

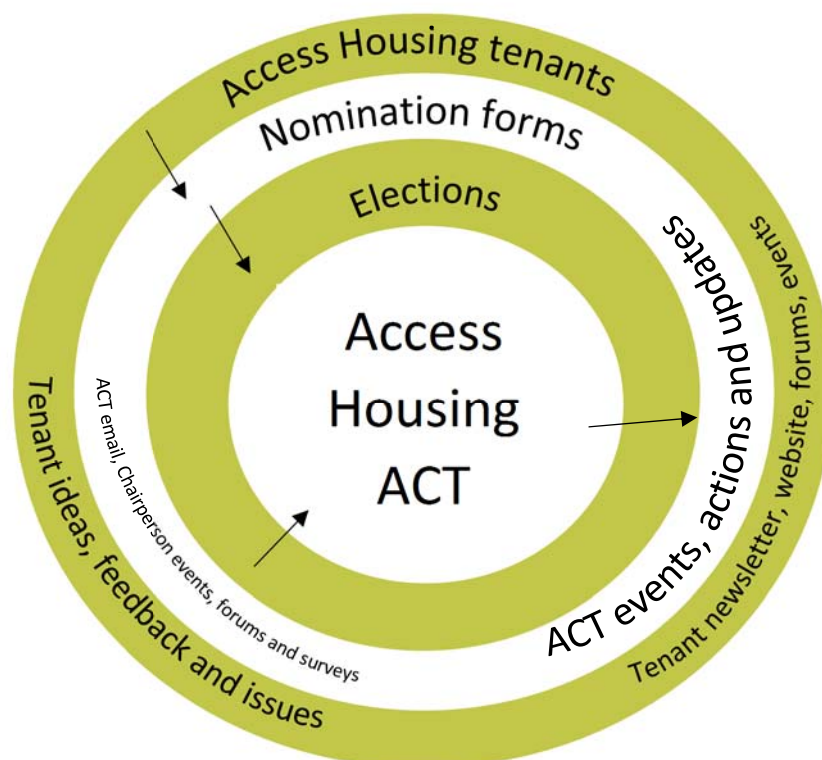
PURPOSE

As a representative and accountable voice for tenants, the Access Housing Advisory Committee of Tenants (referred to as 'ACT') will provide a platform for communication between Access Housing and its community of tenants.

1. ROLE OF THE ACT

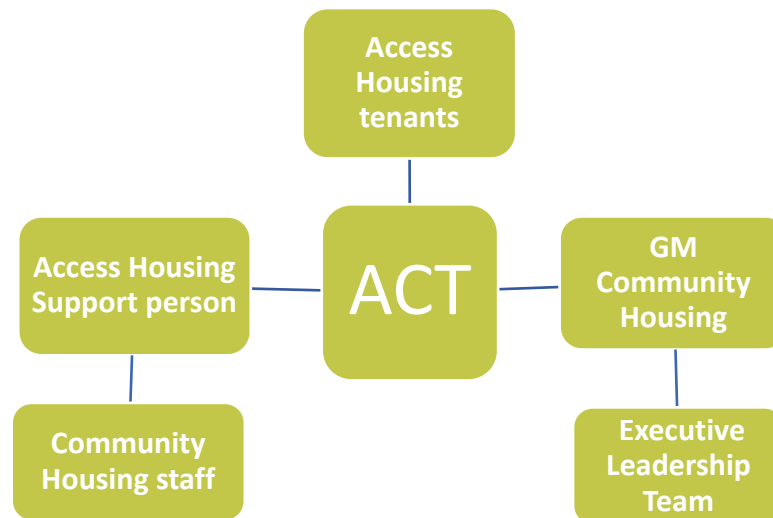
- 1.1. To provide a tenant voice regarding the development and review of new and existing Access Housing policies, procedures and programs that impact tenants.
- 1.2. To empower all Access Housing tenants to be involved by providing an avenue for tenants to raise general issues around policy and service delivery*.
- 1.3. Provide a mechanism for the development of Access Housing tenant led initiatives.
- 1.4. To advise Access Housing on how we consult and communicate with tenants.
- 1.5. Report on the business of the Access Housing ACT to tenants through relevant communication channels such as the tenant newsletter, Access Housing website, tenant forums and focus groups.

2. ACT STRUCTURE: HOW THE ACT COMMUNICATES WITH TENANTS



**Individual grievances or tenancy issues need to be dealt with through the normal Access Housing complaints and appeals procedures, not through the ACT.*

3. ACT STRUCTURE: HOW THE ACT COMMUNICATES WITH ACCESS HOUSING



4. MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

- 4.1. To be a member of the Access Housing ACT you must:
 - 4.1.1. Be an Access Housing tenant or lodge resident or;
 - 4.1.2. Be an Access Housing household member or;
 - 4.1.3. Be a carer of an Access Housing tenant (as defined by the Carers Recognition Act 2004).
 - 4.1.4. Complete an Access Housing ACT nomination form.
 - 4.1.5. Make a commitment to uphold the Code of Conduct.
 - 4.1.6. Be able to make the time commitment necessary for full involvement in the ACT.
- 4.2. Participation in the ACT is limited to one representative per household.
- 4.3. Access Housing reserves the right to appoint tenants onto the ACT where there are vacancies and/or where Access Housing views this to be in the best interests of the ACT.
- 4.4. Membership requests outside these criteria can be reviewed with discretionary decision making by Access Housing.
- 4.5. Where there is a potential risk to Access Housing, the nominated tenant or another tenant as a consequence of a particular nomination, Access Housing reserves the right to make void that nomination.

