

Membership Policy

Approved on: 16 September 1999

Updated on: 28 September 2006

Updated on: 22 March 2007

Updated on: 7 February 2013

Updated on: 24 May 2018

Board of Management



BIELD HOUSING AND CARE

Registered Office: 79 Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh EH7 4QF
Scottish Charity No SC006878

Objective of the Policy

This policy aims to promote the good governance of Bield and to ensure the proper accountability of its Board of Management by having a membership which is as wide as possible, subject to the criteria detailed below. It is intended that Members should be empowered to participate in and contribute to the wider life of Bield.

Promotion of Membership

Bield will promote membership opportunities through the Bield Bulletin, scheme visits and meetings, dissemination of promotional material where appropriate, invitations to relevant organisations and individuals with a background in an appropriate profession or discipline, or with a community of interest with Bield.

Members are advised that any Bield written document can, on request, be produced in a number of alternative formats:

- On audio tape
- In large print
- Any Community language
- In Braille

The Bield Bulletin is also produced on the website.

Membership Criteria

Bield seeks a balanced and representative membership, with no particular group having an undue influence, and comprising persons who have in a personal or professional capacity the requisite knowledge, skills and experience, or a community of interest in the housing and care of older people, appropriate to achieving Bield's objective of improving the lives of older people by offering a diverse range of housing, care and other services.

Bield is keen to ensure that its membership is representative of the communities it serves, therefore we will particularly welcome applications for membership from:

- Tenants or Owners of Bield and persons occupying a property, owned by Bield, by virtue of an Occupancy Agreement and
- Older people and those who care for older people

Bield seeks to achieve equality of opportunity and to this end membership is open to all people regardless of age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race – including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. Applications for membership are particularly welcomed from under represented groups.

Bield also welcomes applications for membership from those who have in a personal or professional capacity experience of, or a particular interest in:

- social care and health
- finance, the law, business and commerce
- voluntary organisations and academic institutions
- housing management

- building and maintenance
- financial management
- working in the local community

Membership is open to nominees of unincorporated bodies, societies, companies and local authorities. A corporate body may appoint a deputy to exercise its rights and powers at any general meeting. Membership is also open to former members of Bield staff although applications will not be accepted until a 5 year period from leaving Bield's employ has passed.

Members' Responsibilities

The primary role of the Member is to advance the good governance of Bield and to ensure that the Board of Management is accountable for its acts or omissions. Members' powers are usually exercised at general meetings, namely: the receipt of the Financial Statements; the appointment of the Auditor; the election of the Board; the application of surpluses for particular purposes; amendment of the Rules, and dissolution of Bield. In addition, the requisite number of members may apply to the Financial Conduct Authority to: appoint an Accountant or Actuary to inspect and report on Bield's books; appoint an Inspector to examine and report on the affairs of Bield; or to call a Special General Meeting.

Member Participation

Members are entitled to be present and vote at any General Meeting of Bield. Members are given at least 14 days notice of such meetings. Members receive a copy of Bield's Annual Report and Accounts.

Applications for Membership

An application form can be obtained from the Governance & Administration Manager at the address below. Completed applications should be forwarded to the Governance & Administration Manager at the same address, together with £1.

Every application for membership will be considered by the Board at its next meeting, or so soon thereafter as is practicable.

An application for membership will only be approved where in the Board's sole opinion an applicant meets the criteria set out above and where admission to membership is within Bield's Rules and would advance Bield's objective of having a balanced and representative membership, such that no particular group has undue influence. A tenant or owner of Bield, and persons occupying a property owned by Bield, by virtue of an Occupancy Agreement, applying for membership will normally be considered to have the relevant community of interest.

If the application is approved the applicant will be advised in writing within 14 days of the date of the decision. At the same time the applicant will receive a Share Certificate, a copy of Bield's Rules and details of how Members can participate in the life of the organisation.

Where an application is unsuccessful, a written statement of the reasons for refusal will be given to the applicant within 14 days of the date of the decision. An applicant may appeal against the decision within 14 days of receipt of the statement of reasons by notice in writing to the Governance & Administration Manager. In exceptional circumstances, the Board at its discretion may consider an appeal that is not in writing. The Board shall consider the appeal at its next meeting or so soon thereafter as is practicable. Intimation of the Board's final decision, together with a written statement of reasons for refusal if relevant, will be given to the applicant within 14 days of the date of the final decision.

Termination of Membership

A Member shall cease to be a Member if:

- (i) he/she resigns their membership
- (ii) the Board reasonably believes he/she has failed to tell the Association of a change of address
- (iii) for 5 AGMs in a row, he/she has not attended, submitted apologies, exercised a postal vote or appointed a representative to attend and vote on his/her behalf by proxy
- (iv) the Association receives a complaint about his/her behaviour and two thirds of the members voting at a Special General Meeting agree to end his/her membership
- (v) he/she dies
- (vi) he/she is a representative of an organisation which no longer exists

The £1 membership fee will not be refundable on termination of membership but will become the property of Bield.

Equality and Diversity

In operating this policy, Bield seeks to achieve equality of opportunity and will not discriminate against anyone on grounds of age; disability; gender re-assignment; pregnancy and maternity; race, including ethnic or national origin, colour and nationality; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation

Review of Policy

The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored by the Board, to ensure that the objectives are being met. The policy will be reviewed every 5 years by the Governance & Administration Manager.