



**Sapphire Independent Housing**

**Head Office**  
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## **Non-Executive Board Member Recruitment Pack**

### **December 2020**



**Sapphire Independent Housing**

**Head Office**  
**1 Holmes Road**  
**London**  
**NW5 3AA**

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Dear prospective applicant,

**Sapphire Independent Housing – Non-Executive Board Member Recruitment**

Thank you for your interest in this position. Enclosed is the information you will require to assist you in completing your application.

**Recruitment timetable and process:**

Closing date: Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2020  
First round of interviews: Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
Second round of interviews: Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021

- The Housing Executive will conduct the initial screening interviews for those candidates successful in being shortlisted
- The second stage will consist of a panel interview with Sapphire Independent Housing Ltd
- All interview stages are likely to take place via video conferencing using Zoom
- Successful candidates will be invited to attend the Board meeting on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 as observers, after which the Board will confirm them into position.

**To apply:**

Please provide an up-to-date CV which shows your full career history with any breaks explained. Please include details of all executive and non-executive roles that are currently held.

- Write a supporting statement (no more than 3 sides of A4) detailing how you are a good candidate for this post and how you fulfil the person specification and highlight any potential conflicts of interest.
- Complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form. It is not mandatory to complete this form. The information requested is purely for monitoring purposes in line with our commitment to equality and diversity and will not affect the outcome of your application.
- The names and contact details of two referees (these will not be taken without prior consent).
- Your application should be emailed to [jk@thehousingexecutive.com](mailto:jk@thehousingexecutive.com) and must be received by **9am Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021**.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this post or the process, in confidence, please call Julie Kellaway at The Housing Executive, on 020 7620 3048.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Beverly Finn  
Head of HR and Central Services



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The following supplementary information has also been included:

- Annual Report 2019/2020 and financial statements which can be viewed at <https://www.sih-annualreport.co.uk>
- Click here to view our [Summary Business Plan 2016-2021](#)
- Further information on Sapphire Independent Housing can be found on our website at [www.sih.org](http://www.sih.org)



## Sapphire Independent Housing

### Welcome Letter

Thank you for expressing an interest in joining the Board of Sapphire Independent Housing Ltd.



I am proud to be the current Chair of Sapphire and, together with fellow Board members and the Executive Management Team, we are taking the Association forward to the next stage in its development. Our track record in housing is established and proven and we are well placed to continue to be a preferred provider based on quality and high service standards. However, important decisions are required as we continue to manage our property portfolio and ensure a viable and sustainable organisation that is best placed to meet customer need into the future.

We are ambitious for the services that we deliver and this is an exciting time to join our Board as we embark on a significant development programme over the coming years, making a £35 million investment into new affordable housing.

Recognising that strong governance is crucial to our continuing success, we are seeking to expand our Board and we are looking for professional people with an impressive track record of achievement in their field either in an executive or non-executive director role. We are looking for people who will contribute to our overall strategic direction and have the ability to govern a highly specialised and complex organisation.

We would be keen to welcome candidates with cross sector experience and background in at least one of the specialist areas of:

- Finance, risk and treasury management
- Asset Management, construction and sustainability

We want to reflect the diversity of the client group we support on our Board and so would welcome applications from suitably qualified people from within the BAME community as well as those with lived experience of social housing and support.

I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jan Stiles  
Chair of the Board



## Background Information for Prospective Board Members

### **Background**

Sapphire Independent Housing is a smaller registered housing provider with 274 homes in London and Hertfordshire. We provide quality support and accommodation to single people in housing need, sheltered housing and general needs homes. We are currently operating in the London Boroughs of Camden, Islington, Brent and Hertsmer Borough Council.

We have a turnover of £3.8m with a quarter of this coming from support grant from local authorities and housing assets of £16m. We are active members of the g320 group of smaller housing associations and the Smaller Providers Benchmarking Club (SPBM). We are pleased to have both the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) and the Investors in People (IIP) gold standard accreditations.

### **Our mission, aims and values**

#### **Our mission is**

'To improve lives and value people'.