5. SELECTION CRITERIA

- 5.1. Fulfil the criteria for membership of the ACT as above.
- 5.2. Be able to participate effectively in formal meeting settings.
- 5.3. Can demonstrate respect for diverse viewpoints.
- 5.4. Can contribute ideas and suggestions to improve service delivery.
- 5.5. Can work constructively with other tenants and residents.

**A visible member is someone who is comfortable being identified publicly as an ACT member and is willing to undertake public duties (attending tenant groups, featuring in tenant newsletter etc)*

6. NOMINATIONS

- 6.1. Nominations for officer positions are open four (4) months prior to the Annual General meeting and must be received by the date advertised in the Access Housing tenant newsletter.
- 6.2. If there are more than five (5) nominations for General Committee Members, positions will be selected based on a lottery system.
- 6.3. If there is more than one (1) nomination received for the positions of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and ILP Representative, selections of these roles will be done democratically through a postal / online vote.
- 6.4. Tenants nominating for executive positions will be asked to provide a short profile when requested. This profile will be included in a tenant newsletter / website to assist tenants in selecting the appropriate representative.
- 6.5. If there is a tie for executive positions or no nominations for an executive position, Access Housing will have the casting vote and the ability to co-opt members as required.
- 6.6. Unsuccessful applicants for Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and ILP Representative roles will be eligible to be considered for General Committee Member roles.
- 6.7. Successful applicants for Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and ILP Representative must be comfortable with being visible in their community and available for public duties.
- 6.8. Participation in the ACT will be made accessible to all tenants.
- 6.9. ACT members will work with Access Housing staff where appropriate to facilitate and promote the development of the next ACT committee.

7. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 7.1. All positions on the ACT will be declared vacant every 12 months at the Annual General Meeting and the new ACT committee will be announced.
- 7.2. All tenants will be invited to attend the AGM, with at least one regional AGM taking place.
- 7.3. Tenants will be encouraged to bring general issues of concern and ideas for the consideration of the ACT.

8. MEMBER POSITIONS

EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

8.1. Chairperson

- 8.1.1. Chair meetings and ensure committee functions properly.
- 8.1.2. Take a leadership role in the recruitment and renewal of the committee.
- 8.1.3. Be responsible for communicating the activities and decisions of the ACT.
- 8.1.4. Develop meeting agendas in consultation with ACT support staff and Access Housing's General Manager of Community Housing.
- 8.1.5. Enable all members to have their say and have a sense of justice and fair play.
- 8.1.6. Ensure that decisions are recorded in the minutes.
- 8.1.7. Know how to bring the conversation back to business and follow an agenda.
- 8.1.8. Represent the ACT by being available to communicate the vision and purpose of the organisation, advocate for and represent the ACT at external meetings and events and be aware of current issues that might affect the ACT.
- 8.1.9. Must be a visible member* of the ACT

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8.2. Deputy Chairperson

- 8.2.1. Provide support to Chairperson.
- 8.2.2. Act as Chairperson when Chairperson is not available.
- 8.2.3. Must be a visible member of the ACT.

8.3. Secretary

- 8.3.1. Provide secretarial support for Access Housing ACT meetings and forums.
- 8.3.2. Record minutes as a true and accurate version of discussion and decision making.
- 8.3.3. Request support from Access Housing ACT support staff as needed.
- 8.3.4. Provide minutes to Access Housing support staff for distribution.
- 8.3.5. Must be a visible member of the ACT.

8.4. ILP representative x 1 minimum

- 8.4.1. Represent the views of Access Housing Independent Living Program tenants.
- 8.4.2. Contribute to discussion and decision making, with a focus upon potential impacts on ILP tenants.
- 8.4.3. Attend ILP tenant engagement events to gain feedback and to communicate the work of the ACT.
- 8.4.4. Must be a visible member of the ACT.

GENERAL POSITIONS

8.5. General member x 5 minimum

- 8.5.1. Contribute to discussion and decision making.
- 8.5.2. Support the work of the Access Housing ACT.
- 8.5.3. Step into other roles as required and volunteer for duties where they see fit.
- 8.5.4. Has the choice as to whether they are a visible member of the ACT.

ACCESS HOUSING STAFF POSITIONS

8.6. Access Housing staff support

- 8.6.1. Attend meetings / provides additional secretarial support where required.
- 8.6.2. Assist with the preparation and distribution of minutes.
- 8.6.3. Will be the Access Housing contact point for ACT members.
- 8.6.4. Will facilitate training and support to ACT members in their committee roles.
- 8.6.5. No voting rights.

