

## **PORT OF LEITH HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED**

### **Membership Policy**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

The Association seeks to ensure its membership reflects the community it serves, namely residents of Leith and its surroundings and other people with a specific interest in its work.

The Association's aims are:

- To build and manage quality, affordable housing for rent and sale in Leith and its surrounding area.
- To continually improve the services we provide to customers and to involve customers in improving our work.
- To assist in improving the quality of life for people who live in the area, by working in partnership with the community and with voluntary and statutory organisations also working in Leith.
- To be efficient and provide value for money.

The Association's activities are controlled and directed by a voluntary Management Board . Professional staff are appointed to support the Board and carry out the day to day activities. The Management Board is elected by the members on an annual basis. We own and manage over 2000 homes.

#### **2.0 Scope of the policy**

This policy is designed to enable prospective and existing members to understand how the Association promotes and monitors membership, to explain eligibility and how to apply for or end membership. It ensures that we comply with our Rules and legislation. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Associations Rules in relation to membership.

Members are those people who hold a share in the Association and whose names are entered in the Register of Members.

#### **3.0 Membership**

##### **3.1 Eligibility**

Membership is open to all regardless of colour, religion, race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, disability, age or sexuality

It is a requirement of members however that they are supportive of the aims of the Association.

Anyone living in Leith or anyone who is interested in the provision and management of good housing is welcome to join the Association.

- Tenants are particularly welcome to join, although there is no compulsion to do so.
- We also welcome applications from people involved in local community groups

- Also welcome are people with a professional knowledge of an area relevant to our work, such as housing management, property maintenance, building construction, Finance, community care, etc.

Applicants must be over 18 years of age, or over 16 if a tenant.

Applicants must purchase a £1 share in the Association which confers membership for life.

### 3.2 Limitations on Membership

To avoid conflict of interest we do not accept for membership anyone having a business interest in our activities, employees, or where a potential conflict of interest arises. Applications for Membership from former employees of the Association will not be accepted until a reasonable period has passed since employment ceased, such period to be determined by the Board of Management on an individual basis.

The Board of Management has absolute discretion in deciding on applications for membership, taking full account of this Membership Policy and the Association's Rules.

### 3.3 Promotion

Membership is promoted by circulating information to tenants at their first sign up and thereafter through our newsletters and web site.

It is also promoted to the community through circulating information to libraries and other community groups.

### 3.4 Monitoring

The Board of Management collects information on the application form for membership on, for example, ethnicity, age and gender to enable it to compare the composition of its membership against the wider communities and enable it to direct its marketing for new membership accordingly. It will not use this information for any other purpose.

### 3.5 The Register of Members

A register of members' details is kept on a computerised database and backed up nightly to provide a duplicate record.

The register can be viewed at the office by anyone, providing they give 3 days notice in writing to the Association. The register is an open document therefore does not come under the Data Protection Act.

### 3.6 Equal Opportunities

The Association has a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and expects its members to support its policy of promoting inclusion and opposing any form of discrimination.

## **4 Procedures**

### 4.1 Making an Application

The attached form (App 2) should be completed and sent together with £1.00 to:

The Secretary  
Port of Leith Housing Association  
108 Constitution St.  
Leith  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6AZ

The form is available on our website: [www.polha.co.uk](http://www.polha.co.uk)  
or by contacting us at: 0131 554 0403

#### 4.2 Considering applications

All applications are considered by the Management Board at its next meeting, or as soon as possible thereafter. Applications cannot be accepted within 14 days of our Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Once an application is approved the applicant will immediately be a member and will be included on our list of registered members. They will receive a copy of the Rules for Port of Leith Housing Association, which includes details of the AGM and standing for election to the Management Board. Members receive an invitation to the AGM and an Annual report each year, in April.

#### 4.3 Appeals

If an application should be unsuccessful, the applicant will be advised of the reasons for refusal. The unsuccessful applicant can appeal in writing if they feel the decision should be changed and the Management Board will consider this information at its next practical meeting. Its decision on this second occasion will be binding. The £1.00 received will be returned to anyone not accepted as a member.

### **5 Ending membership**

Membership will cease when a member:

5.1 Resigns by giving written notice to the Secretary.

5.2 Fails to attend and submit apologies for 5 AGM's.

5.3 Is expelled in accordance with the Rules.

5.4 Changes address but does not notify the Association of the new Address within 3 months, unless the new address is also a tenancy with us.

5.5 Dies.

5.6 There has been a complaint in writing about a member and two thirds of the members voting at a special general meeting agree to end membership.

The £1 share is not refundable on membership ending.

**Keith Anderson**  
**Chief Executive**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010**