



Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations

Policy: Membership of GWSF

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The GWSF Board has approved this policy, to describe the criteria that apply when it considers applications for affiliate or associate membership of the Forum.
- 1.2 The Membership Policy reflects GWSF's purpose as a membership body for community-controlled housing associations and co-operatives (CCHAs), led by voluntary management committees/boards. The Policy describes:
- The constitutional criteria that apply to membership applications
 - The additional policy criteria the Board has approved relating to:
 - prospective members' arrangements for governance and accountability
 - prospective members' areas of operation
 - consideration and approval of membership applications.

2. Constitutional Criteria

- 2.1 Applicants for membership must meet the conditions specified in GWSF's Memorandum and Articles, i.e:

Ordinary Membership

- Any housing association or co-operative in the GWSF Operating Area, registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator, and owning and/or managing fewer than 7,500 houses can be considered for membership

Associate membership

- Any organisation supporting the objectives of the Company and whose application for membership is approved by the Board can become Forum members

3. Policy Criteria

- 3.1 The policy criteria set out below are consistent with GWSF's purpose which is to promote and support community-controlled housing organisations. They are also consistent with the GWSF constitution which allows the Board complete discretion in deciding whether to approve any application for membership.

Community Governance and Accountability

- 3.2 GWSF will protect the voluntary ethos of the community housing movement in Scotland. The Board will not approve any membership application (ordinary or associate) made by a housing association or co-operative that pays its governing body members (other than for out of pocket expenses incurred in the course of their duties).
- 3.3 Membership (ordinary or associate) will not be open to housing associations and co-operatives that are part of a group structure, unless the parent organisation in the group is a community-controlled housing association or co-operative.
- 3.4 Prospective members (ordinary or associate) must have their registered office in Scotland.
- 3.5 Prospective members (ordinary or associate) must normally have an open and democratic constitution, based on "one member, one vote", and with eligibility for shareholding membership open to all residents in the organisation's area(s) of operation.

GWSF Operating Area

- 3.6 Organisations seeking **ordinary membership** must own or manage housing in one of the following local authority areas:
- Argyll and Bute
 - City of Glasgow
 - East Ayrshire
 - East Dunbartonshire
 - East Renfrewshire
 - Inverclyde
 - North Ayrshire
 - North Lanarkshire
 - Renfrewshire

- South Ayrshire
- South Lanarkshire
- West Dunbartonshire

3.7 New applicants for **ordinary membership** must operate in a single local authority area, **or** otherwise satisfy the GWSF Board that they are a community-controlled organisation. For example, based on the organisation's constitutional arrangements for membership; election and composition of the governing body; whether the applicant has community-led governance and democratic accountability to its communities; any constitutional relationships with other RSLs; and the nature and geographical focus of the applicant's activities.

Associate Membership

3.8 New applications for **associate membership** will be considered if the applicant:

- Is a CCHA based outside the main GWSF Operating Area, or
- Is not a CCHA but owns or manages housing within the GWSF Operating Area, **and** the GWSF Board is satisfied that approval of the application will not undermine the Forum's primary purpose as a membership body for community-controlled housing providers.

4. Consideration and Approval of Membership Applications

- 4.1 The Memorandum and Articles permit the GWSF Board to refuse to admit any organisation to membership, if it so decides.
- 4.2 The Board has delegated responsibility for considering and approving membership applications to the GWSF Chairperson and Director, provided that the application clearly meets the membership criteria set out above. All such applications will be reported to the next meeting of the Board.
- 4.3 In cases where eligibility for membership is not clear-cut, or raises potential policy/reputational issues, the application will be referred to the Board for decision.

5. Ending of GWSF Membership

- 5.1 The criteria for cessation of membership are as described in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and include decisions by a member to resign and failure to pay annual affiliation fees or other monies owed to GWSF.
- 5.2 The Memorandum and Articles also describe the procedures to be followed before a member can be expelled. Any proposal to expel a member must be approved at a general meeting of the Forum's members.

Policy approved by the GWSF Board: December 2012

Review Date: December 2014, or as otherwise determined by the GWSF Board