

The Ferguslie Group



Ferguslie Group

Association Membership Policy

Date of Last Review August 2017

Date of Next Review August 2022

Signed

FERGUSLIE PARK HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Membership Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Ferguslie Park Housing Association (FPHA) is a membership organisation that is committed to the involvement of tenants and local residents in the running of its affairs, and to being accountable to tenants and the wider community. Membership of FPHA is open to anyone from the local area and beyond who supports its aims and objectives, and is interested in being kept informed about its affairs, or helping to further develop those aims and objectives.
- 1.2 FPHA's Rules require that the board should set, review and publish its membership policy for admitting new members. This policy reflects any requirements set out in its Rules.
- 1.3 Members of FPHA shall be those people, or organisations, who hold a share in the association and whose names are entered in the Register of Members.

2. Promoting membership

- 2.1 FPHA is a community-based housing association, and is positive about attracting people from the communities it serves, and beyond, to become members of the association.
- 2.2 FPHA seeks to establish a broad and active membership by encouraging individuals and local organisations who have an interest in, and support the aims and objectives of the Association to become members. It wishes to make use of the skills and experience of its members where possible, particularly where those skills match the identified skills being sought as part of the process of recruiting new board members.
- 2.3 FPHA will promote membership to relevant people and organisations in the following ways:
 - Encouraging new tenants to become members of the association at the point when they sign their tenancy agreement (it will always be made clear that membership is not a condition of being allocated a tenancy), and in any subsequent settling in visit.
 - Promoting membership in FPHA's regular newsletter, and on its website.

- Circulating information on membership to local community and representative organisations, and voluntary and other organisations who are active in the Ferguslie Park community, and promoting FPHA membership at local community events.
- Advertising for people with relevant skills who may be potential board members, and must first become members of the association.

2.4 FPHA is committed to promoting diversity and ensuring equality of opportunity. We will strive to ensure our membership reflects the communities we serve. We will put in place arrangements for monitoring the composition of our membership to enable periodic assessment of the extent to which it is representative.

3. Eligibility

3.1 The following groups are eligible to become members of the association:

- Tenants of FPHA
- Service users of FPHA and Tannahill Centre services
- Other people who support the aims and objectives of FPHA
- Organisations sympathetic to the aims and objectives of FPHA

3.2 Applications for membership can be received from any person aged 16 or over. There is no upper age limit on applying for, or continuing to be a member.

3.3 Applicants who have a joint tenancy with FPHA should apply individually for membership. FPHA cannot accept joint applications for membership.

3.4 Membership will be open to all those entitled to apply regardless of their personal characteristics or circumstances. This includes their colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, age, sexuality, disability, religion or beliefs, and marital, pregnancy, maternity or family status.

4. Applying for membership

4.1 Any individual or organisation who wishes to apply for membership should send a completed and signed membership application form (copy obtainable from FPHA) to FPHA's office, together with the sum of £1.00.

4.2 Applications for membership will be considered by the board as soon as reasonably practicable, normally at its next scheduled meeting following receipt of the application. No application can be considered within 14 days preceding the date of a general meeting of FPHA (e.g. an AGM).

4.3 The FPHA board has absolute discretion as to whether to accept or reject an application for membership. Some examples of reasons for refusing an application are:

- Membership would be contrary to FPHA's Rules or policies.
- The management committee considers that accepting the application would not be in the best interests of FPHA.
- Where a significant conflict of interest may exist.

Applicants will be asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest in their application form, such as employment by, or membership of the governing body of another local housing association. The existence of potential conflicts of interest are not in themselves grounds for the rejection of an application. This would only occur where, even allowing for the disclosure of such a conflict, it may adversely affect the work of FPHA. Such conflicts may potentially be of more concern if the member were to seek nomination to the board.

4.4 FPHA wishes to encourage membership, and only in rare circumstances would an application be refused. If this should happen, the applicant will be informed of the reasons in writing, and the £1.00 payment will be refunded.

5. Approval of membership and Register of Members

5.1 When an application is approved, FPHA will write to the new member to confirm this, and will enter their name in FPHA's Register of Members within 7 working days of the meeting which approved the application.

5.2 The Register of Members will list the name, address and date that the new member was entered into the Register. A second copy of the Register will be kept, which is available for inspection by any member, provided that a written request is first submitted in writing to the Secretary of FPHA. Arrangements for access will then be made, normally within 7 days of receipt of the request, at FPHA's offices, with a staff member in attendance.

