

COHOUSING CANBERRA Inc.

CONSTITUTION

March 2018

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Part 1.1 Preliminary

1 Definitions

In these rules:

Note A definition applies except so far as the contrary intention appears (see [Legislation Act](#), s 155).

Association means Cohousing Canberra Inc.

financial year means the year ending on 30 June.

member means a member, however described, of the association.

ordinary committee member means a member of the committee who is not an office-bearer of the association as mentioned in section 12 (1) (a).

secretary means the person holding office under these rules as secretary of the association or, if no such person holds that office, the public officer of the association.

the Act means the [Associations Incorporation Act 1991](#).

the regulation means the [Associations Incorporation Regulation 1991](#).

1A Application of Legislation Act 2001

The [Legislation Act 2001](#) applies to these rules in the same way as it would if they were an instrument made under the Act.

1B Objects

The objects of the Association are to:

- promote and advocate for; and
- provide assistance and resources to its members to facilitate; the establishment of cohousing developments in the ACT that are socially supportive, economically viable and environmentally sustainable.

Part 1.2 Membership

2 Membership qualifications

A person is qualified to be a member if—

- (a) the person is a person mentioned in the [Act](#), section 21 (2) (a) or (b) and has not ceased to be a member of the association at any time after incorporation of the association under the Act; or
- (b) the person—
 - (i) nominates for membership in accordance with section 3 (1); and
 - (ii) has been approved for membership of the association by the committee of the association.

3 Nomination for membership

- (1) A nomination of a person for membership of the association—
 - (a) must be made in writing in the form set out in appendix 1 or other such form or method as adopted by the committee from time to time;
 - (b) shall include the amounts specified in Section 7 for any entrance fee and/or annual membership fee; and
 - (c) must be lodged with the secretary of the association.
- (2) As soon as is practicable after receiving a nomination for membership, the secretary must refer the nomination to the committee which must decide whether to approve or to reject the nomination.
- (3) If the committee decides to approve a nomination for membership, the secretary must as soon as practicable after that decision notify the nominee of that approval
- (4) If the committee decides to approve a nomination for membership, the secretary must enter the nominee's name in the register of members and, on the name being so entered, the nominee becomes a member of the association.
- (5) If the committee decides not to approve a nomination for membership, the secretary must notify the person of the non-approval and refund any payments made by the person within 28 days after receipt of the nomination.

4 Membership entitlements not transferable

A right, privilege or obligation that a person has because of being a member of the association—

- (a) cannot be transferred or transmitted to another person; and
- (b) terminates on cessation of the person's membership.

5 Cessation of membership

A person ceases to be a member of the association if the person—

- (a) dies or, for a corporation, is wound up; or
- (b) resigns from membership of the association; or
- (c) is expelled from the association; or
- (d) fails to renew membership of the association.

6 Resignation of membership

- (1) A member is not entitled to resign from membership of the association except in accordance with this section.
- (2) A member who has paid all amounts payable by the member to the association may resign from membership of the association by first giving notice (of not less than 1 month or, if the committee has determined a shorter period, that shorter

period) in writing to the secretary of the member's intention to resign and, at the end of the period of notice, the member ceases to be a member.

- (3) If a person ceases to be a member, the secretary must make an appropriate entry in the register of members recording the date the member ceased to be a member.

7 Fee, subscriptions etc

- (1) The annual membership fee of the association is \$15 for an individual member and \$25 in total for two or more members living in the same household or, if any other amount has been determined by resolution of the committee, that other amount.
- (2) The annual membership fee is payable—
 - (a) except as provided by paragraph (b)—before 1 July in each calendar year; or
 - (b) if a person becomes a member on or after 1 March in any calendar year—before 1 July in each succeeding calendar year.

8 Members' liabilities

The liability of a member to contribute towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of the association or the costs, charges and expenses of the winding up of the association is limited to the amount (if any) unpaid by the member in relation to membership of the association as required by section 7.

