



## MEMBERSHIP POLICY

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We wish to provide a service to the whole community of West Lothian and in so doing will seek to encourage as many members of the public as possible to apply for membership of Almond Housing Association Limited (AHA Ltd.). Anyone who upholds the interest and wellbeing of AHA Ltd. may apply for membership.
- 1.2 AHA Ltd. will ensure that we apply the principles of our Equality and Diversity policy to all applications for membership, to ensure that no-one is prevented from becoming a member as a result of discrimination because of one of the reasons described in that policy.
- 1.3 So far as it is possible for us to do so, we will seek to reflect the need for a membership that gives a balanced representation of the local community and avoids the domination of AHA Ltd. by a single interest group.
- 1.4 This document covers the following:
  - Application for membership
  - Share Capital
  - Withdrawal from membership
  - Expulsion of members
  - Representative of Bodies Corporate
  - Board of Management
  - Composition of Board of Management
  - Co-option to Board of Management
  - Appeals against refusal of Membership

### 2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 2.1 Board of Management

- To ensure that there is in place a Membership policy which complies with current regulations, guidance and good practice.
- To determine applications for membership, and where required approve the removal of persons from membership.

#### 2.2 Management

- Chief Executive: Overall responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented.
- Head of Corporate Services: To manage the implementation of the policy on a day-to-day basis, and advise the Board and senior colleagues on membership matters.

#### 2.3 Employees

- To ensure they have read and understood the policy and to implement it as required in the course of their work.

### **3.0 MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.1 The persons who hold a share in AHA Ltd. and whose names are entered in the Register of Members shall be the members of AHA Ltd.
- 3.2 No member shall hold more than one share. No more than one membership per household will be accepted.

#### **Application for Membership**

- 3.3 A person wishing to apply for membership will complete an application form (Appendix 1) and submit their application to our office along with the sum of one pound (which shall be returned to them if the application is not approved).
- 3.4 Each application will be considered by the Board of Management as soon as possible after it is received, and within 3 months of being received at the latest. Details of applicants will be made known to the Board prior to each meeting.

If approved, membership shall take effect from the date of that Board meeting.

- 3.5 A person who is a representative of a body corporate may not also be an individual member of AHA Ltd. An individual membership will be suspended for as long as the individual is a representative of a body corporate.
- 3.6 A person shall not be admitted to membership if they are under the age of eighteen years, or such other age for attaining full age as may from time to time be prescribed by statute, except that a tenant of AHA Ltd. who has at least attained sixteen years of age may be admitted to membership.
- 3.7 Members representing an unincorporated body shall for all purposes be treated as an individual member and shall have entered against their name in the Register of Members the name of the unincorporated body that they represent.

#### **Action following Board decision**

- 3.8 Within 7 days of the Board meeting the Head of Corporate Services will write to the applicant with the decision and, if the application is approved, will arrange for the name of the applicant to be entered in the Register of Members and one share to be issued.
- 3.9 Any member who changes their main residence or a body corporate that changes its registered office will provide details of the new address in writing to our registered office within three calendar months of such change of address, except that, where a member who is a tenant of AHA Ltd. changes their main residence by way of transfer or exchange of tenancy, they will be deemed to have given the required notification.

#### **Share Capital**

- 3.10 The share capital of AHA Ltd. shall be raised by the issue of shares with a value of one pound each. Shares shall carry no right to interest, dividend or bonus and shall not be held jointly.
- Shares shall not be withdrawable, but will be transferable with the consent of the Board and in accordance with current procedures for transfer of loan stock.
- 3.11 On the death, expulsion or withdrawal of a member, or if a body corporate ceases to be a body corporate, the member's share shall be cancelled and the amount paid up will become the property of AHA Ltd.

If a member who represents an unincorporated body dies or advises AHA Ltd. that he/she can no longer participate in its affairs, such body may request that the share be transferred to another person representing that body.

- 3.12 Share certificates will be signed at the appropriate Board of Management meeting only.