8.7. Access Housing Senior Executive Committee representative (General Manager level)

- 8.7.1. To bring Access Housing issues of concern / interest to the ACT for their consideration.
- 8.7.2. To be the conduit between the ACT and the Access Housing Executive Leadership Team (ELT).
- 8.7.3. To communicate ACT feedback, input and decision making to the ELT and the broader organisation.
- 8.7.4. No voting rights.

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9. TERM

- 9.1. Definition of one term is 12 months.
- 9.2. Maximum length for any sitting officer is three (3) terms.
- 9.3. Every 12 months there will be an opportunity to elect new members.
- 9.4. Interim appointments can be made by the committee at their discretion using the normal decision making and nomination processes in the scenario that a vacancy occurs mid-term.

10. MEETINGS

- 10.1. Meetings will be held every two (2) months at Access Housing's Rivervale Head Office.
- 10.2. Meetings will be scheduled in regional offices at least once a year.
- 10.3. Regional members will be provided with additional support to participate where barriers to participation are identified.

11. DECISION MAKING

- 11.1. A quorum of five (5) members are required, with the Chairperson having a casting vote.
- 11.2. The AHA ACT is to operate by consensus. Where consensus cannot be reached, then a ballot will be used.
- 11.3. If there are less than five (5) members present at a meeting, a decision cannot be made and the agenda item is held over to the next meeting.
- 11.4. The ACT will be required to make decisions around how Access Housing engages with tenants. Where relevant, the ACT will make decisions based on the below levels of engagement which align with Access Housing's Tenant Engagement Policy:
 - a. **INFORM:** ACT members are to have discussions and make decisions on behalf of tenants. Tenants will be informed of ACT decisions via the tenant newsletter or other means.
 - b. **CONSULT:** Get feedback from tenants on an issue to better understand the problem or to plan solutions. This can be done via tenant surveys, newsletters or focus groups and is usually one-off consultation.
 - c. **INVOLVE:** Work with tenants throughout a process to make sure their concerns and ideas are considered throughout decision making. This would involve getting feedback from tenants on multiple occasions throughout the development or review of a service, policy or program.
 - d. **COLLABORATE:** To partner with tenants in joint decision-making in the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of programs, policies and activities. Tenants have an equal voice in decision making with Access Housing and collaboration occurs over a longer period with the same group of tenants. Names for this type of collaboration include:
 - i. **Co-designing:** identifying and developing a plan for a program policy or activity
 - ii. **Co-producing:** implementing and evaluating a program, policy or activity.
 - e. **TENANT LED:** Tenants lead the development and implementation of an activity and seek help or support from Access Housing (only if needed).
- 11.5. Access Housing will be required to inform the ACT around how tenant issues are considered. Where relevant, Access Housing will report to the ACT based on the below levels of engagement:
 - a. **INFORM:** Consultation with General Manager of Community Housing only, informing ACT of decision-making during meeting.
 - b. **CONSULT:** Access Housing needs to get more information on issue from the organisation.
 - c. **COLLABORATE:** Access Housing opens collaboration internally and externally on the issue asking the ACT how Access Housing should engage with tenants (refer to 11.5)

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12. PARTICIPATION PAYMENT

- 12.1. ACT members will be paid a participation payment for their involvement in ACT meetings and events as per Access Housing's Tenant Engagement Policy paid partnership guidelines.
- 12.2. Participation payments are intended to cover out of pocket payments related to participation including travel expenses and to recognise the ongoing commitment of ACT members.

13. TRAINING

- 13.1. All committee members will make themselves available for training in order to fulfil their roles. This includes consumer representative training, ACT induction processes and training around Access Housing as an organisation.
- 13.2. Access Housing will resource this training within reasonable limits.
- 13.3. ACT members are not able to participate in ACT meetings until they undertake appropriate training.

14. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 14.1. It is expected that Access Housing ACT members work together constructively to resolve disputes.
- 14.2. Disputes that could impact the work of the Access Housing ACT should, in the first instance, be brought to the attention of the Chairperson.
- 14.3. The Chairperson will take a lead role to mediate any dispute.
- 14.4. Where the Chairperson is unable to mediate the dispute, the issue must be escalated to the Access Housing Support Person. Where the Access Housing Support Person is unable to mediate, the issue must be escalated to Access Housing's General Manager of Community Housing.
- 14.5. Committee members that raise a dispute must make an argument as to how the behaviour / actions present in dispute impact the functionality of the group and prevent the Access Housing ACT from carrying out its purpose.
- 14.6. Access Housing will assess the nature of the dispute and take action(s) to resolve. These actions might include any or all of the following:
 - 14.6.1 Assessment of the situation in relation to the impact upon the Access Housing ACT carrying out its functions and provision of directions to the parties involved to resolve the dispute.
 - 14.6.2 Direct mediation with the parties concerned.
 - 14.6.3 Where the dispute cannot be resolved, Access Housing reserves the right to direct the Committee to suspend the appointments of one or more members involved in the dispute to enable the ongoing functioning of the Access Housing ACT.

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