

Board Diversity Programme 2021

Year 1

**Guidance for Trainees**

**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT LOG**

**Contents**

About the programme 3 - 7

Mentoring 5 - 7

Using a Development Plan to set programme goals 8

General Guidance for first 1:1 session 9

Workshop 1 – Preparation 10

Mentoring Session 1 – Preparation 11

Workshop 2 – Preparation 12

Mentoring Session 2 – Preparation 13

Workshop 3 – Preparation 14

Mentoring Session 3 – Preparation 15

Workshop 4 – Preparation 16

Mentoring Session 4 – Preparation 17

Workshop 5 – Preparation 18

Mentoring Session 5 – Preparation 19

Workshop 6 – Preparation 20

Mentoring Session 6 – Preparation 21

Annex 1: HDN Board Mentoring Contract (Trainee) 22

Annex 2: HDN Board Mentoring Contract (Mentor) 23

Annex 3: Personal Learning Log 24

**About the programme**

Thank you for participating in the 2021 HDN Board Diversity Programme (BDP). We hope you find this information pack and Personal Development Log useful and that it helps you to get the most from the Programme.

The programme aims to increase the capability and confidence of individuals to become future Board members. To understand the role of a Board Member in the Social Housing Sector in the context of the current sector challenges and Regulatory requirements. It will enable you to develop your skills, knowledge and thinking to become an effective Board Member benefiting you and your sponsoring organisation and Housing overall. It will provide insight and support in a safe environment, allowing you to develop as a future Board Member.

Through the involvement of participants from different organisations and group development workshops, mentors and trainees can share experience with others from within and beyond the sector. This will build up-to-date knowledge, capacity and best practice in governance, while allowing each participant to develop their unique contribution.

**Structure of the programme**

The design of the programme is based on best practice for governance and personal development using the positive experience and impact of the HDNs Board Excellence (BEP) and Staff Mentoring Programmes (SMP). The different elements of the programme each year are listed below in table 1 and 2:

**Table 1**

**Table 2**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Activity | Details | Approx. Time required |
| 1 | Induction | Series of activities arranged by your sponsoring organisation including welcome and meetings with Chair, CEO and other key Board and Staff Members |  |
| 2 | 6 individual Support Calls – HDN Contact | Bi-monthly call with HDN for support and progress check in | 45mins each  (Bi-monthly) |
| 3 | 6 Mentoring Meetings | Bi-monthly meetings to address identified personal objectives and programme content | 2 hours each  (Bi-monthly) |
| 4 | 4 Board Diversity (BDP) Workshops | Held in the evenings to focus on Board Member skills development | 2 hours each approx. |
| 5 | 4 Board Excellence (BEP) Workshops | Held in the evenings to focus on current Housing governance issues and challenges | 2 hours each approx. |
| 6 | 2-4 Observe Board/ Committee meetings | Arranged by the sponsor and HDN (including reading and preparing in advance) | 8-10 hours each approx. |
| 7 | 2 trainee group networking sessions | To discuss what you have learned and any challenges | 2 hours each approx. |
| 8 | StrengthScope Tool | Feedback provided using StrengthScope personal development tool in year 1 | 2 hours approx. |
| 9 | 360 Appraisal | Focusing on strengths and areas for development in year 2 | 2 hours approx. |
| 10 | CV & Interview Skills Support | Additional workshop or support in year 2 |  |
| 11 | Final Celebration Event | Upon completing BDP | 2 hours approx. |
| 12 | Key reading | Variety of resources will be suggested throughout the programme | 8 hours per month approx. |

Regular support calls from HDN, individual mentoring and support from the sponsoring organisation provide Board Trainees opportunities to engage with an external mentor, HDN and sponsoring organisation to address development, based on your individual needs, in a safe and personal space.

**Board Diversity workshops**

The Board Diversity workshops provide the opportunity for you to develop knowledge, key skills and build contact networks with fellow trainees and speakers/facilitators. The content of the workshops has been developed to be relevant to trainee development.

**Board Excellence workshops**

The Board Excellence workshops provide the opportunity for you to develop knowledge, key skills and build contact networks with Board members from other organisations. The content of the mentoring classes has been developed to be relevant to the current challenges and issues for board members in the sector.

The workshops will be facilitated by the regional HDN Board Excellence Coordinator supported by Board members and specialist external speakers.

All Board Diversity workshops are an integrated and essential component of the BDP, complemented by the Board Excellence workshops which have newly appointed and current Board Members in attendance. Trainees should attend all four BDP workshops and will be invited to key BEP workshops to meet current Board Members and address current key issues facing Boards within the housing sector.

