

Introduction to Becoming a Board Member

What is it like to be a Board member at Family Housing Association?

Board Members play a very important role in setting our future direction and ensuring that we keep delivering what we do best.

You would work closely with other Board Members and the Management Team of senior officers, setting the vision and priorities, then asking the right questions about performance and service delivery. You would be holding officers to account, whilst ensuring that our focus remains on putting our tenants first and our drive to continuously improve in everything we do.

We are looking for people who can think differently, challenge existing practices, bring lived experiences, have plenty of drive and passion, and work constructively and collectively as team players. You don't need to have Board or housing experience. Many of our existing members did not have previous Board experience and have really excelled in their roles.

Board Member Role

- **Responsible to** - Chair of the Board.
 - **Hours** – Board Meetings take place every other month, which typically last up to 2 hours. You would need to read reports and prepare to participate in the meetings. In the fullness of time, you could choose additional participation, such as by joining the Audit Committee.
 - There is an Annual Board Away Day, held locally, when Board Members and Officers review future priorities for the Association, including Business Planning and topical issues.
 - **Tenure** - Board Members are appointed for three years. Each year, the Chair will meet with you to check how you're doing and carry out an appraisal to help you understand if further training or development would be helpful and that the balance of skills and experience across all Board Members covers all necessary areas. Board Members typically serve for 6 years, although your tenure could be extended annually from 6 years up to a maximum of 9 years, depending upon whether the Association would benefit from retaining particular skills and experience on the Board.
 - **Remuneration** – Board members participate on a voluntary basis, with any reasonable expenses being paid, such as for travel.
 - **Location** - We have a hybrid approach to Board and Committee meetings. Most meetings are held at our office in Birkenhead, but some may be held virtually using Microsoft Teams or Zoom.
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What Do Board Members Do?

You would work as part of a team, with other Board Members and liaise with officers, helping develop and steer the direction of the organisation to ensure we are delivering on our purpose. Board Members help shape and scrutinise the running of Family Housing Association to check we are operating effectively, efficiently and economically. A Board Members' role is strategic, ensuring Policies are in place for Officers to follow, setting budgets and determining the direction of the business. Board Members don't get involved in the day to day running of Family Housing Association, as Officers are tasked with this. Internal Auditors carry out audits of service areas to reassure Board Members that policies and procedures are being followed. External Auditors analyse our Annual Accounts and provide assurance to Board Members that they are an accurate reflection of the business.

What Can You Bring?

We want to encourage more applicants who bring skills, knowledge and experience from a wide perspective. We want our Board to have a diversity of opinions and backgrounds, reflecting the Wirral community in which we work.

With this in mind, our focus on recruitment is on these key areas and competencies:

- Has a passion for the work of Family Housing Association, with a focus on our tenants and local communities.
- Is self-aware, take responsibility for their learning, and actively participate in meetings and activities.
- Has sound judgement and common sense.
- Values a diverse board and organisation and is committed to Family Housing Association's vision and values.
- Be well-informed and able to contribute specialist knowledge, expertise and experience to the Board.

We would like you to bring your own unique insight to Family Housing Association, helping us make a difference in our customers' lives. We would like you to tell us in your application how you think you can contribute to the work of Family Housing Association and how your skills and experience will benefit the organisation. Housing experience or having been on a Board before are not essential.

Board Member Support

We want to ensure that our Board Members get something out of their time with us. We want to support you in developing your skills and knowledge. You would be provided with support from Officers to help you understand and develop in the role. Officers are always available to discuss issues and provide additional explanations and guidance. There are regular training opportunities in addition to Board Briefings where 30 minute presentations are provided prior to some meetings on relevant topics. There is also the opportunity to experience a guided tour around our housing stock and to meet annually with the Chair to discuss your thoughts or concerns as part of the appraisal process.

Summary

Family Housing Association has a strong commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion by understanding the diverse views and needs of our tenants and the Wirral communities. We are keen to encourage applications from underrepresented groups to our Board. This includes young people, people from BAME backgrounds and people with a disability.

If you have any questions or queries, please contact me so that we can discuss them. If having considered all the information available, you would like to be considered to join the Board of Family Housing Association, then please complete the enclosed application form and return it to:

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