We aim to achieve this through four strategic objectives:

1. To remain a strong and viable provider of high-quality housing and services
2. To grow the business and develop the Association
3. Invest in our residents
4. Be an employer of choice

#### **Our guiding values**

We are guided by the following values:

**Accountability:** Everything we do must stand the test of scrutiny by all who have an interest in our work.

**Integrity:** We are always open to examine what we do and how we do it to make sure that we make the best use of our resources to meet our priorities.

**Respect:** We will treat everyone as an individual having an appreciation of their individual needs and wants.

**Ownership:** Everyone has a part to play and takes responsibility for delivering excellent services and finding solutions to challenges.



## Sapphire Independent Housing

### Our history

Sapphire Independent Housing was originally established in 1969, as Irish Centre Hostels and we purchased our first supported scheme, Hope House, in Kilburn in 1973, which was refurbished in 1974 and renamed **Conway House**. The Association purchased **St Louise**, a large all female hostel, from the Daughters of Charity in 1976 but as this no longer met modern day standards St Louise was closed in 2019.

In 1994 our first self-contained general needs property, **Highgate Road and College Yard**, was purchased using funding supplied by the Rough Sleepers Initiative. The Association went on to build three more additional self-contained general needs properties throughout the 1990s using Rough Sleepers Initiative funding to help meet the needs of single people requiring independent living.

Sapphire underwent its first rebranding in 1995, when Irish Centre Hostels changed its name to Irish Centre Housing and we had begun to diversify our services across the public housing sector.

Sapphire continued to grow throughout the nineties and **St Eugene Court**, our development for older independent residents, was purchased and redeveloped into 25 independent flats for the elderly in 1999. **Hackett House** was also purchased, in the same year from the Local Authority and up until 2016 was used as part of Sapphire's Recovery Service. Hackett House is now used as a shared general needs house, for both male and female residents, moving on from the final stages of hostel life and on to independent living.

Sapphire acquired **Bethany House**, our 93 bed all-female hostel, in 1999 from the YWCA along with **Townsend House** from the Girls Friendly Society (GFS) in 2003 and **Hepburn Court** from the YWCA in 2006.

**Conway House** and **Tara Lodge** are our most recent developments. Conway House was completely refurbished as a 60 bed male hostel in 2012 and has a fully equipped **Training and Resource Centre (TRC)** which is open to all Pathway and Sapphire residents as well as the local community. **Tara Lodge** is situated adjacent to Conway House and comprises of five general needs family flats and one single bed flat.

Sapphire rebranded, in 2015 as Sapphire Independent Housing, to more accurately reflect the organisation as it is today: A modern and diverse housing association offering a mixed-tenure portfolio that provides support and services to people, some of whom have a vulnerability, in housing need across three London boroughs and South Hertfordshire.

### The present and the future

The most significant change for us (prior to the pandemic) was the sale of our St Louise hostel in central London. The decision to dispose of the hostel was always a difficult one for us. Having made the decision to do so in 2018, we embarked on an 18 month project to support residents to find alternative accommodation and decommission the scheme. The disposal of St Louise enables us to achieve our strategic aim to provide new modern affordable homes, and we are delighted to have been selected as preferred partner for several small sites in the London Borough of Hounslow, and to take forward proposals to build a new scheme in the London Borough of Brent. Currently our development pipeline is 120 units





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which will more than replace the units lost from the sale of St Louise. The development programme is being funded by a combination of proceeds of sale, grant funding and new loan funding. The first new homes are expected to come on stream in 2022/23.

Of course, the pandemic has overshadowed everything, and it is hard to recollect life as it was before COVID-19, so huge has been the impact on society and on our individual lives. In our response, we invoked our Business Continuity Plan on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and moved quickly to new ways of working, which ensured we were able to maintain essential services, support vulnerable residents and protect our staff. We have continued to work in this adjusted way over the last nine months. Looking ahead to the future, we are determined to use the crisis as a catalyst for good, building on our plans for the future so that Sapphire remains a strong viable housing provider offering much needed housing and services.



## Governance at Sapphire

Sapphire's Board meets five times a year. We currently have nine members on the Board who have a broad range of expertise and experience which is relevant to Sapphire. In addition to the main Board, we have three committees;

- Development Committee
- Finance Audit and Risk (FAR) Committee
- Remuneration and Nomination Committee

The FAR Committee meets four times a year and in addition to its four Board members also has an independent member. The Development Committee meets on an ad hoc basis but usually three times a year, and the Remuneration and Nomination Committee meets twice a year.

