



SP37 Resident and Community Shareholding Membership Policy

1. Scope

This policy will determine how the Board will appoint and involve resident and community shareholding members.

2. Aim

Since October 2017, Soha has been a mutual housing association, where staff and residents work together to make a difference in our communities as a landlord and as an employer.

Membership enables residents, community members and staff to hold Soha to account and to participate meaningfully in taking decisions that will help shape our future direction, strategy, and investments.

3. Policy Statement

Soha's Rules set out that membership is open to:

- Residents (tenants, leaseholders or shared owners who are named on the tenancy agreement and are resident in a Soha property);
- Employees; and
- Members of the community. This may include current and ex-Board members who are not eligible for membership under the categories above.

In addition to the requirements set out in Soha's Rules, applicants for membership must agree that they will sign up to Soha's values, act in all times in the interest of Soha and for the benefit of the community.

The Rules include details of where membership will not be permitted. Where the Rules do not dictate, or they are silent, the policy will draw on good practice such as the NHF Code of Governance.

Shareholding members will be encouraged to learn about Soha and to play an active role throughout the year, as well as taking part in decision making through the AGM.

Shareholding members will have a representative body. For resident members, this role will be carried out by the Members' Forum. For employee members, this role will be carried out by the Staff Consultative Committee.

No benefits shall be given to members because of their shareholding status. They will receive the same services as other residents. However, Soha may run prize draws or offer token gestures to encourage and recognise take up of membership and to thank those resident members who play an active role within the association.

We will not discriminate on the grounds of any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. We will monitor membership to check how representative it is on the basis of protected characteristics and also in terms of Soha's geography.

As with all other residents, shareholding members are able to make complaints to Soha about its standard of service, actions or lack of action, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf. Further information on how to make a complaint can be found in Soha's Complaints Policy.

4. Application and Approval Process

Soha will proactively seek to recruit resident members through a variety of activities including, for example, at Soha events, door knocking, via resident publications and social media platforms.

Any prospective Board member (with the exception of co-optees) must also be a shareholding member of Soha. The application process for shareholding membership is the same for all applicants as shown below.

To apply for membership, applicants will be required to complete an application form, either online or in paper form, to confirm they meet the eligibility criteria for membership as shown in the attached procedure.

The approval procedure will set out how applications will be reviewed to ensure:

- The relevant checks by officers of Soha are carried out on all applications; and
- The recording of officer level recommendations and the reasons for any recommendations to refuse an application.

Applications for membership will be considered and approved by the Personnel and Remuneration Committee on behalf of the Board. Information on the officer recommendations will be provided where a deferral or refusal is recommended. Information on the reason for applying to become a member will be provided for each application. Decisions will be made at least quarterly either electronically or at Committee meetings.

When an application has been approved by the Committee, details of the membership will be recorded in the membership register and confirmation sent to the applicant.

New applications for membership may be suspended in exceptional circumstances. Applicants will be informed of the reason(s) for suspension.

5. Involving Resident and Community Shareholding Members

Being a member of Soha means that you have a voice in how the organisation is run and governed and that you also have ownership of how the organisation engages with and invests in our communities.

The Communities Strategy sets out how members, residents and the wider community will be able to lead Soha's engagement in their own community and direct Soha's investment in addressing local issues. Membership is both internally and externally facing and is therefore a bridge into supporting work in and harnessing the energies of our communities.

Soha will also have a plan of information, events and activities to engage with members throughout the year, aiming to maximise involvement and to recruit new members.

6. Resident Involvement

This policy relates to residents becoming shareholding members of Soha and has been developed by residents since the decision to become a mutual. Their involvement in the governance of Soha is fundamental to the ethos and structure of our organisation.

7. Responsibility

The Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive are responsible for implementing this policy.

8. Monitoring and Review

The success of membership is monitored via the Corporate Plan and Communities Strategy. This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner to reflect best practice.

9. Appeals

Individuals who wish to contest any membership matters arising from this policy may do so by writing to the Chair of the Board.

10. Context

Soha's Rules and Standing Orders
Communities Strategy
SP43 Staff Shareholding Membership Policy
SP06 Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice
SP07 Complaints Policy
Members' Forum Constitution
Soha's Code of Conduct
NHF Code of Governance 2020
Equality Act 2010

Version Number - 3			
Members' Forum Approved	15 January 2026	P&R Committee approved	18 November 2025
EIA Completed	4 November 2025	Board approved	29 January 2026
DPIA Completed	4 November 2025	Review date	By January 2029

Resident and Community Shareholding Membership Procedure

Nature of shareholding

Shareholders can only belong to one of these classes:

- Resident shareholder
- Employee shareholder
- Other (community) shareholder. This includes current and ex-Board members who are not eligible for membership under the categories above.

Where a shareholder is both an employee and a resident, they will be defined as an employee shareholder. If they are no longer employed by Soha, they may be classed as a resident shareholder subject to fulfilment of the resident shareholder approval process.

Eligibility criteria for resident and community shareholding members

- Be over the age of 18 years
- Have not been previously expelled as a member
- Have not been removed from the Board by resolution of the Board or members
- Not receiving treatment for a medical condition which, in the opinion of a registered medical practitioner, would make them incapable of exercising their rights as a member and might remain so for more than three months
- Have not been convicted of an indictable offence, which is not, or cannot be, spent
- Have not been convicted of any other offence which, in the opinion of the Board, might bring Soha into disrepute, or is incompatible with the role of a member
- Not party to any legally binding debt arrangement or an Individual Voluntary Arrangement (IVA) and not currently bankrupt or subject to a Bankruptcy Restriction Order
- Have a full tenancy or lease agreement (residents only)
- Not be in breach of the tenancy or lease agreement (residents only)

In addition, residents and community members must:

- Agree to be bound by the Rules of Soha and all policies and procedures
- Uphold Soha's values
- Act in the best interests of Soha
- Act for the benefit of the community
- Set out the reason(s) for applying
- Pay the sum of £1.00

Ending of shareholding

Any shareholding member shall cease to be such if any of the criteria in C16 of Soha's Rules are enacted.

Upon ending a tenancy with Soha, a resident would automatically end their shareholding membership, unless it was agreed by the Board to appoint the individual as a community member.

If a community member ceases to be a Board member, their shareholding membership will end unless the Board resolves otherwise.