



**MEMBERSHIP POLICY**

<b>POLICY IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST</b>	
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Approved by Director:	24 FEBRUARY 2021
Effective From:	24 FEBRUARY 2021
Date of Next Review:	24 FEBRUARY 2024
Diversity compliant:	YES
Equality Impact Assessment:	LOW
Data Protection compliant:	YES
Health & Safety compliant:	YES
Procedure implemented:	YES
SDM system changes made:	N/A
Training Completed:	
Posted on Sharepoint:	
Posted on website:	

**COVID-19 Generic Policy Statement:**

Although we will always endeavour to abide by our policies and procedures we may be unable to do so due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The organisation will follow all Government guidance implemented to mitigate transmission of the COVID-19 virus. This could effect over service delivery and protocols contained within this policy.

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## **1. Introduction**

Forgewood Housing Co-operative is a membership organisation, and aims to attract people from the groups and communities we serve to become members of the Co-operative. Furthermore Forgewood intends to ensure that it is inclusive to all members of society and seeks to establish a wide and active membership by offering membership to individuals living outwith our communities who may have an interest in our work.

Members of Forgewood hold a share in the Co-operative and their names are entered into a Register of Members. It is a requirement of membership that members are supportive of the aims and objectives of Forgewood.

The overall aim of this policy is to ensure we have a membership which is as open, inclusive and widely reflective of the communities we serve as possible.

The Co-operative is a registered Industrial & Provident Society and a registered charity. We are constituted under the SFHA Model Charitable Rules.

This policy document should be read in conjunction with the Co-operative's Rules.

## **2. Equal Opportunities**

The concept of Equal Opportunities is central to the entire membership process. It is our desire to ensure that the barriers to membership arising from ethnicity, race, nationality, colour, gender, marital status, special needs, language difficulties, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability are removed by providing a range of opportunities for people with an interest in the Co-operative to become members.

## **3. Membership Policy Objectives**

Forgewood Housing Co-operative aims to be accountable to its tenants and the wider community in general.

The membership policy objectives of Forgewood Housing Co-operative are therefore;

- To ensure, above all, community (especially Forgewood's tenants and factored owners) participation in the management of the Co-operative;
- To encourage Forgewood's tenants and owners within our estates to take up membership of the Co-operative;
- To encourage high attendance of members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and participation in the voting for Committee Members;
- To have a membership of the Co-operative which is appropriately

balanced when judged against the geographical mix of our stock and in terms of tenant/owner-occupier mix.

- To encourage other interested parties, such as professional persons, local representatives and appropriately skilled persons to become members of the Co-operative.

#### **4. Promotion of Membership**

Forgewood will promote membership of the Co-operative in a number of ways which ensures people have the opportunity to make an informed decision about whether or not to become a member. We will promote membership of the Co-operative by circulating information on membership to tenants, owners and the local community.

Information on membership will be provided via newsletters, website, resident meetings, tenant's conferences, new tenant visits, tenancy sign-up and other general contact with our residents and service users.

Committee members and staff will actively encourage eligible people to join.

We may utilise the services of EVH's Register of Committee Members or advertise externally to ensure that we can have access to suitably qualified and experienced people who may have an interest in joining the Management Committee. This is subject to Forgewood identifying a need to attract committee members with specific skills and expertise.

#### **5. Applying for Membership**

Forgewood seeks to ensure broad representation in our membership and we particularly welcome applications from:

- Tenants of the Co-operative
- Owner occupiers whose properties are factored by the Co-operative
- Other residents within our geographical areas of operation
- Other persons who can contribute particular community, business or professional experience and skills.

We recognise that there are sections of the community that may be currently underrepresented and we are therefore keen to receive applications from as many potential members as possible.

Applications for membership shall be forwarded to the Co-operative's registered office either on-line or in writing and should include the sum of one pound. An example of our existing membership application form is included at Appendix B to this document.

Every application is considered by the Governing body of the Co-operative at its next meeting after the application is received, or as soon thereafter as is

practicable. Applications from persons wishing to become a member will require to give reasons for wishing to join the Co-operative.

If we approve your application, you will immediately become a member of the Co-operative and your name will be included in our Register of Members within seven working days. You will then be issued one share in the Co-operative, which is non-refundable and non-transferable.

Whilst it is the Co-operative's intention to encourage membership, the Management Committee has absolute discretion in deciding on applications for membership, taking full account of this Policy and Rules of the Co-operative.

An indication of areas where there may be grounds for refusal are as follows:-

- a) Where the Co-operative rules or policies prevent membership (e.g. Applicant is under 16, Applicant is a member of staff);
- b) Where a conflict of interest may exist which would, even allowing for the disclosure of such an interest may adversely affect the work of the Co-operative.

It is considered that this ground may extend to individuals with an occupational or financial interest in property development or speculation, or an employee or committee member of another Housing Co-operative with a competing interest.

- c) Where the Management Committee suspects that the application is part of an organised attempt by narrowly defined interest groups who are hostile to the principles of local accountability, equality of treatment and tolerance or has grounds for believing that the applicant does intend to participate in normal membership activities. Examples of this are attempts by a local political party grouping, or sectarian or racist groupings which do not support the overall aims and objectives of the Co-operative. The Committee recognises that the refusal of membership applications on this ground must be made in an open and accountable fashion and should not be used to undermine attempts to make the Co-operative locally accountable and representative.

Where an application is unsuccessful a statement of the reasons for refusal will be given. An applicant will then have one further opportunity to request membership, and to give reasons why the decision should be changed; this should normally be made in writing. The Governing body will consider the reasons at its next practical meeting and its decision on that occasion will be final.