Sapphire is a signatory to the NHF Code of Governance and undertakes regular reviews of Board effectiveness. An induction programme will be provided to all new Board members along with any required training.

## Our Board members

### Chair:

**Dr Jan Stiles:** Jan was elected Chair in April 2017 after joining the Board in February 2014. Jan's most recent post was Director of Executive Education and Director of Bath, London at the University of Bath. She first worked in industry in sales and then as a Managing Director before moving to the academic sector where she has worked for the last twenty-three years, more recently as Chief Executive Officer for Executive Education at Cambridge Judge Business School before joining Bath University. Jan teaches strategy and leadership, is qualified in MBTI 1 and 2, Firo-B and Emotional Intelligence psychometrics. She is also co-author of *Finance for the General Manager* published by McGraw Hill.

### Board Members:

**Maggie Van Reenen:** Maggie is a Marketing and Communications Consultant and joined the Board in February 2014. Maggie Chairs the FAR Committee.

**Terry Sullivan:** Terry is an experienced Quantity Surveyor and Project Manager with experience of sales, marketing and estimating large scale public sector and commercial projects. He has held the posts of Managing Director of Berkeley Partnership Homes Ltd and Sales Director for Wilmott Dixon Housing (Southern) Ltd. He currently runs his own consultancy providing cost and development advice to a range of clients. Terry joined the Board in February 2016.

**Alan Johnson:** Alan is a housing consultant with over 25 years' experience in the development of both private and affordable accommodation. Previously he was Group Development Director of A2Dominion Housing Group. Alan joined the Board in May 2016. Alan chairs the Development Committee.

**Alan Strickland:** Alan joined the Board in February 2018 and brings public policy and stakeholder engagement experience from leadership roles in the voluntary sector and local government.





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Alan is Director of External Affairs and Resident Involvement at the housing association Optivo. He previously spent seven years as a council cabinet member, securing London's largest Mayoral Housing Zone, leading a major review of Supported Housing and working to attract over £500m of public investment in regeneration projects. In senior roles at Volunteering England and NCVO, Alan worked across Whitehall to secure policy changes to support volunteering. He was previously a trustee of The Conservation Volunteers and Alexandra Palace Charitable Trust. Alan Chairs the Remuneration and Nomination Committee.

**Alasdair Macarthur:** Alasdair joined our Finance, Audit and Risk Committee in May 2019 as an independent committee member. Alasdair worked for 30 years in IT in large, blue-chip utility companies. Since retiring Alasdair served for 4 years as a Trustee at Parents and Children Together (PACT) one of the leading adoption agencies in England where he chaired the Audit Committee and acted as interim Chair of that charity. Most recently he has worked on a number of ad-hoc consultancy assignments, providing business development support to some of the 26 Adoption Agencies across England & Wales, as well as ad-hoc coaching and support to the CEOs in these adoption agencies. He is also a non-exec with Aspire Housing.

**Mithun Kathirgamanathan:** Mithun joined the Board in September 2019.

Mithun is a chartered accountant and currently the Head of Corporate Finance at Red Door Ventures, a real estate development and investment vehicle wholly owned by the London Borough of Newham. Prior to this he held posts as an Investment Associate at Octopus Healthcare and Executive in the Business Modelling Group within Corporate Finance at Deloitte.

**Catherine Ryder:** Catherine joined the Board in September 2019.

Catherine is Director of Policy and Research at the National Housing Federation. Prior to this role, she was Head of Policy, with a particular interest in supported housing, welfare and the Social Housing Green Paper. Catherine also heads up the Federation's Together with Tenants project. She has previously worked as Advisor to the Chief Executive at the Federation and recently spent some time working on economic development and housing at Coast to Capital – a Local Enterprise Partnership in Surrey and Sussex.

**Mark Sweeney:** Mark joined the Board in September 2019.

Mark has extensive experience in the social housing sector having started his professional career as a housing trainee in an inner London local authority in 1982. He is currently Head of Governance at Altair, a management consultancy specialising in the social housing sector. He also has extensive previous experience as a non-Executive Director in the sector. Along the way he has also spent 10 years working in ICT and undertaking strategic project and programme management.



