

Findhorn Ecovillage Land Trust Allocations Policy

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Scope

This policy describes the circumstances by which an individual may apply to receive support from the Land Trust. It explains who may be eligible and who may be disqualified from such support, and how priorities will be allocated. It does not set out to describe the specific nature of such support, which will change from time to time and will be set out in the Housing Support Policy.

Context

Ekopia conducted a housing needs questionnaire in 2004 and produced proposals for a land trust in 2005 and 2006, which were discussed at various community meetings.

In September 2006 an agreement was reached between Ekopia Ltd., Duneland Ltd. and the Barrels East Cluster Group. This set up the Land Trust as a division of Ekopia, the main aim of which is to provide subsidies to members of the community seeking affordable housing. It is anticipated that further such agreements will be undertaken in due course.

Applications

Applications are welcome from any member of the community who wishes to reside at The Park, Findhorn and who supports the purposes and aspirations of the Ecovillage and its associated community. These aims are broad and may be described as an intention to create a human settlement that is ecologically, economically, socially and spiritually sustainable. A commitment to the ideals expressed in 'Common Ground', (available from the New Findhorn Association) is expected.

Further reading is available in such documents as: 'The Essential Guide', available from the Titleholders' Association; The 'Deed of Community

Conditions' also available from the Titleholders' Association; Numerous other books, magazines and publications.

Membership of Ekopia is not a pre-requisite of Housing Support, and neither is formal membership of any other community group or association, although such memberships may be reasonable interpreted as providing evidence of support for the Ecovillage.

Administration of Applications

The Land Trust is a division of Ekopia Ltd. It is administered by the Land Trust Committee who shall deal with all applications. Membership of this group is broadly representative of the many stakeholders involved. Initial membership shall comprise 2 representatives appointed by each of the Findhorn Foundation, New Findhorn Association and Ekopia.

Acceptance of Applications

A register shall be kept of all successful applications. This register shall be open to inspection by members of Ekopia, and residents of the Park given one week's notice.

The Register shall be reviewed annually by the Land Trust Committee.

Disqualifications and Exclusions

The following are criteria which shall disqualify any applicant.

1) One who is, or who has been in the 12 months prior to their application, a member of the Land Trust Committee.

(A close relative of either of the above shall not be disqualified, but must complete full details in the declaration of the application form. A 'close relative' is defined as a parent, grandparent, child, step-child, spouse or co-habittee.)

2) One who is not or has never been resident in the counties of Moray and Nairn for at least six months.

3) The following are criteria that, at the discretion of the Land Trust Committee, may exclude any applicant from the register who has a demonstrable history of unacceptable behaviour, including but not limited to:

evictions for anti-social behaviour
non-payment of rent
non-payment of other monies owing to local organisations.

4) Exclusions may also be based on financial circumstances (see below under Awards.)

5) Anyone wishing to receive Housing Support for a property which is part of a Cluster may also require to receive the acceptance of the Cluster group itself. Whether or not this is the case may be determined by examining the bye-laws of any particular Cluster.

Awards

Awards of support from the Land Trust shall be made according to the following criteria.

Shared Ownership

For 'Shared Ownership' support in which the individual is the owner or part owner of the property and wishes support with the capital costs of purchase:

Criteria to be taken into account:

- a) Length of service to the community, including a suggested minimum period of two years work with an organisation affiliated to the Ecovillage.
- b) Financial circumstances.

1) 'Length of service to the community' shall be measured by years of employment with or continuous part-time service (including paid self-employed status) to any organisation affiliated with the Ecovillage project. In the case of individuals of pensionable age, a prior demonstration of committed work shall be an acceptable criterion. Whether or not any given organisation has such an affiliation shall be determined by the Land Trust Committee from time to time.

2) Financial Circumstances

Candidates are expected to make a full disclosure of their financial circumstances to the Land Trust Committee (such information to be held in confidence by members of that Committee). The Committee shall take cognisance of the current Communities Scotland 'Homestake' scheme or its successor(s). This currently excludes those whose gross household income is:

- £19,700 if you are single person
- £25,100 for a household of larger size.

Shared Ownership housing is a financial partnership between the Land Trust and the occupant(s) of the house. The above criteria are therefore not intended to provide a rigid system of points, but are rather the basis for an attunement to an appropriate outcome for all concerned.

Rental Properties - Not currently available.

Change of Circumstances

Applicants whose names are maintained on the register shall keep the Land Trust Committee apprised in writing of any material changes in their circumstances. Failure to do so may result in their name being removed from the Register.

Appeals/Complaints

Any appeal against a decision made by or complaints concerning the operation of the Land Trust Committee may be made in writing to the Board of Ekopia Ltd.

Review of Policy

This Policy shall be reviewed annually by the Land Trust Committee who shall publish any suggested amendments and consult with the Board and ideally also the membership of Ekopia Ltd. and the community at large prior to implementing them.

Findhorn Ecovillage Land Trust

Application Form for Housing Support

Your attention is drawn to the Land Trust's Housing Support policy which identifies the mechanism by which successful applicants may receive such benefits. (Note: at present this policy only covers the case of Barrels East and will require modification when the Land Trust has access to further funds.)

Name(s)

Number of persons in household

Current address and contact details

Number of years living in the counties of Moray or Nairn.

Involvement with community organisations:

Name

Years of Association

Personal statement of current housing situation, and future goals/ambitions.

I/we enclose full details of my/our current financial circumstances, including household income, assets and liabilities and any anticipated changes that may occur in the foreseeable future.

Signed
