

Corporate Policies & Procedures



Membership Procedure

1.	Policy objective
1.1	<p>This policy outlines the guidelines and procedures for enrolling new members of Watford Community Housing (WCH). It ensures a streamlined and consistent process to welcome individuals who wish to join and participate in our governance. This Policy includes information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The eligibility criteria for becoming a member.• Enrolling new members• Cessation of membership• The role and purpose of a member• The key elements of WCH's membership strategy.
2.	Legislative or regulatory requirement
2.1	Watford Community Housing Rules
3.	Scope and definitions
3.1	The policy applies to all persons seeking membership and covers the entire enrolment process, from initial contact to membership approval.
3.2	Unless otherwise specified, the term 'tenant' is taken to mean persons who are currently resident in WCH owned properties and are permitted to become full WCH members.
3.2.1	Full Members: Tenants, shared owners and leaseholders are eligible for full voting membership. Full members have the right to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and vote to influence policies, services and key decisions and become a member of the Gateway Membership Team.
3.2.2	Associate Members: Licensees and Residents in WCH local areas over the age of 16 are eligible to apply for associate membership. Associate members do not have voting rights at General meetings but can stand for election to and vote in the Gateway Membership Committee elections.
4.	Policy Statement
4.1	WCH is a membership organisation. Our membership is the foundation of all our activities and plays a vital role in our governance and operations. The Group Board is committed to incorporating perspectives of our membership in its decision making processes and strives to align the interests of our members with business decisions.

4.2	We are committed to actively promoting membership to foster a strong sense of identity with WCH. By becoming members, individuals are empowered to take ownership of our long-term vision. Our members shape the overall direction of WCH including our key strategies, policies and plans. This cultivates a relationship built on trust and shared understanding, ensuring mutual commitment to our collective success.
5.	Eligibility and Qualifications
5.1	All WCH Tenants, Shared owners and leaseholders are eligible for Full membership, this includes employees of WCH.
5.2	Licensees and Residents of WCH homes who are not tenants of WCH, persons living in Local Community Areas over 16 years of age who are not tenants are eligible for Associate membership.
5.3	Membership is personal to a member and cannot be transferred.
6.	Application Process for Membership
6.1	The membership application form is available on the website and is given to new Tenants as part of their welcome process. Membership application forms are also available on request from Customer Services or any staff member.
6.2	Completed membership forms should be submitted to governance@wcht.org.uk . The applicant will be assessed to ensure they meet the criteria for membership as stated in the rules of WCH. The assessed application will be presented to the next Group Board meeting for approval.
6.3	Following approval at the Group Board meeting, the Assistant Company Secretary will write to the applicant advising them that their application has been approved enclosing their Membership Certificate stating member name, address, and membership number.
7	Updating Membership Register
7.1	The membership number for Full members will be the customer tenancy number. For Associate members, this will be a sequential number following on from the last Associate member number. Leaseholder forms should follow this same format.
7.2	The customer details are then updated on WCH data management system, the Membership UDC is updated to 'full member' by the Company Secretary or any member of the governance team.
8	End of Membership Procedure
8.1	Membership ends through notification or end of tenancy. The notification of end of tenancy will be usually sent to the customer service mailbox and this will then be passed on to the Governance mailbox.
8.2	Members who have left, will be included on the next Company Secretary report to Group Board.
8.3	The Company Secretary will update the customer details on the data management system by changing the Member UDC to 'non-member'.

9	Responsibilities
9.1	The Group Director of Customer Relationships and Housing Operations Teams to ensure this policy is adhered to.
9.2	The Company Secretary will be responsible for the legal administration of membership functions, liaising with the Housing Operations Team in carrying out these functions. The Governance Team will meet up monthly with the Housing Team to review the membership list to ensure maintenance of the register of members.
10	Monitoring and Review
10.1	<p>WCH will review its approach to membership every three years particularly considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The numbers of potential members becoming members, paying particular regard to the numbers of members from traditionally under-represented groups. • The quality of engagement with the membership and the outcomes and impact arising from that engagement. • The relationship between the developing membership and other aspects of the Communities Strategy; and • Compliance with statutory regulations.
11	Related Documents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCH Rules • Communities Strategy • Register of Members • Gateway Committee Standing Orders
12	Approval
	Approved by: EMT August 2023 Group Board October 2023
	Date of approval: August 2023
	Review date: August 2026
	Policy 'owner': Company Secretary