## **Our Executive Management Team**

### **Heather Thomas - Chief Executive**

Heather joined Sapphire in November 2016 and has 20 years' experience of working at a senior level with different registered providers. With experience of managing diverse housing tenures; she brings considerable experience and knowledge of the housing association sector.

She also recently took over as Chair of Croydon Churches Housing Association in South London, she is a corporate member of the Chartered Institute of Housing and has a Masters in Organisational Behaviour. She is also a guest lecturer to housing students at South Bank University.

Heather also has considerable experience in transformation, customer service, cultural change, performance improvement and governance.

### **Jesse Fajemisin – Operations Director**

Jesse joined Sapphire in 2018 and became Operations Director in November 2019.

He has over 10 years' combined experience in housing, property and repairs and maintenance contract management. He has led services within the G15 and worked in the charity sector, so has a range of experiences across different tenures and contracts, including general needs, temporary housing, floating and accommodation-based support.

### **Claudette Marciano – Finance Director**

Claudette joined Sapphire Independent Housing as Finance Director in 2020.

She is a member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, has a BA (Hons) in Accounting and Finance and has over 20 years' experience in Strategic and Corporate Finance. Claudette began her career in the private sector, before moving to the public sector and has also held senior finance positions at G15 housing associations, specialising in long-term financial planning and investment appraisal.

### **Beverly Finn – Head of HR and Central Services**

Beverly joined Sapphire in 2009, having previously worked in the private sector in mainly executive management support and human resource management. Beverly has a CIPD level 7 Advanced Diploma in Human Resource Management and is an Associate member of CIPD and a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

Since joining Sapphire Beverly has focussed on organisational development, delivering a professional HR service and has taken the lead in the organisation's communication and marketing strategy and governance.



## Sapphire Independent Housing

### Board Member: Role Profile and Person Specification

**Payment:** £1,500 plus expenses

**Time commitment:** Board members are expected to attend 5 Board meetings a year & an Awayday. They are also expected to take part in a committee in accordance with their skills, interests & experience. Members should also make every effort to attend training & visits to services.

During the pandemic the Board has been meeting virtually but it is hoped to be able to resume in person meetings from late 2021 which will take place in our Kentish Town Head Office.

#### Purpose of role

To contribute to the Board in its responsibilities for setting the strategic vision and direction of the organisation, in line with regulatory requirements and the Association's objectives through excellence in governance and effective strategic planning.

#### Key role relationships

To maintain good relationships with other members of the Board, the Chief Executive and other key members of Sapphire's senior staff and with external stakeholders.

#### Core tasks and responsibilities

##### Leadership:

1. To provide leadership for both the direction and control of the Association. To set the vision and guiding principles and ensure that obligations to stakeholders are understood and reflected in strategy and policies.
2. To uphold and promote Sapphire's mission, values and strategic objectives.

##### Governance:

3. To contribute to ensuring compliance with the Association's Code of Governance, financial regulations, standing orders, delegated authorities and the Social Housing Regulator's, Regulatory Code.
4. To act reasonably and always in the best interests of the Organisation and ensure that your behaviour as a Board member is in line with our values and strategic objectives.

##### Strategy:

5. To set both the short and long-term objectives for the Association and to determine the strategic aims and outcomes required.
6. Contribute to/initiate the review and evaluation of present and future opportunities, threats



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and risks in the external environment and current and future strengths, weaknesses and risks in the internal environment to ensure effective strategic decision-making.

### **Performance of the Board:**

7. To ensure that the Board fulfils its duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the organisation including compliance.
8. To contribute to the implementation of frameworks for effective financial control and identification and management of risk.

### **Focusing on organisational performance:**

9. To contribute to overseeing organisational performance and continuous improvement, ensuring the organisation is managed efficiently and effectively.
10. To scrutinise and review performance against agreed targets and budgets; also, in respect of customer feedback and the performance of comparable organisations.
11. To read and digest reports prepared by staff and advisors and contribute to appropriate debate of key issues by the Board.

### **Maintaining good relationships with staff:**

12. Build and maintain effective and constructive working relationships with the Chief Executive and other senior staff.
13. In conjunction with the Board, determine Chief Executive remuneration and ensure, when necessary, that the Chief Executive is replaced in a timely and orderly fashion.
14. Contribute to ensuring that the Board as a whole acts in partnership with senior staff.

