



**Shareholding and  
Tenant Associate  
Membership Policy**

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## **Introduction**

The Association operates a Shareholding and Tenant Associate Membership Policy that aims to encourage the involvement of both tenants and those who share the values and objectives of the Association. To achieve this, the Association has created, in addition to its shareholding membership, the category of tenant associate.

All tenants are automatically eligible to become tenant associates. Shareholding membership of the Association requires the purchase of a £1 share in the Association. Shares are non-returnable, non-transferable and limited to one per person. Because the Association operates on a not-for-profit basis, shares carry no right of interest, dividend or bonus.

## **Tenant Associates**

All tenants are automatically tenant associates. This entitles them to:

- to attend Development or other Tenant/Resident Group meetings;
- to attend and vote at the Association's Tenants Forum;
- to stand for election to the Tenant Committee;
- to sit on the Tenant Committee.

The Association has established a variety of ways of ensuring that tenants' views are taken into account and that tenants are given opportunities to influence the management and decision making processes that affect their homes.

In addition to surveys and consultations on specific issues, the Association seeks to hold regular Development or other Tenant/Resident Group meetings that aim to discuss local issues. Staff and Board members attending these meetings will encourage tenants who are active at an area or local level or who express an interest, to attend the Tenant Forums that are held twice a year and where issues of a more general nature are discussed.

Dates for the Tenant Forums are advertised in tenant newsletters as well as on the website. Tenants who signify at local meetings or on the Standardised Tenants Satisfaction survey, that they are willing to attend the forum meetings are written to individually prior to each meeting.

Terms of reference have been established for the Tenant Forum and every year at the forum meeting that is held in conjunction with the Association's Annual General Meeting, elections to the Tenant Committee are held.

All tenants attending the forum are eligible to vote as well as any tenants who have attended previous forums or who have demonstrated previously their willingness to be involved in tenant participation activities.

Membership of the Tenant Committee shall be through election from the Tenant Forum. The membership of the Tenant Committee will be set at a maximum of 12 and the four longest serving members will retire each year.

In order to promote the widest possible tenant representation, the Association will seek to ensure that tenants from schemes or areas not represented on the Tenant Committee have preference. Elections therefore will only normally be required where there are more tenants standing for election than vacant places or where there is more than one tenant from a scheme or area and there are no further vacancies.

If vacancies arise during the year then they can be filled on a casual basis before being confirmed by election at the next Forum/AGM meeting.

The right of a tenant to attend the Forum or stand for election to the Tenant Committee or sit on the Tenant Committee may be withdrawn if the tenant is considered by the Board to be acting for reasons other than furthering the values and objectives of the Association. This right will also generally be withdrawn if a tenant or individuals in their household are in breach of their tenancy agreement.

The maximum term for a tenant on the Tenant Committee is two terms of three years and after this, the tenant must stand down for a period of three years before they are allowed to stand for re-election.

The Tenant Committee will review its terms of reference annually but will usually meet with staff, Committee and Board members four times a year. The Tenant Committee will be expected to become actively involved in influencing decisions that affect the management of the Association.

Although the Tenant Committee is the preferred route by which the Association believes that tenants can influence and become involved in the decision making and management of the Association, Tenant Committee members, both current and former, are also eligible to apply for shareholding membership of the Association.

## Shareholding Members

The purpose of shareholding membership is to:

- provide an active pool of people who have expressed an interest in the Association and from whom new Board/Committee members may be drawn;
- allow other people to express support and commitment to the work of the Association without playing an active role;
- enhance the Association's accountability to the communities in which it operates;
- allow tenants and residents of the Association to play an active part in the Association's affairs.

Applicants should meet at least one of the following criteria:

- have the appropriate skills, experience and commitment to make a significant contribution to the Association's Board or Committees either now or in the future;
- demonstrate an existing and continuing interest and support for the work of the Association;
- help improve the representation of local communities within the Association's shareholding membership and/or board and committee structures.

Applicants will be sought by variety of recruitment methods:

- through personal connections and recommendations;
- by actively developing links with local communities where the Association operates;
- by establishing and implementing structures to increase the involvement of tenants in the affairs of the Association;
- through holding 'open days' or similar promotional events, where interested parties may be given the opportunity to learn more about the work of the Association;
- by placing advertisements in the local press within the areas in which the Association operates.

Applicants will be required to complete an application form that will enable them to demonstrate their experience, eligibility and commitment. The Board will consider all applicants for ordinary shareholding membership and has the absolute right to decide whether to accept or reject the application. If the application is accepted, the applicant will be included in the register of shareholders and issued with a share certificate and a copy of the Rules of the Association.

If an application for Membership is refused, a written explanation will be provided to the applicant within seven days of the decision. The Association on appeal will arrange for an independent review of its decision to refuse admission.

The following individuals will not be eligible for approval as shareholding members:

- individuals under the age of eighteen;
- individuals and their close relatives who have been an employee of the Association within the previous 12 months;
- any individual who has previously been expelled from shareholding membership of the Association;
- individuals whose relationship with another organisation may be seen as having an unacceptable conflict of interest.

The Association may at its discretion reject applications from tenants who are in breach of the terms of their tenancy or lease

The number of shareholder members that the Association may have at any one time shall be limited, for ease of administration, to 99. In order to prevent conflicts of interest and to avoid any single interest group controlling the Association, the Board has imposed a one fifth ceiling on any single interest group becoming shareholding members of the Association including tenants/residents of the Association.

Shareholders have a general obligation to:

- agree to be bound by the obligations put on them as set out in the Association's Rules;
- when acting as shareholders, act at all times in the interests of the Association, and for the benefit of the community, as guardians of the objectives of the Association.

As a shareholding member of the Association, the member will:

- have the right to stand for election to the Board of the Association;
- receive the Association's Annual Report and Accounts, have the right to attend and vote at the Association's AGM and have the opportunity to vote on any proposed changes to the Association's rules;
- be expected to subscribe to the aims and objectives of the Association, to actively pursue its work and to comply with its rules and code of conduct.

The shareholding membership elects a Board annually to govern the Association. The Board has a maximum of 12 members including co-optees. Tenants who are shareholding members are entitled to stand for membership of the Board and are elected in the normal manner. A maximum of 2 tenant Board Members are allowed at any one time.

Each year, with the notice of the AGM, the Association's Company Secretary will ask all members to confirm in writing their intention to remain as members or to resign. The aim of this declaration is to avoid having dormant members.

Members can all also cease to be a shareholding member if:

- they die;
- they are expelled under the rules;
- they withdraw from the Association by giving one month's notice to the Company Secretary;
- in the case of a corporate or unincorporated body that they cease to exist.