9 Disciplining of members

- (1) If the committee is of the opinion that a member—
 - (a) has persistently refused or neglected to comply with a provision of these rules; or
 - (b) has persistently and wilfully acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the association;

the committee may, by resolution—

- (c) expel the member from the association; or
 - (d) suspend the member from the rights and privileges of membership of the association that the committee may decide for a specified period.
- (2) A resolution of the committee under subsection (1) is of no effect unless the committee, at a meeting held not earlier than 14 days and not later than 28 days after service on the member of a notice under subsection (3), confirms the resolution in accordance with this section.
- (3) If the committee passes a resolution under subsection (1), the secretary must, as soon as practicable, serve a written notice on the member—
 - (a) setting out the resolution of the committee and the grounds on which it is based; and

- (b) stating that the member may address the committee at a meeting to be held not earlier than 14 days and not later than 28 days after service of the notice; and
 - (c) stating the date, place and time of that meeting; and
 - (d) informing the member that the member may do either or both of the following:
 - (i) attend and speak at that meeting;
 - (ii) submit to the committee at or before the date of that meeting written representations relating to the resolution.
- (4) Subject to the [Act](#), section 50, at a meeting of the committee mentioned in subsection (2), the committee must—
- (a) give to the member mentioned in subsection (1) an opportunity to make oral representations; and
 - (b) give due consideration to any written representations submitted to the committee by that member at or before the meeting; and
 - (c) by resolution decide whether to confirm or to revoke the resolution of the committee made under subsection (1).
- (5) If the committee confirms a resolution under subsection (4), the secretary must, within 7 days after that confirmation, by written notice inform the member of that confirmation and of the member’s right of appeal under section 10.
- (6) A resolution confirmed by the committee under subsection (4) does not take effect—
- (a) until the end of the period within which the member is entitled to appeal against the resolution if the member does not exercise the right of appeal within that period; or
 - (b) if within that period the member exercises the right of appeal—unless and until the association confirms the resolution in accordance with section 10 (4).

10 Right of appeal of disciplined member

- (1) A member may appeal to the association in general meeting against a resolution of the committee that is confirmed under section 9 (4), within 7 days after notice of the resolution is served on the member, by lodging with the secretary a notice to that effect.
- (2) On receipt of a notice under subsection (1), the secretary must notify the committee which must call a general meeting of the association to be held within 21 days after the date when the secretary received the notice or as soon as possible after that date.
- (3) Subject to the [Act](#), section 50, at a general meeting of the association called under subsection (2)—

- (a) no business other than the question of the appeal may be transacted; and
 - (b) the committee and the member must be given the opportunity to make representations in relation to the appeal orally or in writing, or both; and
 - (c) the members present must vote by secret ballot on the question of whether the resolution made under section 9 (4) should be confirmed or revoked.
- (4) If the meeting passes a special resolution in favour of the confirmation of the resolution made under section 9 (4), that resolution is confirmed.

Part 1.3 Committee

11 Powers of committee

The committee, subject to the Act, the regulation, these rules, and to any resolution passed by the association in general meeting—

- (a) controls and manages the affairs of the association; and
- (b) may exercise all functions that may be exercised by the association other than those functions that are required by these rules to be exercised by the association in general meeting; and
- (c) has power to perform all acts and do all things that appear to the committee to be necessary or desirable for the proper management of the affairs of the association.

12 Constitution and membership

- (1) The committee consists of—
- (a) the office-bearers of the association; and
 - (b) 3 ordinary committee members;

each of whom must be elected under section 13 or appointed in accordance with subsection (4).

- (2) The office-bearers of the association are—
- (a) the president; and
 - (b) the vice-president; and
 - (c) the treasurer; and
 - (d) the secretary.
- (3) Each member of the committee holds office, subject to these rules, until the conclusion of the annual general meeting following the date of the member's election, but is eligible for re-election.
- (4) If there is a vacancy in the membership of the committee, the committee may appoint a member of the association to fill the vacancy and the member so

appointed holds office, subject to these rules, until the conclusion of the next annual general meeting after the date of the appointment.