### **Representing the organisation:**

15. Act as an ambassador and representative for the organisation, upholding the reputation of Sapphire and its mission, objectives and guiding principles.
16. Network and promote the achievements, purposes and benefits of the organisation.

### **Adding value:**

17. Apply personal expertise with due regard to both the business and social aspects of the business.
18. Be familiar and keep up to date with sector issues.
19. Role model good governance practices and behaviours.



## **Person specification – BOARD MEMBER**

### **Core competencies**

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Strong team player, able to work consensually.
- Strategic thinking, able to analyse complex information, demonstrate clear analytical intellect and contribute to rational decision making.
- Support the mission, values and social housing objectives of Sapphire.

### **Knowledge and experience**

- Experience of operating at senior executive/non-executive director level.
- Knowledge of good governance.
- Knowledge of business strategy.

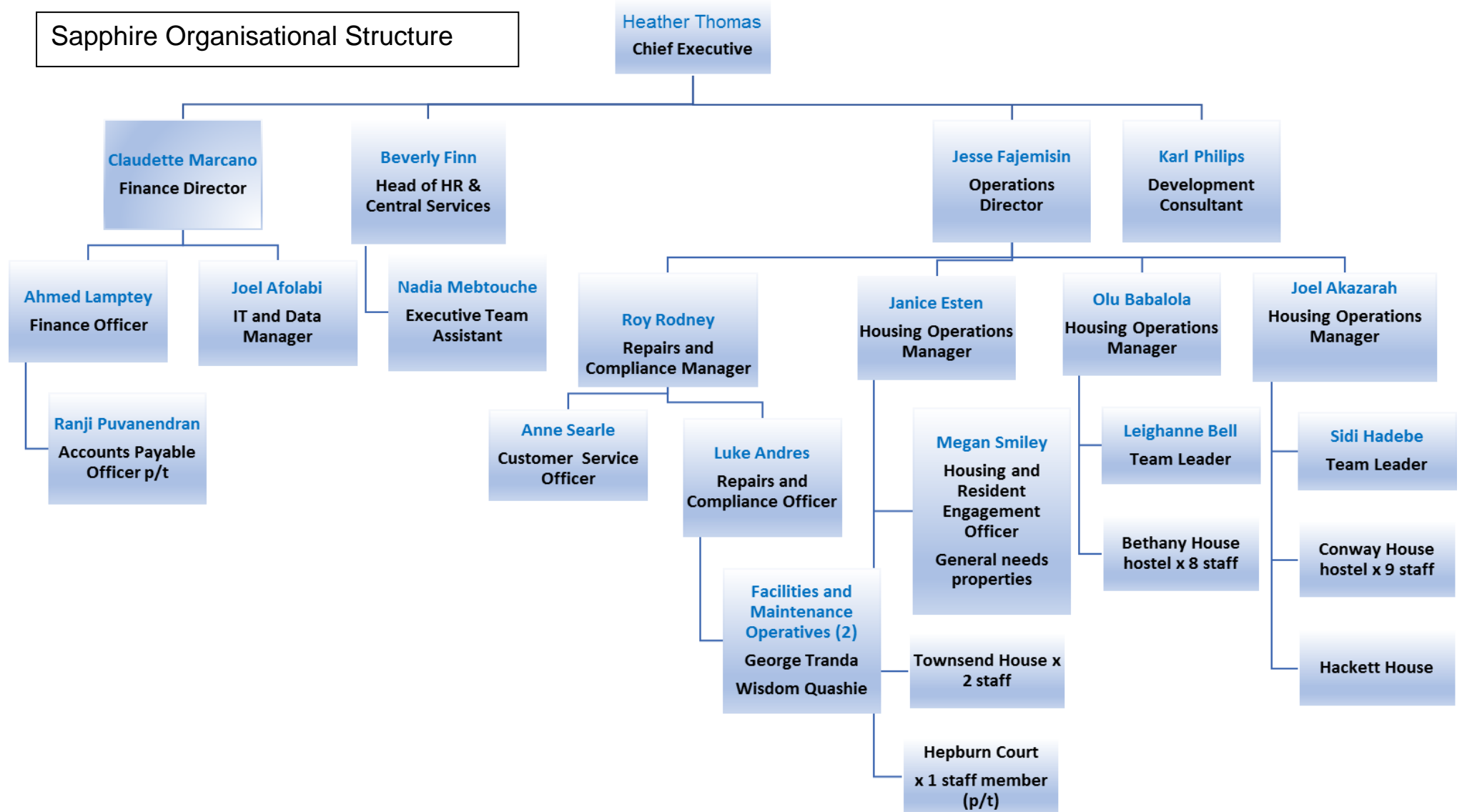
### **Skills and abilities**

- The ability to be able to participate fully as a Board member and have confident questioning and debating skills in order to make informed judgements on both written and verbal information.
- Able to assess risk and promote risk awareness without being risk averse.
- Able to challenge appropriately and hold the Board and senior staff to account.
- Able to contribute to team spirit, to work collaboratively, and deliver 'cabinet style' decision making.

### **Personal behaviour and style**

- Actively role models the professional conduct expected of the Board.
- Proactively demonstrates strong commitment to equality and diversity.
- Passionate about service improvements; strongly champions the right of residents and customers to have access to excellent services.
- Listens to others and provides decisive decision making when it is required.
- Enabling and supportive leadership style that motivates staff to deliver the best.
- Demonstrates credibility and integrity.
- Open to learning and development, for self, staff, and the Board; fosters a learning culture throughout the organisation.
- Has the time and commitment to effectively discharge the responsibilities of the post of Board member.

# Sapphire Organisational Structure





## Monitoring Form – Equal Opportunities

At Sapphire Independent Housing Ltd we are wholly committed to both the principle and operation of equality. This is demonstrated by how we deliver our services to our residents and in the way that we support our own staff. We wish to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and appointed solely on their suitability for the post irrespective of race, gender, age, disability, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation or religion. We monitor the recruitment process to ensure we are meeting our diversity and equality aims and the information given by you will only be used to assist us in doing this.

To help us monitor the effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy please complete the following form. The information given on this form will be kept separately from the information used in the recruitment process. All information is strictly confidential and will only be used for statistical purposes. Only restricted and authorised personnel will have access to this data. The information you give on this form will be treated separately from your application and will not be considered in regards to your recruitment or the selection process.