Mentors are also welcome and encouraged to attend. Other Board members or HDN staff may attend some sessions where they have a particular interest in or knowledge of the topic.

**Personal Development**

All trainees will have a dedicated HDN Coordinator to communicate with regularly to review progress and address any challenges. The coordinator will match you with a mentor, go through any personal development tools/reports with you, update sponsor organisations on progress and set up informal group networking sessions quarterly for trainees as well as hold individual calls with you on a bi-monthly basis. For any queries relating to the programme, its content and the roles of individuals involved the first point of contact is your coordinator who can help answer queries or sign-post as required.

**Sponsor support**

Your sponsoring organisation will arrange your induction to the organisation, including information about the organisation, its governance framework, introduction to its Board and key staff and any other relevant administrative and support aspects.

Your sponsoring organisation will also arrange for you to observe suitable Board/Committee meetings with you individually to continue your development and build your familiarity with the Board environment and its contents.

**Guidance for mentoring sessions**

**What is One-One Mentoring?**

Mentor (n). A wise or trusted advisor or guide

* Mentoring is a concept developed to support personal and professional development.
* It can be used to enhance performance, knowledge and skills.
* Mentoring usually involves pairing the ‘Trainee’ with someone who has specific knowledge, skills or experience to share, and is motivated to develop others

HDN and your mentor will have appropriate experience in relation to your needs. Mentors will be Board members or appropriate level staff and will have worked collaboratively in a non-executive capacity having governance experience.

HDN and mentors and trainees will arrange 1:1 session’s online or at venues agreed by both. Any additional email or phone support will be agreed by the mentor and trainee within a mentoring ‘contract’ (see annex 1).

**The role of the Board Mentor – Best practice**

The following tips will help forge a productive mentoring relationship:

* The values of trust, respect, openness, inclusion and confidentiality are critical to establishing good rapport. Following through on promises and commitments will produce trust. Sharing information about yourself – perhaps the challenges you’ve faced - will demonstrate openness and build mutual respect.
* Discuss and agree with your Trainee when and where the 1:1 mentoring sessions will take place. Ensure you both record the dates, times and venues in advance and stick to them. Please avoid prioritising other commitments over the sessions, once you’ve agreed them. Cancellation or postponement should be by exception (e.g. due to illness).
* It’s good practice to encourage the Trainee to set the agenda for the mentoring sessions, and to explore issues that are of the greatest importance to them.
* The Trainee may understandably be hesitant to raise difficult issues with their Mentor, particularly in the early stages of the relationship. The Mentor should gently encourage, but not try to force the Trainee to recognise those issues.
* Excellent communication skills, including listening, empathy, summarising and reflecting back, will lead to more productive conversations. Also, the use of silence can be powerful to allow the Trainee some thinking time.
* Ensure you are ‘present, in the moment’. Your focus should be entirely on the Trainee and the dialogue the two of you are having. Avoid undermining the richness of the discussion by checking phones and leaving laptops or tablets open on the table. They cause distraction and it suggests your mind is elsewhere.
* Aim to be non-judgmental whilst offering constructive challenge as a positive contribution within the relationship.
* Where appropriate, the Mentor should encourage the Trainee to seek additional advice and assistance outside the mentoring relationship, including HDN and their sponsoring organisation.
* Ensure that each 1:1 session is structured. This may include: a few minutes of catch-up; reflecting on the last workshop; discussing actions and commitments agreed at the last session; refocusing on the Trainee’s personal development goals; discussing recent/upcoming board meetings; summarizing what happens next.

**The role of the Board Trainee – Best practice**

The following tips will help forge a productive mentoring relationship:

* Please ensure you arrive for your 1:1 session on time and mentally prepared for the conversation you are about to have.
* Bring with you any necessary paperwork – this Personal Development Log, your Development Plan, any notes from the workshops that you’d like to discuss.
* Be as open and honest with your mentor as possible. They are not there to judge you; they are there to support you and help you develop. No questions are bad ones. The conversations are confidential to the two of you.
* Follow through on any actions you’ve committed to take and arrive prepared to discuss them at the following meeting.
* Ask your mentor for suggestions about other learning resources and networks. Your mentor is likely to have well-established contacts and some of these may be useful to you.
* Ensure you are ‘present, in the moment’. Your focus should be entirely on the dialogue the two of you are having. Avoid undermining the richness of the discussion by checking phones and leaving laptops or tablets open on the table. They cause distraction and it suggests your mind is elsewhere.
* The conversations should always be 2-way. You are working in partnership with your mentor.
* Please flag any concerns or difficulties about any aspect of the programme to your HDN Contact at check-in sessions as soon as they arise. This will enable us to help you in a timely fashion.

