



The HDN Board Excellence Programme increases the capability and confidence of individual Board members to develop strategy in response to current challenges and regulatory requirements.

- The programme builds up-to-date knowledge, networks, capacity and excellence in governance, while allowing each participant to develop their unique contribution. You will be supported throughout the programme by an HDN associate facilitator.
- The involvement of participants from different organisations at regular workshops enables mentors and mentees to share experience with others from within and beyond the sector. These workshops take place across different landlords in your region. Since the pandemic, these group sessions are now delivered virtually in 2.5 hour sessions, enabling ease of attendance without the need to travel.
- These are complemented by four, individually tailored one-to-one meetings with an assigned personal mentor, a psychometric personality questionnaire and 1 to 1 coaching sessions. You agree time and method for each individual mentoring session, which lasts approx. 1-2 hours.

Entrants to the programme can be at any level of experience as a Board Member, from entrants to experienced Chairs. The four individual mentoring sessions are specifically focussed on the needs of the Board Member and meeting their own objectives.

Why join the HDN Board Excellence Programme?

- To gain confidence and understand your governance role more thoroughly.
- To understand assurance, risk, regulation, compliance, finance, treasury, value for money, new development, board dynamics and your role more widely.
- To gain insight from speakers and mentors who are Board members and Senior staff, including the Regulator of Social Housing, National Housing Federation, National Federation of ALMO's and CIH.
- To meet, share experiences and learning with Board Members from across the sector and gain access to on-line additional resources.

What HDN expects from a participant on the programme (Mentee)

- A commitment to their own personal development, be open to the support, guidance and feedback from their mentor and to complete the programme.
- Give thought to their objectives and prepare for meetings with their mentor and to be proactive when arranging meetings and following up agreed actions.
- Treat mentors with respect and prioritise meetings and attendance.
- Make the most of this opportunity, show a commitment to valuing the diversity of thought and opinion in inclusive group workshops.
- Respect and consider fellow mentees, facilitators and other mentors participating in the group workshops.

Programme objectives and organisation benefits

The objectives outlined below are for all mentees. Individuals will also have their own personal objectives which they can address in their one-to-one meetings with their mentor.

1. Increase knowledge of what is expected of a Board/Committee member.
2. Increase understanding of Board Governance and improve strategic thinking.
3. Expand or broaden their Sector knowledge.
4. Improve their confidence, self-awareness, influence and relationship building skills.
5. Improve their ability to challenge and ask the right questions.

Participating organisations derive multiple benefits from mentoring, which include board members who are more knowledgeable, confident, effective and more diverse in their thought and contribution. Many Board Members on the programme have taken up key positions as Chairs of Committees, or the Board.

Timings & Costs

This is a rolling programme with participants expected to complete their programme in 10-12 months from enrolment which includes a briefing session, four meetings with a mentor and 8/10 x 2.5 hr virtual group sessions via Zoom.

Places are of excellent value - £1,950 +VAT for HDN members and £2,670 +VAT for non-members per mentee.

Who becomes a mentor?

Mentors are experienced professionals on Housing Boards, including CEOs and Senior Executives, Board and Committee Chairs or experienced Board Members.

They share their time, skills and knowledge to support mentees and to support the sector, sometimes due to the support and inspiration they have received earlier in their career, people want to “give back”.

Benefits of being a mentor include:

- Sharing their knowledge, expertise and experience.
- Practicing and developing their coaching and mentoring skills.
- Opportunity to gain a better understanding of people development.
- Gaining insight into other organisations and skill sets and learning from them.
- Attendance at Group Workshops to hear the latest thinking from key speakers and to participate and learn from other Board Members and Executives.
- Contributing to corporate social responsibility.

What HDN expect from a mentor

Senior experience of managing others and resources is useful, just as important for a mentor is the motivation to want to develop others. We expect mentors to value diversity of thought and opinion as key elements of a strong Board.

Some useful skills and qualities of great mentors are listed below – this list is not exhaustive nor is any one person expected to embody them all:

- Skills a mentor will find useful in a mentoring relationship include building relationships, listening, questioning, sensitively challenging, identifying options, setting boundaries or expectations, clarifying objectives, focusing, action planning, being creative and reflecting.
- Qualities of a helpful and successful mentor include being patient, giving encouragement, being open and honest, empowering mentees to lead sessions, creating a confidential space, showing an interest in the mentee, remaining objective and supporting self-reflection.

For more information:

Contact us directly on 01484 652606 or boardmentoring@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk.

What are the benefits for me as a Board member mentee...some quotes from past participants:

"It has helped considerably with my understanding of the housing sector and the role of the regulator. This was something I had absolutely no knowledge of before, so I feel much more confident in this now."

"My mentor has given me new 'ways of seeing' Board information – how to interrogate reports, ask questions in advance but also as they occur at meetings, and how to present questions, showing my thought process"

"I now see my role as 'raising the red flag'. I am prepared to speak up about the elephant in the room. If you don't do this, that is when the organisation will get into trouble"

"This has been a transformative process for me. I feel much more confident in my Board and Committee work, and my dealings with Staff. I have built a much better relationship with my Chair and CEO than previously. I have also started mentoring secondary school pupils and will be starting my own company as a direct result of increasing confidence and better understanding of good governance. Thank you so much!"

"I am thinking more about my ambassador role, and how to make my Boards more diverse"

The best thing about the programme...some quotes from past participants:

"Understanding the HCAs role and the diversity/approach of other housing associations."

"The vast knowledge of the mentors and trainers and the diversity of all mentees."

"The course was informative and current."

"The opportunity to hear from professionals who are expert in their field of housing."

Overall...

"The programme was fantastic."

"Nothing could have prepared me for how effective the course has made me."

"Excellent programme that I recommend to all board members."