- (5) No committee member shall have any remunerated employment by the association and no remuneration or other benefit in money or kind shall be given by the association to any committee member except as reimbursement for approved out of pocket expenses

13 Election of committee members

- (1) Nominations of candidates for election as office-bearers of the association or as ordinary committee members—
 - (a) must be made in writing, signed by 2 members of the association and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate (which may be endorsed on the nomination form); and
 - (b) must be given to the secretary of the association not less than 7 days before the date fixed for the annual general meeting at which the election is to take place.
- (2) If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies on the committee, the candidates nominated are taken to be elected and further nominations may be received at the annual general meeting.
- (3) If insufficient further nominations are received, any vacant positions remaining on the committee are taken to be vacancies.
- (4) If the number of nominations received is equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, the people nominated are taken to be elected.
- (5) If the number of nominations received exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled, a ballot must be held.
- (6) The ballot for the election of office-bearers and ordinary committee members must be conducted at the annual general meeting in the way the committee may direct.
- (7) A person is not eligible to simultaneously hold more than 1 elected position on the committee.
- (8) The committee may appoint a member of the committee to also undertake the duties of another office-bearer on a temporary basis if the office bearer is unable to undertake their duties for at least 2 months.

14 Secretary

- (1) The secretary must keep minutes of—
 - (a) all elections and appointments of office-bearers and ordinary committee members; and
 - (b) the names of members of the committee present at a committee meeting or a general meeting; and

- (c) all proceedings at committee meetings and general meetings.
- (3) Minutes of proceedings at a meeting must be confirmed by the committee at the next succeeding meeting.
- (4) The secretary must keep a register of members of the association including a record of the names and contact details of people elected as office bearers and committee members
- (5) Unless a public officer is appointed by the association, the secretary shall also fulfill the duties of public officer of the Association as required under the Act.

15 Treasurer

- (1) The treasurer of the association must—
 - (a) collect and receive all amounts owing to the association and make all payments authorised by the association; and
 - (b) keep correct accounts and books showing the financial affairs of the association with full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of the association.

16 Vacancies

For these rules, a vacancy in the office of a member of the committee happens if the member—

- (a) dies; or
- (b) ceases to be a member of the association; or
- (c) resigns the office; or
- (d) is removed from office under section 17 (Removal of committee members); or
- (e) suffers from mental incapacity; or
- (f) is disqualified from office under the [Act](#), section 63 or section 63B; or
- (g) is subject to a disqualification order under the [Act](#), section 63A; or
- (h) is absent without the consent of the committee from all meetings of the committee held during a period of 6 months.

17 Removal of committee members

The association in general meeting may by resolution, subject to the [Act](#), section 50, remove any member of the committee from the office of member of the committee before the end of the member's term of office.

18 Committee meetings and quorum

- (1) The committee must meet at least 3 times in each calendar year at the place and time that the committee may decide.

- (2) Additional meetings of the committee may be called by any member of the committee.
- (3) Oral or written notice of a meeting of the committee must be given by the secretary to each member of the committee at least 48 hours (or any other period that may be unanimously agreed on by the members of the committee) before the time appointed for the holding of the meeting.
- (4) Notice of a meeting given under subsection (3) must specify the general nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting and no business other than that business may be transacted at the meeting, except business that the committee members present at the meeting unanimously agree to treat as urgent business.
- (5) Any 3 members of the committee constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a meeting of the committee.
- (6) No business may be transacted by the committee unless a quorum is present and, if within half an hour after the time appointed for the meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting stands adjourned to a time and place within the following 7 days as notified to the committee members by the secretary.
- (7) If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour after the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting is dissolved.
- (8) At meetings of the committee—
 - (a) the president or, in the absence of the president, the vice-president presides; or
 - (b) if the president and the vice-president are absent—1 of the remaining members of the committee may be chosen by the members present to preside.
- (9) Any member of the association may attend committee meetings as an observer

