

# Cohousing Berkshire

## Resident / Membership of Company Selection Policy

The following procedure will be followed for all potential applicants seeking to become a permanent resident, regardless of the nature of tenure, i.e. Private lease, Social shared ownership, Social rental.

### 1. Waiting list

Applicants must be paid up members of Cohousing Berkshire to be eligible to join the Company. Their Cohousing Berkshire membership number will determine the order of offering membership of Kennet and Thames Cohousing Ltd (KATCH) or other company set up by Cohousing Berkshire.

Anyone expressing an interest in becoming a member of our cohousing company shall complete an application form. Those interested in social housing should also check their eligibility with the Housing Association, and follow their registration procedures.

### 2. Selection process

- a) Two – thirds of the membership of the company will be allowed to develop naturally, (e.g. up to 20 households of a 30 household scheme) as and when applications are accepted. At that point, the company directors, or an elected sub-group will look at the balance of household types and make decisions about how to attract further members to ensure a diverse community, and to comply with any obligations to supply social housing.
- b) Potential members will be invited to meetings and socials to meet current members, and will be encouraged to take an active part in the work of Cohousing Berkshire. They will be expected to attend some meetings and socials, and allowances will be made to ensure people have opportunities to attend, e.g. meetings held on different days of the week and at weekends.
- c) Potential members should be contactable by phone and/or email and should respond to communications. Assuming ongoing interest, the individual will be given a nominated contact (a 'buddy') from the current membership.
- d) Full financial expectations will be made clear to the applicant as soon as possible, and all available information about the cohousing project should be given to them to bring them up to date.
- e) As soon as practical after 3 attendances, a meeting of the company board will review the application. Board members unable to attend may appoint another member to vote by proxy at the meeting.

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- f) Decisions to accept new members will be based on:
  - i. A broad commitment to the values and principles of cohousing and acceptance of the policies and procedures set out in our residents' handbook.
  - ii. Seeking to establish a diverse community in terms of age, gender, ethnicity etc.
  - iii. A suitable skills/contribution mix (if required – depends on whether we have land to manage/ rentable units to look after etc)
  - iv. Whether the existing members feel that the applicant meets a minimum standard of general conduct at meetings and interpersonally.
- g) The decision to accept an applicant will be made according to company policy (as per the consensus procedures the company has adopted).
- h) The company will have the final say on the selection of individuals from the housing register.

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*NOTES – things to consider / remember, but not necessarily part of this doc.*

*Residents agree to company's terms and conditions as per other docs in the Handbook.*

*Expectations re conduct – violence, abuse, drugs, discrim language, excessive noise*

*Participation – communal meals prep, attending meetings, working in gardens*

*Self-build – do we specify range of materials, eco specification?*

*Upkeep of private space. Animals/pets limited by number? Ponds allowed?*

*Can requirements be changed/reviewed at intervals e.g. to allow for changes in legislation/changes in balance of community.*

*Do requirements need to be in terms of lease/tenancy agreements?*

*Check other cohos e.g. Lancaster (~ done and no specific policy/procedure found, but they do have a comprehensive handbook with plenty of policies worth nicking/adopting).*

*Current members of association are self-selected and have not been required to sign any policy / adhere to any requirements other than completing membership form and paying subs. Do they sign up to this policy when company is formed?*

*Same policy/requirements for buyers and renters via Housing Assocs? (Full members and Associate members) Or worded slightly differently? (ref Membership Structure doc)*

*Will Housing Assoc need to agree to our policy? Will they pass it on to prospective tenants?*

*Non-compliance – Threshold state process for dealing with, but could someone be forced to sell their house and move out of community? (in extreme case)*

*Company articles – will they include requirements of members? Terms of lease – can they include req'ts e.g. criminal behaviour.*

*How prescriptive should we be – must be aware of discrimination. Broad mix / diverse community. How is balance achieved?*

*Assume people join in good faith until prove otherwise?.*

*How to assess potential residents/company members before we have somewhere for them to visit. Sub committee?*

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*Lodgers and adult co-residents who are not the home owner? Are they perm residents who have to join company and are bound by requirements? Is the home owner/lease holder responsible or others living in the house?*