



HDN Board Mentoring Programme

The following information is intended to outline the purpose and delivery of the HDN Board Mentoring Programme. The programme is designed to increase the capability and confidence of individual Board members to fulfil their role, in the context of the current sector challenges and Regulatory requirements. Through the involvement of participants from different organisations, one-to-one meetings with a mentor and group development workshops, both mentors and mentees can share experience with others from within and beyond the sector. This will build up-to-date knowledge, networks, capacity and best practice in governance, while allowing each participant to develop their unique contribution.

Programme objectives

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. Knowledge of what is expected of a Board/committee member
2. Understanding of Board Governance
3. Improve confidence
4. Expand Housing Sector knowledge
5. Improve relationship building
6. Improve strategic thinking
7. Improve ability to challenge and ask the right questions
8. Increase self-awareness

Organisation benefits

Participating organisations derive multiple benefits from mentoring, which centre on having board members who are more knowledgeable, confident, effective and more diverse in thought and contribution.

Who can participate?

Board Mentoring is open to all organisations – existing or new or potential Board and Committee members can apply.





Organisations who are not HDN members (if you are unsure whether you are a member please check the [HDN website](#) for a list of members) can put forward any number of mentees at a cost of £1650 plus VAT per person, and any number of mentors freely to participate they will be briefed and trained for the role.

HDN members can put forward any number of mentees at a discounted cost of £1350 plus VAT per person, as well as mentors.

There are many reasons why Board and Committee members may choose to participate which include wanting to understand governance, their own role, the housing sector, regulatory requirements, political and economic climate and impacts better. As well as supporting their organisations through critical changes, reflecting on approaches to strategy and governance at different organisations, and increasing their self-awareness to perform better as a Board member and team.

Why do people become a mentor?

Mentors are experienced professionals of both Executive and Non-Executive Director levels, who share their time, skills and knowledge to support others – to support the sector as a whole. Often because of the support and inspiration they themselves have received earlier in their career people want to “give back”.

Benefits of being a mentor include:

- Sharing their knowledge, expertise and experience
- Employing, practicing and developing their coaching and mentoring skills
- Opportunity to gain a better understanding of people development
- Gaining insight into other organisations and learning from them

What we look for in a mentor

Typically, mentors will have been a board member or a board chair. Have occupied a senior position within the housing sector. Have a real knowledge and interest in governance as well as having a passion for seeing individuals develop. They will also have a strong commitment to valuing diversity. 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 to self-reflect.

Why apply to be a mentee?

Mentees join the programme for many reasons these include:

- To gain confidence and understand governance more thoroughly
- To meet people from across the sector and share learning
- To gain insight from national partners including the Homes and Communities Agency, National Housing federation, National Federation of ALMO's and TPAS.
- To understand finance, value for money, development, board dynamics, risk and assurance more through the content of the programme

What can you expect from HDN and your regional coordinator?

- A careful matching process to ensure suitable mentors are matched with all mentees.
- A briefing to all mentees and mentors (particularly new mentors) at the start of the programme. This could include relevant training for mentors depending on experience.
- To ensure and maintain the excellent calibre of mentors on the programme, an organisational or personal endorsement will be sought via the application process.
- 360 assessment tool for feedback and reflection.
- A Personal Development Log (PDL) is provided for all mentees to complete. The PDL provides a framework to help prepare for meetings and workshops, it provides space to record any actions and can be used to reflect on learning.
- Four mentoring workshops – covering a range of areas related to development, current challenges and action planning for the future.
- Support for mentees and mentors to address queries throughout the programme.
- DISC based psychometric exercise.
- Regular check-ins with mentees at workshops to ensure the programme is running smoothly, address queries and time to reflect and share any learning.
- Regular communication with participating organisations throughout the programme.
- Regular meetings with steering groups to help guide, support and share feedback on the programme.

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- An evaluation survey at the end which provides the opportunity to give direct feedback to HDN on all aspects of the programme.
- A celebration at the end of the programme for participants to present their achievements, hear from speakers, celebrate with colleagues and receive their certificates of achievement.
- An opportunity to join an Alumni group for continued learning from peers and networking.

Commitment expected from a Mentor

Attendance of a half day training or briefing session before the start of the program which cover expectations, roles and structure and content of the programme.

Mentors are expected to commit to five meetings with their mentee over a ten-month period. Setting aside 1-2 hours for each meeting is usual but this may vary depending on mentee requirements.

It's important that mentors prioritise and set time aside for meetings with their mentee, and to focus without distraction consider meeting in a neutral space. This will help mentees gain confidence, feel valued and achieve their goals.

The meetings are held at mutually agreed venues however, mentees will be advised they may need to travel to their mentor's location.

Commitment expected from a Mentee

- Every mentee is expected to be committed to their own personal development, be open to the support, guidance and feedback of their mentor and to complete the programme.
- It is essential for a mentee to also have a commitment to valuing diversity to be able to make the most of inclusive group workshops.
- Every mentee is expected to give thought to their objectives and prepare for meetings with their mentor appropriately. As well as being proactive when arranging meetings and following up on actions agreed at meetings with their mentor to make the most of the opportunity.
- Mentors give their time freely, so are expected to be treated with respect. Meetings with them should be prioritised and only be cancelled or rearranged in emergencies.





- To respect and consider fellow mentees, facilitators and other mentors participating in the group workshops to ensure you all gain the most from each other and the programme.
- All mentees must attend a briefing session on the structure and content of the programme.
- Mentees are expected to attend five meetings with their mentor, four workshops and a national celebration conference at the end of the programme.

Organisations can support by:

- Promoting the programme internally.
- Selecting appropriate mentees and mentors to participate in the programme and where possible, to provide equal numbers of both.
- Encouraging participation from those who the programme could help to prepare them to become future board members or committee members.
- Linking the programme to any board development plans and appraisals to both help identify mentees/mentors and to embed any learning.
- Checking-in with their own participants for feedback and advising HDN or the coordinator of any concerns.
- Providing venues and speakers for workshops.
- Participating in steering groups.
- Encouraging mentees to attend all parts of the programme.
- Supporting HDN in addressing concerns raised about their own mentees/mentors.

Application and Matching Process

The time frames outlined below are for guidance only as they can be subject to change. Mentees are accepted onto the programme at any time during the programme if there is capacity as the programme is very flexible.

April – July Although expressions of interest are accepted all year round, mentor and mentee application forms are available from April via the HDN [website](#). To be accepted mentees must complete the application form or provide a CV and outline their objectives. Mentors should also complete the mentor application form. The closing date is 6th July 2018.



July – August Within four weeks of the closing date a notification will be sent to mentees and mentors regarding their acceptance and the next steps.

September mentees and mentors will receive contact details of their respective mentee/mentor from HDN and can then start arranging their first meetings.

September – October mentees and mentors will all be provided with a briefing about the program including:

- Programme structure and content
- Role of a mentor and mentee
- Mentoring tools & skills
- Mentor and mentee relationship and expectations
- Mentoring contract/boundaries
- List of mentoring class dates and venues
- Opportunity to ask questions

October – June mentees and mentors meet approximately five times and mentees attend four mentoring workshops.

Criteria for completion

Mentees should aim to complete the whole programme however mentees who complete a minimum of eighty percent will receive a certificate of achievement. However, in cases when this has not been possible please contact your coordinator or HDN.

HDN – your Network to Diversity