5.3 Upon having their membership approved, new members will receive:

- A share certificate
- A copy of FPHA's Rules
- Details of the member's obligations to FPHA, and how they can participate in the work of FPHA, including how they can be nominated for membership of the FPHA board
- A copy of the latest Annual Report, newsletter and FPHA's current membership policy

6. Membership by an Organisation

- 6.1 Organisations who are sympathetic to the aims and objectives of FPHA may apply for membership in the same way as individual applicants. Once approved as a member, the organisation is free to nominate anyone it considers suitable to be its representative to FPHA. That person represents all of the organisation's rights and powers at general meetings.
- 6.2 The organisation must send FPHA a copy of the authorisation or appointment of their representative, to confirm the identity of the individual concerned. This should be signed by an authorised signatory of the organisation, and the signature must be independently witnessed. The identity of the representative can be changed at any time, by confirming the identity of the new representative, as above, and withdrawing the authority of the original representative.
- 6.3 Any person who is designated as a representative of an organisation cannot also be a member of FPHA as an individual. If FPHA is notified of the identity of a representative, and that person is already a member of FPHA, we will suspend their individual membership for as long as they remain the representative of an organisation.

7. Member involvement

- 7.1 During their period of membership, members should expect to receive:

- Regular newsletters
- FPHA's Annual Report
- A summary of the Annual Financial Statements
- Invitations to major events, such as formal openings of new housing schemes
- Invitations to the Annual General Meeting, and any other general meetings called by FPHA

We will make every effort to hold general meetings at times and locations suitable for all members, which is accessible to all.

- 7.2 Members are entitled to vote on any matters requiring a decision at a general meeting. They are also entitled to nominate another member to stand for election onto the board of management, or to be nominated themselves for election, and to vote in any election for the appointment of board members.
- 7.3 FPHA is committed to keeping its members informed about key issues and developments at the Association, so that members can make informed contributions and decisions at general meetings. It will do this primarily via its quarterly newsletters, but also by preparing short reports to be circulated in advance for any special items requiring consideration.

- 7.4 FPHA will actively promote to its members the opportunities that exist for being elected and serving on the board. Every year, FPHA makes an assessment of the skills, knowledge and diversity that it needs amongst its board members in order to have a fully effective governing body membership, and identifies any gaps that need filling in the next round of board member recruitment and elections. FPHA will make this information available to its members each year in advance of any Annual General Meeting, to guide members in making suitable nominations for board membership as part of the election process.
- 7.5 Members are obliged to notify FPHA of any change of address in writing within 3 months of the change. This is important as failure to do so may lead to termination of membership. This requirement does not apply to tenants who move home in order to transfer to another FPHA property.

8. Ending membership

- 8.1 Membership will come to an end if:
- A member resigns, giving 7 days' notice in writing to the Secretary;
 - The board reasonably believes that a member has failed to tell FPHA of a change of address;
 - For 5 AGMs in a row the member has not attended, submitted apologies, exercised a postal vote or appointed a representative to attend and vote on their behalf by proxy.
- 8.2 Where a member inadvertently loses their membership due to a change of address or non-attendance at AGMs, and wishes to continue to be a member, they may immediately re-apply for membership, and the board will give consideration to their application.
- 8.3 Membership may come to an end as a result of a complaint about the behaviour of a member, when two-thirds of members voting at a special general meeting convened to consider the complaint agree to this course of action. The details of such a procedure are set out in FPHA's Rules.
- 8.4 It is FPHA's policy that its staff members should not be permitted to be members of the Association. If an existing member is appointed as an FPHA member of staff (whether temporary or permanent), they must resign their membership before being permitted to accept any offer of employment.
- 8.5 When membership comes to an end, or if the member dies, the board will cancel the share, and record the ending of membership in the Register of Members.
- 8.6 FPHA will inform members that their share has been cancelled and their membership has come to an end if their address/es are known to FPHA.

8.7 When a share is cancelled, the value of the share (i.e. £1.00) will then normally belong to FPHA. A member may nominate a person to whom FPHA must transfer their share when they die, provided that the person nominated is eligible for membership within the terms of this policy.

9. Publication, implementation and review

9.1 A copy of this policy will be made available to any applicants for membership on request, and/or to new members at the time of their appointment.

9.2 Membership application forms will include diversity information, and FPHA will periodically analyse data that it holds on its members, to ascertain whether the membership is representative of the communities that it serves, and whether any initiatives to promote membership to particular sections of the community may be appropriate.

9.3 Any personal information given to FPHA in respect of its members will be handled in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation, will only be used for the reasons specified, and will not be shared with any third party without consent, except as required by law.

9.4 This policy will be reviewed at least within 5 years (by September 2022) or sooner should circumstances require. The Group Chief Executive has lead responsibility for initiating the review, and for the implementation of the policy, but may delegate elements of this to an appropriate member of staff.