**Mentor and Trainee mentoring contract**

Please ensure both Mentor and Trainee agree and sign a mentoring contract at your first session, to include confidentiality and when and where to meet (see Annex 1).

**Using a Development Plan to set programme goals**

Please use this form to capture your goals for the programme. You can use this for your HDN check-ins, any workshops and 1:1 mentoring sessions, to capture actions and progress to date.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Goal/ development area** | **What I want to develop and why** | **How will I know if I have achieved this** |
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**1:1 Guidelines for first session with mentor:**

Things to consider for this session:

* **Personal Introductions and ‘getting to know you’**
* **Set the ground rules, which may include:**
* Arranging your sessions; Where? When? How long? Methods of communication?
* Confidentiality and areas of potential conflict of interest
* Contact between meetings
* Your relationship: trust, respect, openness
* Feeding back to each other
* Contracting
* **Expectations:**
* Trainee/Mentor expectations. Hopes and what is realistic and achievable
* **Exploring development priorities and goals:**
* What has Trainee learned from their StrengthScope – feedback about themselves?
* What are their development needs and priorities for the programme?
* **Specific Development actions**
* What are the immediate priorities and development actions (e.g. preparing for next workshop or Board observation opportunity, or essential reading)?
* **Next workshops**
* What are Trainee objectives and expectations? Any planning or preparing required?
* **Review**
* Note outcomes, decide actions, agree focus for next session

**Workshop 1: The role of a Board Member and how to conduct yourself in meetings**

**Your objectives for this session**

**Reviewing the workshop**

What more have I learned about me?

What have I learned about becoming a Board member?

What areas do I want to develop/ improve?

What will I share with my mentor, sponsor and HDN?

What other resource could I access outside of this programme to continue my learning and development? (Networks? An article to read? A conversation with a stakeholder?)

And then update your Development Plan accordingly.

**Mentoring Session One - Preparation**

* **My key objective/focus for this session**
* **Ground rules I’d like to agree**
* **My personal development areas**
* **What I learnt from my StrengthScope feedback**
* **What I learnt from the first workshop**
* **Questions I’d like to ask**

**Workshop 2: Hearing the tenant voice and gathering diverse voices**

**Your objectives for this session**

**Reviewing the workshop**

What more have I learned about me?

What more have I learned about becoming a Board member?

What areas do I want to develop/ improve?

What will I share with my mentor, sponsor and HDN?

What other resource could I access outside of this programme to continue my learning and development? (Networks? An article to read? A conversation with a stakeholder?)

And then update your Development Plan accordingly.

**Mentoring Session Two - Preparation**

* **My key objective/focus for this session**
* **Ground rules – anything to update?**
* **My personal development areas**
* **Progress and actions taken since Mentoring Session One**
* **What I learnt from the second workshop**
* **Questions I’d like to ask**

**Workshop 3: Housing in the North – addressing inequalities**

**Your objectives for this session**

**Reviewing the workshop**

What more have I learned about me?

What more have I learned about becoming a Board member?

What areas do I want to develop/ improve?

What will I share with my sponsor?

What other resource could I access outside of this programme to continue my learning and development? (Networks? An article to read? A conversation with a stakeholder?)

And then update your Development Plan accordingly.

**Mentoring Session Three - Preparation**

* **My key objective/focus for this session**
* **Ground rules – anything to update?**
* **My personal development areas**
* **Progress and actions taken since Mentoring Session Two**
* **What I learnt from the third workshop**
* **Questions I’d like to ask**

**Workshop 4: Charities and Charitable Status**

**Your objectives for this session**

**Reviewing the workshop**

What more have I learned about me?

What more have I learned about becoming a Board member?

What areas do I want to develop/ improve?

What will I share with my mentor, sponsor, HDN?

What other resource could I access outside of this programme to continue my learning and development? (Networks? An article to read? A conversation with a stakeholder?)

And then update your Development Plan accordingly.

**Mentoring Session Four - Preparation**

* **My key objective/focus for this session**
* **Ground rules – anything to update?**
* **My personal development areas**
* **Progress and actions taken since Mentoring Session Three**
* **What I learnt from the fourth workshop**
* **Questions I’d like to ask**

**Workshop 5:**

**Your objectives for this session**

**Reviewing the workshop**

What more have I learned about me?