Other provisions relating to membership are as follows;

- If the membership application is agreed a share certificate will be issued to the applicant and his/her name will be entered in the register of members;

and

- No member shall hold more than one share in the Co-operative, however a household may have more than one member within it.

## **6. Member Participation and Involvement**

The Co-operative wishes to ensure its members are informed and can actively participate in the organisation. To this end, the Co-operative will:

- Publicise any general meetings (AGM) at least 14 days before the date of the meeting;
- Circulate information to members so they can make informed decisions at the Annual General Meeting. Where information in particular format or language is requested, the Co-operative will endeavour to provide this;
- Make every effort to hold general meetings (Annual and Extraordinary) at times and locations suitable for membership, and which is accessible to all
- Keep members informed on all major developments affecting the Co-operative;
- Actively promote the opportunities that exist, through election, for serving on the Management Committee;
- Make a copy of our annual accounts available for all our members;
- Provide all members with a copy of our Annual Report.

## **7. Termination of Membership**

Membership will cease when a member:

- a) Resigns by giving written notice to the secretary
- b) Becomes an employee of the Co-operative
- c) Is expelled in accordance with the rules
- d) Changes address, but fail to notify the Co-operative.
- e) Fails to attend or to submit apologies for a set number of consecutive Annual General Meetings, as set out in our rules.
- f) In the case of a body corporate ceases to be a body corporate.
- g) Dies

The Management Committee will end the membership and cancel the share.

The £1.00 membership is non-refundable on termination of membership. The value of this share will then belong to the Co-operative and transferred to our revenue reserves.

## **8. Monitoring Membership**

Annually the Co-operative collates various pieces of information relating to membership. This information outlines:

- Whether there has been an increase or decrease in the Co-operative's

membership;

- Percentage of people who attended the last Annual General Meeting in comparison to total membership.

From time to time the Co-operative may undertake a membership survey which asks existing members various questions regarding their membership to ensure that it is meeting their expectations and identifying any gaps within our existing membership, for example, under represented groups, accessibility of AGM, quality of written communication materials etc.

## **9. Policy Review**

The Membership Policy will be reviewed every four years, or earlier as required at the request of the Management Committee.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Forgewood Housing Co-operative is a registered Housing Co-operative.

It is owned and controlled by its members.

You can apply for membership of Forgewood Housing Co-operative if:

- You are 16 years or over.
- You agree with the Co-operative's aims and objectives.

The Co-operatives aims and objectives are:

- To provide houses for persons in need.
- To provide housing or other services to aged, infirm or disabled persons.
- To provide any other services such as maintenance and improvement to the homes of aged persons.
- Not to trade for profit.



**Forgewood's vision is:**

### **Investing in our People, Homes and Communities**

From this vision we have identified **5 Strategic Objectives:**

- To continuously improve our services to our tenants and customers by designing services that meets their needs.
- To ensure financial sustainability and compliance. We will maximise income and seek efficiencies in line with our longer term objectives.
- We will meet our regulatory, governance and financial requirements.
- To develop our people through training, education, coaching and leadership.
- To develop effective partnerships which maximise the benefits to Forgewood and our communities.
- To develop a clear asset management strategy and housing demand assessment, to better direct our available resources

Membership costs £1. Although the shares do not have a right of interest, dividend or bonus they can give you a powerful voice in the way in which the Co-operative is controlled. All members can vote at the Annual General Meeting and become eligible to stand for election to the Management Committee.

All applications for membership must be approved by the Co-operative's Management Committee. When approved each new member is issued with a share certificate.

**FORGEWOOD HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE LTD  
49 DINMONT CRESCENT  
MOTHERWELL  
ML1 3TT**

**Membership Application Form**

Title (Mr Mrs Miss Ms etc)	Forenames	Surname

Address	Postcode

Are you the tenant at this address? Yes / No  
 Are you the spouse or partner of the tenant at this address? Yes / No  
 Is this your only or principal home? Yes / No

If No, please state the address of your main residence

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Please state briefly why you wish to become a member of Forgewood Housing Co-operative (this could be because you are a tenant or live in the area or involved in housing issues etc)

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Please enclose £1.00 (one Pound) in respect of your application as a one share member of Forgewood Housing Co-operative Limited. Cheques should be made payable to Forgewood Housing Co-op Ltd.

Return to: The Secretary, Forgewood Housing Co-operative Limited  
49 Dinmont Crescent, Motherwell, ML1 3TT

I understand that the information given in this application will be treated confidentially and used to verify my application and for the purposes of providing me with information. I confirm that the information provided is correct and that I have not deliberately withheld any relevant information.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

The omission or provision of false or misleading information will affect your membership entitlement.

***For office use only***

Date Received	Committee Date	Decision	Share Issued	Share Number

Please also complete overleaf

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION  
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING**

To assist Forgewood Housing Co-operative in monitoring its membership, you are requested to complete the following information. This information is optional and will be used for monitoring purposes only. The information will be treated confidentially and will be used for statistical information only.

Age Group	Please <input type="checkbox"/>		Gender	Please <input type="checkbox"/>		Employment	Please <input type="checkbox"/>
16-17			Male			Clerical	
18-25			Female			Retail	
26-40						Manual	
40-60						Professional	
60+						Self employed	
						Unemployed	

Ethnic Origin	Please <input type="checkbox"/>
White: Scottish	
White: Other British	
White: Irish	
White: Other	
Black, Black Scottish or Black British: African	
Black, Black Scottish or Black British: Caribbean	
Black, Black Scottish or Black British: Other	
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British: Indian	
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British: Pakistan	
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British: Bangladeshi	
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British: Chinese	
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British: Other	
Mixed	
Other	
Refused	