19 Delegation by committee to subcommittee

- (1) The committee may decide to delegate to 1 or more subcommittees (consisting of the member or members of the association that the committee considers appropriate) the exercise of the functions of the committee that are specified in the instrument, other than—
 - (a) this power of delegation; and
 - (b) a function that is a function imposed on the committee by the Act, by any other Territory law, or by resolution of the association in general meeting.
- (2) A function, the exercise of which has been delegated to a subcommittee under this section may, while the delegation remains unrevoked, be exercised from time to time by the subcommittee in accordance with the terms of the delegation.
- (3) A delegation under this section may be made subject to any conditions or limitations about the exercise of any function, or about time or circumstances, that may be specified in the instrument of delegation.

- (4) Despite any delegation under this section, the committee may continue to exercise any function delegated.
- (5) Any act or thing done or suffered by a subcommittee acting in the exercise of a delegation under this section has the same force and effect as it would have if it had been done or suffered by the committee.
- (6) The committee may, in writing, revoke wholly or in part any delegation under this section.
- (7) A subcommittee may meet and adjourn as it considers appropriate.

20 Voting and decisions

- (1) Questions arising at a meeting of the committee or of any subcommittee appointed by the committee are decided by a majority of the votes of members of the committee or subcommittee present at the meeting.
- (2) Each member present at a meeting of the committee or of any subcommittee appointed by the committee (including the person presiding at the meeting) is entitled to 1 vote but, if the votes on any question are equal the vote is lost.

Part 1.4 General meetings

21 Annual general meetings—holding of

- (1) With the exception of the first annual general meeting of the association, the association must, at least once in each calendar year and within 5 months after the end of each financial year of the association, call an annual general meeting of its members.
- (2) The association must hold its first annual general meeting—
 - (a) within 18 months after its incorporation under the Act; and
 - (b) within 5 months after the end of the first financial year of the association.
- (3) Subsections (1) and (2) have effect subject to the powers of the registrar-general under the [Act](#), section 120 in relation to extensions of time.

22 Annual general meetings—calling of and business at

- (1) The annual general meeting of the association must, subject to the Act, be called on the date and at the place and time that the committee considers appropriate.
- (2) In addition to any other business that may be transacted at an annual general meeting, the business of an annual general meeting is—
 - (a) to confirm the minutes of the last annual general meeting and of any general meeting held since that meeting; and
 - (b) to receive from the committee reports on the activities of the association during the last financial year; and
 - (c) to elect members of the committee, including office-bearers; and

- (d) to receive and consider the statement of accounts and the reports that are required to be submitted to members under the [Act](#), section 73 (1).
- (3) An annual general meeting must be specified as such in the notice calling it in accordance with section 24 (Notice).
- (4) An annual general meeting must be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this part.

23 General meetings—calling of

- (1) The committee may, whenever it considers appropriate, call a general meeting of the association.
- (2) The committee must, on the requisition in writing of not less than 5 members, call a general meeting of the association.
- (3) A requisition of members for a general meeting—
 - (a) must state the purpose or purposes of the meeting; and
 - (b) must be signed by the members making the requisition; and
 - (c) must be lodged with the secretary; and
 - (d) may consist of several documents in a similar form, each signed by 1 or more of the members making the requisition.
- (4) If the committee fails to call a general meeting within 1 month after the date when a requisition of members for the meeting is lodged with the secretary, any 1 or more of the members who made the requisition may call a general meeting to be held not later than 3 months after that date.
- (5) A general meeting called by a member or members mentioned in subsection (4) must be called as nearly as is practicable in the same way as general meetings are called by the committee and any member who thereby incurs expense is entitled to be reimbursed by the association for any reasonable expense so incurred.

