and fulfils such criteria for membership as the Board may from time to time determine.

Corporate or member of corporate body who has in a personal or professional capacity relevant knowledge, experience, skills or expertise which is complimentary to WLHP's aims, is not a tenant and fulfils such criteria for membership as the Board may from time to time determine.

Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone Number	

Signature

Date

Please return this completed form to:

Governance Team
Wheatley House
25 Cochrane Street
Glasgow
G1 1HL