



The Langstane Group

Membership Policy

Senior management team approval	31 August 2020
Board / Committee	Board of Management
Approval date	18 January 2021
Implementation date	2 March 2021
Review date	18 January 2024
Version	V4

Policy Version	Date of Approval	Changes made to Policy
V1	15 March 2010	New
V2	24 November 2014	No changes
V3	27 August 2018	Re-write
V4	18 January 2021	As part of high level governance review of policies

1. Introduction

Langstane Housing Association is a Co-operative and Community Benefit Society and a registered social landlord with charitable status.

The Langstane Group consists of Langstane Housing Association Limited, and its wholly owned subsidiaries.

This policy applies to Langstane Housing Association Limited (Langstane / the Association) only as subsidiary companies are managed by a Board of Directors.

2. Policy statement

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- Information on how to become a member of Langstane Housing Association Limited is widely available, easily understood and in formats that encourage membership from a wide and diverse range of people / groups; and
- The Association meets all legislative and regulatory requirements in this respect.

The Association will endeavour to encourage a broad range of membership which reflects the Rules of the Association and the communities served.

Membership applications from tenants, other customers, community groups and other community residents in the areas in which Langstane is active, will be encouraged.

3. Objectives

The Association will promote membership from a broad range of applicants by:

- Making information widely available e.g. on our website, through social media, in publications and when talking to tenants and others face to face;
- Having information available at our reception points and other areas accessed by members of the public;
- Using internal processes such as the allocations and the complaints process to encourage membership and / or influence changes that benefit tenants and other customers;
- Making the process of becoming a member straightforward and clear;
- Periodically publicising the role of general members; and
- Linking membership to achievements that benefit those involved with Langstane e.g. tenants and other customers.

The Association may also, from time to time, invite applications for membership from individuals with specific occupational skills / backgrounds to meet identified skills gaps.

4. Links to other strategic documents and policies

The Association's Membership Policy is linked to a number of strategic documents and policies in particular but not solely:

- Rules;
- Equality and Diversity Strategy;
- Tenant Participation Strategy;
- Tenancy Sustainment Strategy;

- Tenant Scrutiny Framework;
- Community Investment Strategy;
- Scheme of Delegation;
- Customer Care Standard;
- Equality and Diversity Policy; and
- Social Media Policy.

5. Policy Membership

The Association's Rules, which are available on the website and on request, determine who may become a member. All members must uphold the Association's objects, mission, vision and values.

A member of the Association is an individual or organisation holding a £1.00 share in the Association and whose name is entered in the Register of Members. Membership fees are non-refundable.

Anyone aged 16 or over may apply to become a member.

No member may hold more than one share. There is no interest, dividend or bonus payable on shares.

An organisation that is a member can appoint a person to act as its representative. A representative of an organisation cannot also be an individual member of the Association.

If an individual member becomes a representative of an organisation, their individual membership is suspended whilst they represent the organisation. Members are entitled to attend annual general meetings (normally held in September each year) and any special general meetings called. As a member, voting rights are granted and members can vote for or against any item on the agenda.

Members are eligible to be nominated to the Board of Management. The Board of Management is responsible for setting the Association's strategic objectives. Although being a part of the Board of Management is only available to members, taking part in the Association's decision making can be achieved in other ways providing comment when the Association consults openly regarding some policies and strategic documents.

Applying for membership

Membership application forms are widely available for potential members to complete and return along with their fee of £1.00. Assistance can be provided to complete the form if needed. The fee will be returned if the application is refused.

Application forms will be considered, under the Association's Scheme of Delegation, by the senior management team at their next available meeting.

Whilst every application for membership is determined on its own merit, there is a general presumption that applications will be approved and only in exceptional circumstances will they be refused.

Within seven working days of a decision being made, applicants will be advised of the

senior management team's decision in writing. If required, this will determine any reason for refusal and refund the fee paid (£1.00). Grounds for refusal, whilst not exhaustive, may be due to a significant conflict of interest or where an applicant has acted or is acting in a way that is contrary to the interests of the Association.

One opportunity to appeal a refusal can be made. The appeal must be made within 10 days of the date on the notification letter, to the Board of Management's Chairperson (via the Secretary) and detail the grounds of the appeal. Assistance can be given where necessary to make the appeal. A decision will be made at the next Board of Management meeting providing the appeal is received at least ten working days before the next meeting date.

However, in accordance with its Rules, Langstane's Board has absolute discretion in deciding on applications for membership. The Rules also empower the Board to refuse an application for membership on a number of prescribed grounds, relating to contravention of Langstane's Rules or policies; conflicts of interest; or where acceptance of applications would not be judged to be in Langstane's best interests.

Maintaining membership

All members are required to notify the Secretary in writing, at the registered office (680 King Street, Aberdeen, AB24 1SL) of a change of address. This must be notified within three months. This rule does not apply if members are tenants and have moved home by transferring tenancy to another Association owned property or a property maintained by the Association.

A Register of Members is maintained in accordance with the Rules of the Association. The Register contains details of the member's name, address, date of membership approval and membership number for each and every member. The Register of Members is available for public inspection at a mutually agreed date and time by contacting the Secretary.

Ending membership

Membership can be ended by giving the Secretary in writing, at the registered office (680 King Street, Aberdeen, AB24 1SL) seven days' notice.

Membership will end when:

- A member has been expelled in accordance with the Rules of the Association; The Association is not notified of a member's change of address within three months;
- For five annual general meetings in a row a member has not attended, submitted apologies, exercised a postal vote or appointed a representative to attend and vote on their behalf by proxy; and / or
- A complaint is received about the actions of a member that are deemed to be prejudicial to the interests of the Association and two thirds of members voting at a special general meeting, agree to this.

Membership ends on the death of a member unless the member has nominated a person to whom the share should be transferred.

The membership fee of £1.00 is non-refundable on termination of membership.

6. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed in three years' time from the date of implementation or where a change in legislation or regulatory framework is implemented and it is deemed appropriate to review the policy sooner.

In the event that the policy is not reviewed within the above timescale, the latest approved policy will continue to apply.

7. Right to complain

In the event you are not satisfied with the service you have received, please contact the Association for a copy of the Complaints Policy. This can also be viewed on Langstane Housing Association's website – www.langstane-ha.co.uk.

8. Equality and diversity

The Langstane Group / Langstane Housing Association are committed to promoting equality and diversity across all areas of work. Discrimination or harassment of any kind is not tolerated.

If you would like this document sent to you in large print, please contact Support Services on 01224 423000.