24 Notice

- (1) Except if the nature of the business proposed to be dealt with at a general meeting requires a special resolution of the association, the secretary must, at least 14 days before the date fixed for the holding of the general meeting, send to each member at the member's preferred contact address appearing in the register of members, a notice specifying the place, date and time of the meeting and the nature of the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting.
- (2) If the nature of the business proposed to be dealt with at a general meeting requires a special resolution of the association, the secretary must, at least 21 days before the date fixed for the holding of the general meeting, send a notice to each member in the way provided in subsection (1) specifying, in addition to the matter required under that subsection, the intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution.

- (3) No business other than that specified in the notice calling a general meeting may be transacted at the meeting except, for an annual general meeting, business that may be transacted under section 22 (2).
- (4) A member desiring to bring any business before a general meeting may give written notice of that business to the secretary who must include that business in the next notice calling a general meeting given after receipt of the notice from the member.

25 General meetings—procedure and quorum

- (1) No item of business may be transacted at a general meeting unless a quorum of members entitled under these rules to vote is present during the time the meeting is considering that item.
- (2) Five members present in person (who are entitled under these rules to vote at a general meeting) constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a general meeting.
- (3) If within 30 minutes after the appointed time for the start of a general meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting if called on the requisition of members is dissolved and in any other case stands adjourned to a time and place within the following 14 days as notified to members by the secretary.
- (4) If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the time appointed for the start of the meeting, the members present (being not less than 3) constitute a quorum.

26 Presiding member

- (1) The president, or in the absence of the president, the vice-president, presides at each general meeting of the association.
- (2) If the president and the vice-president are absent from a general meeting, the members present must elect 1 of their number to preside at the meeting.

27 Adjournment

- (1) The person presiding at a general meeting at which a quorum is present may, with the consent of the majority of members present at the meeting, adjourn the meeting from time to time and place to place, but no business may be transacted at an adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting at which the adjournment took place.
- (2) If a general meeting is adjourned for 14 days or more, the secretary must give written or oral notice of the adjourned meeting to each member of the association stating the place, date and time of the meeting and the nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting.
- (3) Except as provided in subsections (1) and (2), notice of an adjournment of a general meeting or of the business to be transacted at an adjourned meeting is not required to be given.

28 Making of decisions

- (1) A question arising at a general meeting of the association is to be decided on a show of hands and, unless before or on the declaration of the show of hands a poll is demanded, a declaration by the person presiding that a resolution has, on a show of hands, been carried or carried unanimously or carried by a particular majority or lost, or an entry to that effect in the minutes of the association, is evidence of the fact without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favour of or against that resolution.
- (2) At a general meeting of the association, a poll may be demanded by the person presiding or by not less than 3 members present in person or by proxy at the meeting.
- (3) If the poll is demanded at a general meeting, the poll must be taken—
 - (a) immediately if the poll relates to the election of the person to preside at the meeting or to the question of an adjournment; or
 - (b) in any other case—in the way and at the time before the close of the meeting that the person presiding directs, and the resolution of the poll on the matter is taken to be the resolution of the meeting on that matter.

29 Voting

- (1) Subject to subsection (3), on any question arising at a general meeting of the association a member has 1 vote only.
- (2) All votes must be given personally or by proxy but no member may hold more than 2 proxies.
- (3) If the votes on a question at a general meeting are equal, the vote is lost.
- (4) A member or proxy is not entitled to vote at any general meeting of the association unless all money due and payable by the member or proxy to the association has been paid, other than the amount of the annual subscription payable for the then current year.

30 Appointment of proxies

- (1) Each member is entitled to appoint another member as proxy by notice given to the secretary no later than 24 hours before the time of the meeting for which the proxy is appointed.
- (2) The notice appointing the proxy must be in the form set out in appendix 2.