What more have I learned about becoming a Board member?

What areas do I want to develop/ improve?

What will I share with my mentor, sponsor, HDN?

What other resource could I access outside of this programme to continue my learning and development? (Networks? An article to read? A conversation with a stakeholder?)

And then update your Development Plan accordingly.

**Mentoring Session Five - Preparation**

* **My key objective/focus for this session**
* **Ground rules – anything to update?**
* **My personal development areas**
* **Progress and actions taken since Mentoring Session Four**
* **What I learnt from the fifth workshop**
* **Questions I’d like to ask**

**Workshop 6:**

**Your objectives for this session**

**Reviewing the workshop**

What more have I learned about me?

What more have I learned about becoming a Board member?

What areas do I want to develop/ improve?

What will I share with my mentor, sponsor, HDN?

What other resource could I access outside of this programme to continue my learning and development? (Networks? An article to read? A conversation with a stakeholder?)

And then update your Development Plan accordingly.

**Mentoring Session Six - Preparation**

* **My key objective/focus for this session**
* **Ground rules – anything to update?**
* **My personal development areas**
* **Progress and actions taken since Mentoring Session Five**
* **What I learnt from the Sixth workshop**
* **Questions I’d like to ask**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Annex 1: Board Diversity Programme Agreement**  **I…………………………………………… (Trainee) agree:**  To commit myself to attending all 6 mentoring meetings and 4-8 workshops annually, agreed for the duration of the mentoring programme.  That all discussions will be totally confidential and will not be discussed outside the session, except by mutual agreement.  The process will operate within a framework of equality and diversity and any unacceptable behaviour should be challenged and managed.  All levels of contact will be agreed and any unwanted intrusion will be discussed.  To demonstrate my commitment to my mentor and the programme by prioritising Trainee meetings.  To inform HDN and mentor if I miss any mentoring sessions during the course of the programme and am unable to rearrange them for a mutually convenient time.  To inform HDN and mentor ASAP if I am unable to continue with the mentoring relationship  Any difficulties within the mentoring session will be discussed initially by the mentor and the Trainee. If the problem cannot be resolved, the matter should be discussed with the HDN Board Mentoring Co-ordinator.  **Signature**: ………………………………………………………  **Date**: …………………………………………………………….   |  | | --- | | **Things to discuss and agree in first meeting** | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | What are my expectations of the mentor/Trainee: |  | | What are my boundaries: |  | | Communication (how, where and when): |  | | Availability, frequency, length of time of meetings: |  | | Who will be responsible for scheduling the meetings: |  | | How the objectives will be reviewed: |  | | Ground rules (confidentiality, openness, truthfulness, etc.): |  | | |

**Annex 2: Board Diversity Programme Agreement**

**I…………………………………………… (mentor) agree:**

To commit myself to attending all 6 mentoring meetings and 4-8 workshops annually, agreed for the duration of the mentoring programme.

That all discussions will be totally confidential and will not be discussed outside the session, except by mutual agreement.

The process will operate within a framework of equality and diversity and any unacceptable behaviour should be challenged and managed.

All levels of contact will be agreed and any unwanted intrusion will be discussed.

To demonstrate my commitment to my Trainee and the programme by prioritising Trainee meetings.

To inform HDN and Trainee if I miss any mentoring sessions during the course of the programme and am unable to rearrange them for a mutually convenient time.

To inform HDN and Trainee ASAP if I am unable to continue with the mentoring relationship, to ensure my Trainee has the best opportunity to successfully complete the programme.

Any difficulties within the mentoring session will be discussed initially by the mentor and the Trainee. If the problem cannot be resolved, the matter should be discussed with the HDN Board Mentoring Co-ordinator.

**Signature**: ………………………………………………………

**Date**: …………………………………………………………….

**Things to discuss and agree in first meeting**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | What are my expectations of the mentor/Trainee: |  | | What are my boundaries: |  | | Communication (how, where and when): |  | | Availability, frequency, length of time of meetings: |  | | Who will be responsible for scheduling the meetings: |  | | How the objectives will be reviewed: |  | | When the relationship should be ended: |  | | Ground rules (confidentiality, openness, truthfulness, etc): |  | |

**Annex 3: Personal Learning Log**

Please use this Learning Log to record anything you learn during the programme, including at Board/ committee meetings, one-to-ones and in group sessions.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Experience** | **Review** | **Conclude** | **Actions** |
| **What happened** | **What was the result/ impact** | **What did I learn** | **What will I do** |
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