The information recorded below is collected and processed in accordance with the consent given in our privacy statement. If you prefer not to answer any of the questions, we will respect your viewpoint and your registration will not be affected in any way.

### AGE

<input type="checkbox"/> 18-30	<input type="checkbox"/> 51-65
<input type="checkbox"/> 31-40	<input type="checkbox"/> 65+
<input type="checkbox"/> 41-50	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

### GENDER

<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Male
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-binary	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to use own term: please specify	

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### CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Do you have any dependents that you have caring responsibilities for?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> No

### DISABILITY

Defined as an individual who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Definitions (for the purposes of the Act):

- Substantial means neither minor nor trivial.
- Long term means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions).
- Normal day-to-day activities include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes. I consider myself to have a disability, as defined by the Equality Act 2010
<input type="checkbox"/> No

### **ETHNIC ORIGIN**

Please note that ethnic questions are not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. UK citizens may belong to any of the ethnic categories indicated.

*[The following categories are those in the 2011 census]*

#### **Asian / Asian British**

- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Asian Other

#### **African / Caribbean / Black / Black British**

- ☐ Black African
- ☐ Black Caribbean
- ☐ Any other African / Caribbean / Black background

#### **Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups**

- ☐ Asian & White
- ☐ Black African & White
- ☐ Black Caribbean & White
- ☐ Mixed Other
- ☐ Arab
- ☐ Any other group, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **White**

- ☐ English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- ☐ White Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

### **RELIGION/BELIEFS**

What is your religion or belief?

*[The following categories are those in the 2011 census]*

- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Christian  
(including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant  
and all other Christian denominations)
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Other (please state): \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ No religion (including  
humanist, atheist &  
agnostic)

### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

What is your sexual orientation: *[The following categories are those recommended by Stonewall, the lesbian, gay and bisexual charity]*

- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Gay Man
- ☐ Gay Woman / Lesbian
- ☐ Heterosexual / Straight
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other (please state): \_\_\_\_\_