Part 1.5 Miscellaneous

31 Funds—source

- (1) The funds of the association must be derived from entrance fees and annual subscriptions of members, donations and, subject to any resolution passed by the

association in general meeting and subject to the [Act](#), section 114, any other sources that the committee decides.

- (2) All money received by the association must be deposited as soon as practicable and without deduction to the credit of the association's bank account.
- (3) The association must, as soon as practicable after receiving any money, issue an appropriate receipt.

32 Funds—management

- (1) Subject to any resolution passed by the association in general meeting, the funds of the association must be used for the objects of the association in the way that the committee decides.
- (2) All cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments must be signed by any 2 members of the committee or employees of the association, being members of the committee or employees authorised to do so by the committee.

33 Alteration of objects and rules

Neither the objects of the association mentioned in the [Act](#), section 29 nor these rules may be altered except in accordance with the Act.

34 Common seal

- (1) The common seal of the association must be kept in the custody of the secretary.
- (2) The common seal must not be attached to any instrument except by the authority of the committee and the attaching of the common seal must be attested by the signatures either of 2 members of the committee or of 1 member of the committee and of the secretary.

35 Custody of books

Subject to the Act, the regulation and these rules, the secretary must keep in his or her custody or under his or her control all records, books, and other documents relating to the association.

36 Inspection of books

The records, books and other documents of the association must be open to inspection at a place in the ACT, free of charge, by a member of the association at any reasonable hour.

37 Service of notice

- (1) For these rules, the association may serve a notice on a member by sending it to the member's preferred contact address shown in the register of members.
- (2) Provided that the notice has been correctly sent to the preferred contact address last provided to the association by the member, the notice will be presumed to have been received by the member

38 Surplus property

- (1) If upon the winding up or dissolution of the association any property remains, after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, that property must not be paid to or distributed among the Members but must be given or transferred to and vest in:
 - (a) the Nature and Society Forum Inc ABN 52 456 986 523, provided that the Nature and Society Forum Inc fulfils the requirements specified in section 92(2) of the Act.
 - (b) if the Nature and Society Forum Inc no longer exists or no longer fulfils the requirements specified in section 92(2) of the Act, the Conservation Council ACT Region Inc ABN 68 248 339 828, provided that the Conservation Council ACT Region Inc fulfils the requirements specified in section 92(2) of the Act; or
 - (c) if neither the Nature and Society Forum Inc nor the Conservation Council ACT Region Inc is still in existence and fulfils the requirements specified in section 92(2) of the Act, the Association must pass a special resolution nominating:
 - (i) another Association for the purpose of section 92(1)(a) of the Act; or
 - (ii) a fund, authority or institution for the purpose of section 92(1)(b) of the Act;

and vest its surplus property in the event of the dissolution or winding up of the Association.
- (2) An Association nominated under subclause (1)(c)(i) must fulfil the requirements specified in section 92(2) of the Act.

Appendix 1.

Application for membership of Cohousing Canberra Inc.

I,
(full name of applicant)

of (address).....

(email).....

(phone number).....

apply to become a member of the association.

Please indicate how you would like to receive notices from the Association—
email (*preferred*) / text message / post

If I am admitted as a member, I agree to—

- (a) be bound by the rules of the association for the time being in force; and
- (b) promptly advise the secretary of changes to my contact details

.....
(*Signature of applicant*)

Date

Appendix 2.

Form of appointment of proxy

I,
(full name)

of
(address)

a member of
(name of incorporated association)

appoint
(full name of proxy)

of
(address)

a member of that incorporated association, as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the general meeting of the association (annual general meeting or other general meeting, as the case may be) to be held on

..... and at any adjournment of that meeting.

*My proxy is authorised to vote in favour of/against (delete as appropriate) the resolution (insert details).

.....
(Signature of member appointing proxy)

(*To be inserted if desired.)

Date

Note A proxy vote may not be given to a person who is not a member of the association.