



## Membership Policy

<b>Purpose:</b>	Membership Policy
<b>Review Date:</b>	October 2024 Date Approved: 27/10/21
<b>Guidance:</b>	THA Model Rules, Revised 2020 SFHA Open All Hours, August 2019 SFHA Governing Body Succession Planning and Recruitment, February 2021
<b>Regulatory Standards:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.</li> <li>2. The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.</li> <li>5. The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.</li> </ol>
<b>Other Relevant Policies</b>	THA Model Rules

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This policy sets out Trafalgar Housing Association's (THA)'s process and criteria for approving applications for shareholding membership. It will also ensure that THA operates according to its Model Rules and complies with relevant legislation and regulation.
- 1.2 As a community-based housing association, THA will seek to establish a broad and well represented membership across the community it serves and beyond.

## **2.0 PROMOTION OF MEMBERSHIP**

- 2.1 THA recognises the contribution of local people is invaluable in terms of their skills and local knowledge and experience, particularly those who match the skills being sought while recruiting new Board members.
- 2.2 THA will promote membership to relevant people and organisations in the following ways:
- Encouraging new tenants to become shareholding members when they sign their tenancy agreement (non-conditional)
  - Publish the Membership Policy on our website
  - Promote the Membership Policy and on the website and in regular newsletters
  - Circulating information to local community groups, local businesses and local voluntary organisations.
  - If necessary, advertise in local press or media to attract people with particular skills to meet skills gaps for potential Board members, who must first become a Shareholding member.

## **3.0 ELIGIBILITY**

- 3.1 THA promotes an open membership and therefore encourages all local people who have a genuine interest in the Associations work to become a Shareholding member.
- 3.2 Tenants, service users, local people, local community groups and organisations who support our aims and objectives are all encouraged to become 'Shareholding members'.
- 3.3 Organisations may apply for a Shareholding membership and can nominate anyone they feel is suitable to represent them, however must provide authorisation of who the representative will be. This can be changed at any time by withdrawing the original representative and providing authorisation for the new one. Representatives cannot themselves be shareholding members at the same time.
- 3.4 Applications will also be considered from those out with the area, however all applications for membership will be at the absolute discretion of the Board. The grounds for refusal of an application for shareholding membership include where:

- It would be contrary to the Association's Rules or policies;
- A conflict of interest exists which may adversely affect the work of the Association;
- It would not be in the best interests of the Association;

3.5 Anyone over the age of 16 can apply and there is no upper age to apply or to continue to serve as a Board member. Joint tenants should apply individually.

3.6 Current or ex staff members are not permitted to be Shareholding members and any existing shareholding member offered a contract of employment with THA must resign their membership prior to their appointment.

3.7 THA is committed to promoting diversity and ensuring equality of opportunity and will strive to ensure its membership reflects the community it serves. Membership will therefore be open to all those entitled to join regardless of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, age, sexuality, disability, religion or beliefs and marital pregnancy, maternity or marital status.

#### **4.0 APPLYING FOR MEMBERSHIP**

4.1 Individuals or organisations should send a completed and signed application to THA's registered office, together with the sum of £1.00.

4.2 Applicants will be asked to declare any potential interests such as employment or membership of another local housing association. Although any such interest would not be a cause for rejection, should it affect the work of THA, this may become more of an issue should the shareholding member seek nomination for the Board.

#### **5.0 APPROVAL OF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

5.1 Applications will be considered by the Board as soon as reasonably practicable, normally at its next scheduled meeting. No application can be considered 14 days prior to the Annual General meeting.

5.2 Following approval, the Shareholding member will be entered in the Register of Members listing their name, address and date approved. A second register will also be held and will be available for inspection, within 7 days of written request to the Secretary.

#### **6.0 INVOLVEMENT**

6.1 All Shareholding members will receive regular newsletters, invitations to all general meeting or key events and copies of the annual accounts, by request.

6.2 Shareholding members can vote at elections to appoint Board members, or on any other matters requiring a decision at a general meeting. They can also nominate another Shareholding member to stand for election onto the Board or even nominate themselves for election.

### **6.3 Board Member Recruitment**

- 6.3.1 THA will actively promote any opportunities of serving on the Board to its shareholding members. Board members skills are assessed annually to ensure they have the necessary skills, knowledge and diversity to have a fully effective Board. Any skills gaps identified will be sought through the Board recruitment process, which will complement the democratic process of elections at the AGM.
- 6.3.2 Should an election be necessary at an AGM, Shareholding members will receive details of how of the nominees' skills and knowledge can support these gaps.

### **7.0 ENDING MEMBERSHIP**

7.1 Shareholders membership will come to an end if they:

- Resign, giving 7 days' notice in writing to the Secretary
- Fail to advise of a change of address, within 3 months of moving
- For 5 AGM's in a row, does not attend, submit apologies, vote by post or appoint a representative to attend on their behalf by proxy.
- No longer fulfil the membership criteria

7.2 Should a Shareholder inadvertently lose their membership due to any of the above, they may immediately re-apply for membership to be considered by the Board. Reminder letters will be sent and reasonable efforts will be made to retain membership where possible.

7.3 Should membership need to come to an end as the result of a complaint about a shareholder's behaviour a special general meeting will be held to hear the complaint, where two-thirds of Shareholding members voting need to agree whether the membership will end. Any further application for membership after this will need to be approved by two-thirds of the shareholding members voting at a general meeting.

7.4 When a membership comes to an end, or if a Shareholding member dies, the Board will cancel the share and record the date this was approved on the Register of Members. The value of the share will remain with THA, however Shareholding members can nominate someone to transfer their share to when they die, provided the nominee is eligible to join.

### **7.0 DATA PROTECTION**

7.1 THA treats information security and data protection very seriously, therefore all applicants will receive a Shareholder Fair Processing Notice with their application form which explains how information is processed. All personal data provided will be processed according to data protection legislation for the reasons specified and will not be shared by any third party without specific consent, unless required by law.

## **8.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

8.1 The Board will ensure this policy complies with regulation and guidance and the Director will regularly review and monitor the policy. Thereafter, the Administration Officer will implement the policy and ensure systems and controls are in place to support the application of the policy.

## **9.0 REPORTING**

9.1 The Board will receive a report annually, prior to the AGM, to advise them of the Shareholding membership status and AGM arrangements. As well as including a summary of total shareholding members and quorum required at the AGM, it also details those retiring and nominated for election.

9.2 This report will also confirm that the Secretary has conducted a review of compliance with the requirements of our Rules confirming that these are all in order and they have signed a Schedule of Registers to confirm this for the following:

- Register holding the details of the use of the Association's Seal;
- Shareholder Member Registers