



## **Who We Are and What We Do**

### **About Us**

**Apna Ghar** ('Our Home') was founded in 1979 by a group of disabled people, using a day centre in Central Middlesex Hospital. Their aim was to respond to an urgent need for housing and support from an increasing number of disabled people, particularly by those with Asian backgrounds. Today, we house and support families from all backgrounds.

### **Our Vision, Mission and Values**

Our vision, mission and values were developed with input from both staff and board members. Having a collaborative, team approach captures our spirit to move forward together. Every staff and board member has a role to play in the future success of the business, uniting behind a common purpose.

#### **Vision**

A viable community business

#### **Mission Statement**

Enabling independent lifestyle choices

#### **Our Values**

Respect, Dignity, Reliability

#### **Strategic Objectives**

We have four strategic objectives setting out a framework for achieving our goals and setting our future direction of travel. These cover financial viability, service delivery, maintenance of assets and partnership working. Further details are contained in our Business Plan which will be provided to shortlisted candidates.

#### **What We Do**

Apna Ghar currently manages 298 homes (108 are owned and 190 are agency managed) in the London boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Islington, Haringey, Hackney and Newham. Almost half of our stock meets wheelchair standards. The rents from the owned properties are fully retained by the Association whilst a proportion of the rents on the agency managed units, are retained as Management Fees.

In addition to providing the basic management & maintenance services that other Housing Associations offer, Apna Ghar provides additional support to its disabled & elderly residents which includes helping clients budget, apply for

welfare benefits, making applications to Local Authorities & other statutory agencies and getting aids & adaptations done.

We are currently negotiating to take ownership of 20 tenanted properties that are managed on behalf of other landlords. We hope that the transfer will take place in the next twelve months.



## **Governance Standards**

As a board, we are accountable to a range of stakeholders. We have individual and collective responsibilities to fulfil these obligations.

Apna Ghar's two adopted governance codes are:

- National Housing Federation (NHF): Code of Governance – Promoting board excellence for housing associations
- NHF : Excellence in Standards of conduct – Code for members.

These set out our standards for governance. Each member is provided with a copy of these at their induction. Training is provided to promote an awareness and understanding of these standards.

## **Regulation**

The social housing sector is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). The Regulator has a publication called “Regulating the Standards” (recently updated in July 2018) which sets the standard to which we are regulated.

The approach the current regulator uses is one of co-regulation, focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money. The RSH is committed to undertaking the regulatory activity under a principle of minimum interference, maintaining lender confidence and protecting taxpayers while simultaneously cutting red tape.

## **Buddy System**

In line with best practice Apna Ghar has set up a buddy system.

At the induction stage all new board members will be buddied with an experienced board member. This will be a peer to peer relationship, based on mutual respect.

Your buddy will act as a support and mentor to you during your induction. Your buddy will support you by:

- answering any questions you have about the organisation, its history and who's who in the organisation

- explaining the processes involved in board meetings and understanding the papers
- reflecting and debriefing you on what happened at a board session
- referring you to appropriate sources of help
- exchanging views
- preparing for your appraisal
- be a point of contact for any learning or development needs
- helping you develop key knowledge and skills to fulfil your board role

Your buddy will provide support for six to twelve months. Alternatively, the buddy system can be ended by mutual agreement, if the stated objectives have been met.

One day you will be a buddy to someone.



Approved by Board: April 2016

Review: April 2019

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION : BOARD MEMBER / SHAREHOLDER**

The Board membership should reflect a wide range of perspectives and a broad mix of competency, abilities, knowledge, experience and skills. The board should be as representative and as diverse as the community it serves. This applies equally to those who apply as residents or independent candidates and work within a framework of equality and diversity. Members of the Board should be able to demonstrate:

### **Experience and Knowledge**

1. EITHER experience at a senior level, exercising a relevant professional or business skill, for example finance, treasury, surveying, property development, housing management, repairs and maintenance, human resources, law or strategic management;
2. AND/OR direct knowledge of one of Apna Ghar's key user groups, such as tenants or those with special housing support and care needs and local housing issues.

### **Abilities and Skills – the ability to :**

1. Develop vision and purpose for the organisation with commensurate leadership qualities;
2. Distinguish strategic and operational matters to focus on the bigger picture;
3. Work effectively in a team with other Board Members and the Management Team;
4. Read, understand and analyse both written and numerical reports presented to the Board for decision and information and to draw out pertinent points for discussion;
5. Challenge constructively while respecting the roles, views and feelings of others;
6. Contribute to forming a consensus with other Board Members when involved in decision making and influence through persuasive discussion;
7. Make balanced, informed decisions and to think creatively;
8. Consider the long term implications and broader view of issues, spotting opportunities, identifying key risks and the means of mitigating them;
9. Act as an ambassador for Apna Ghar at formal and informal gatherings.

**Personal Qualities / Values**

1. Upholding Apna Ghar's values and treating people as individuals, with respect and integrity.
2. Being fair, honest and accountable, whilst maintaining confidentiality



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## **JOB DESCRIPTION: BOARD MEMBER / SHAREHOLDER**

The Board is responsible for ensuring that the Association is viable, properly governed, properly managed and providing value for money within a framework of equality and diversity.

### **Duties and responsibilities**

1. Define and ensure compliance with the vision, mission, values, aims and objectives of the Association
2. Establish strategy, policies and plans to achieve those objectives, putting tenants needs at the heart of all service provision
3. Approve each year's budget and accounts prior to publication
4. Establish and oversee a framework of delegation and systems of control through effective leadership
5. Agree policies and make decisions on all matters which might create significant financial or other risk to the Association, or which raise material issues of principle
6. Ensure that Apna Ghar has in place effective arrangements to ensure health and safety and to safeguard tenants and staff interests
7. Safeguard Apna Ghar's assets ensuring they are kept in good order and used to further the business goals of the organisation
8. Monitor, review and evaluate Apna Ghar's performance in relation to agreed plans, budgets, controls and decisions
9. Appoint and, if necessary dismiss, the Chief Executive and participate in the appointment of other staff, ensuring best practice standards in employment and being a responsible employer.
10. Ensure Apna Ghar's affairs are conducted lawfully, in accordance with its rules and the requirements of its regulators, and in accordance with adopted codes of governance, performance and probity
11. Participate in meetings, training, appraisal and buddy schemes to ensure continuous learning and development

For the post of Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer, additional criteria will apply.