### **Ending membership**

- 3.13 Any member may withdraw from AHA Ltd. by giving the Secretary one month's notice in writing of their intention to do so.
- 3.14 Where the Board is satisfied that a member has failed to notify a change in main residence (in the case of a member who is an individual) or change in registered office (in the case of member who is a body corporate), as required by section 3.9 above, that member will be deemed to have withdrawn from membership, their share shall be cancelled and the amount paid shall become the property of AHA Ltd. with effect from the passing of a Board resolution to that effect.
- 3.15 Where a member fails to attend at least five Annual General Meetings in a row and has not submitted apologies, exercised a postal vote or appointed a representative to vote on their behalf, that member will be deemed to have withdrawn from membership and their share will be cancelled etc. as in para. 3.14 above.
- 3.16 All cancellations of shares will be recorded in the Register of Members.

### **Expulsion of Members**

- 3.17 A member may be expelled by a resolution carried by the votes of two-thirds of the members present in person or by proxy and voting on a poll at a Special General Meeting of AHA Ltd. of which notice has been duly given, provided that a complaint in writing of conduct detrimental to the interests of AHA Ltd. has been communicated to them by the Secretary not less than one calendar month before the meeting.
- 3.18 The complaint shall contain details of the conduct of the member complained of and shall call upon the member to answer the complaint and to attend the meeting. At the meeting the members shall consider evidence in support of the complaint and such evidence as the member may wish to place before them. If on due notice having been served upon them the member fails to attend the meeting without adequate reason being provided, the meeting at its discretion may proceed in his/her absence.
- 3.19 No person who has been expelled from membership shall be re-admitted except by resolution carried by the votes of two-thirds of the members present in person or by proxy and voting on a poll at any general meeting of which notice has been duly given.

### **Representative of Body Corporate**

- 3.20 A body corporate may by resolution of its governing body appoint and revoke the appointment of any person it thinks fit as its representative who shall, during the continuance of their appointment, be entitled to exercise at any general meeting of AHA Ltd. all the rights and powers of the body corporate in its capacity as a member.

A copy of any such resolution signed by two members of the governing body, or in the case of a local authority by the Chief Executive of the Council, shall be sent to the Secretary of AHA Ltd.

## 4.0 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 A person may become a member of the AHA Ltd. Board of Management by:
- i. Election at an Annual General Meeting.
  - ii. Co-option by application or invitation.
  - iii. Casual Vacancy by invitation
- 4.2 There will be a maximum of 15 Board Members with up to 5 tenants, 5 others, 3 residents and 2 representatives of other organisations.

## 5.0 DATA PROTECTION

- 5.1 AHA Ltd. will ensure that in recording and processing the names and addresses etc. of members we comply with current data protection legislation and any related statutory guidance.

Personal details will be included in a Register of Members. A version of the Register listing members' names only may be inspected on request by members of the public.

- 5.2 AHA Ltd. will ensure that the details we hold are used solely for the purposes of communicating with members. AHA Ltd. will not pass on members' personal details to any other individual, commercial company or other organisation.

## 6.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

- 6.1 The Head of Corporate Services will ensure that all applications for membership are processed within the 3 month target timescale, and that the Register of Members is kept up to date.
- 6.2 The Head of Corporate Services will ensure that this policy is reviewed by the Board of Management at least every five years.

<b>FIRST APPROVED IN</b>	<b>SEPTEMBER 1997</b>
<b>CURRENT VERSION 5.0 APPROVED IN</b>	<b>FEBRUARY 2017</b>
<b>NEXT REVIEW DUE BY</b>	<b>FEBRUARY 2022</b>



## Almond Housing Association Limited

### Membership Application Form

Please complete this form if you wish to join the Association, either in a personal or professional capacity. When completing the form, please refer to the Membership Statement attached.

Almond Housing Association actively welcomes applications from all persons who are interested in supporting our aims.

There are no barriers to becoming a member of Almond Housing Association, and you do not have to live or work within the community geographical area in order to have an interest in our work.

Applications for membership will be subject to approval by the Board of Management, and payment of the £1 membership fee.

Benefits of becoming a Member of Almond Housing Association:

- Regular updates about the Association through the 'Almond View' newsletter.
- Right to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting.
- Involvement in consultations that affect the local community.
- The opportunity to stand for election to the Board of Management.

**GENERAL INFORMATION** [Please print clearly, apart from email address]

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Are you an Almond HA tenant or service user?

**Yes/No\***

*[\*Circle your answer]*

**SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE INFORMATION**

Are you (or have you been) involved in other voluntary work? **Yes/No\***

(If 'yes' please provide details) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you are a tenant, would you be interested in participating in a Tenants' Focus Group?

**Yes/No\***

Please describe why you are interested in joining Almond Housing Association:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT**

1. Almond Housing Association Limited will comply with the Data Protection Act in how we record and use your name, address and any other personal details you have given us.
2. Your personal details will be added to our Register of Members. A version of the Register containing your name only may be inspected on request by members of the public. The full details on the Register will not be available to anyone outside Almond Housing Association Limited.
3. We will only use your personal details to communicate with you regarding Special or Annual General Meetings of the Association or to send you information about our activities such as Newsletters.

**I apply to become a Member of Almond Housing Association and enclose the sum of £1.00**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send your completed application form to: Head of Corporate Services, Almond Housing Association Ltd., New Almond House, 44 Etive Walk, Craigshill, Livingston EH54 5AB Tel: 01506 439291**

## MEMBERSHIP STATEMENT

- 1) Almond Housing Association Limited is a registered social landlord (RSL) that provides affordable housing in West Lothian. It is an Industrial and Provident Society and registered Scottish charity, and is run by a Board of Management that is made up of volunteers.
- 2) Membership of Almond Housing Association is open to anyone who is aged 18 years or over and has an interest in our work. Almond tenants may become members at the age of 16. To become a member, you must buy a £1 share in the Association. This entitles you to attend and vote at all general meetings and to receive information about our activities through the Annual Report and newsletters.
- 3) People become members to demonstrate their support for Almond's work and, in the case of members who are not also tenants, to enable them to receive information about our activities.
- 4) Members who want to play an active part in influencing Almond's affairs may apply to join the Board of Management. Board Members are elected at the AGM and normally serve for three years. At the end of this period, a member can, if they wish, stand for re-election. The responsibilities of being a member of the Board of Management are considerable. The Board is the governing body of the Association and Board members have the status of Directors and Trustees of the charity.
- 5) The Board of Management is responsible for, amongst other things:
  - ensuring that Almond complies with all legal and regulatory requirements;
  - deciding and guiding Almond's strategy;
  - employing staff;
  - agreeing Almond's policies;
  - making sure that Almond has adequate funding available to meet its obligations as a landlord and as an employer;
  - assessing and managing risk.
- 6) Board members are provided with training to make sure they can carry out their responsibilities effectively. Almond has developed a statement of roles and responsibilities for Board members that describes what is required. This is used to help recruit new members and also to help existing members review their contribution on an annual basis. If you would like information about becoming a member of the Board of Management, please contact Angela Coutts, Head of Corporate Services.
- 7) Almond makes sure that its work is informed and influenced by the views of tenants and other service users. This is a regulatory requirement as well as being good practice. Almond does this by maintaining regular contact with tenants through focus groups. They play an important part in consultation about new developments or changes in services and are an important source of information about performance and service delivery standards.
- 8) Tenant focus groups are also consulted about specific projects – for example the design and content of the Tenants Handbook or the Annual Report on the Social Housing Charter, and some members carry out more detailed 'scrutiny' reviews of specific activities. If you would like information about becoming a member of a focus group, please contact Eveline Armour, Tenant Engagement Officer.

**Tel: 01506 439 291**

**email: [enquiries@almondha.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@almondha.org.uk)**