



Sapphire Independent Housing



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Sapphire Independent Housing – Director of Operations

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 12th June
First interview: Tuesday 20th June (online)
Final interview (in person): Wednesday 28th or Thursday 29th June (in NW5)

- First round interviews will take place via Teams video conferencing.
- Candidates in the final stage will be asked to complete some Reasoning and Personality exercises online.
- In person interviews will be held at Sapphire's Head Office, 1 Holmes Road, London, NW5 3AA

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.
- Complete the **Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form**. (The form is at the end of this pack. 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).
- Email your application to rec@thehousingexecutive.com by **10.00 am Monday 12th June 2023**.

If you would like to discuss any aspect, call our consultant Tony Clark at The Housing Executive on 020 7620 3048. He can also arrange an informal discussion with Heather Thomas, the Chief Executive.

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 is also available on these hyperlinks:

- Annual Report 2022/2023 and financial statements which can be viewed at <https://www.sih-annualreport.co.uk>
- Click here to view our [Summary Business Plan 2021-2026](#)
- Further information on Sapphire Independent Housing can be found on our website at www.sih.org

Should you have any difficulties accessing these documents, they can be emailed to you.



Sapphire Independent Housing – Director of Operations

Welcome Letter

Thank you for expressing an interest in the Director of Operations role at Sapphire Independent Housing.

I am proud to be the Chief Executive of Sapphire and, together with the Board members and the Executive Management Team, we have been taking the Association forward to the next stage in its development. Our track record as a smaller specialist housing association is established and proven and we are well-placed to continue to be a preferred provider based on our quality and high service standards.

We are ambitious for the services that we deliver and it is an exciting time to take on this crucial role as Director of Operations as Sapphire prepares for its growth via the development of new homes in Hounslow. We are looking for someone who can lead a varied portfolio of services and prepare for growth. This is a great opportunity for the right person to make their mark.

Enclosed is a range of information which will hopefully give you a flavour of the sort of organisation we are and the culture within which we operate. If you think you would like to be part of this and part of helping us shape our future then we look forward to hearing from you

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely

Heather Thomas
Chief Executive



Background Information

Sapphire Independent Housing is a smaller registered housing provider with 288 homes in London and Hertfordshire, with a further 100 in our development pipeline. We provide quality support and accommodation to single people in housing need, sheltered housing, general needs homes and have recently diversified into shared ownership and intermediate rented units. We currently operate in the London Boroughs of Camden, Islington, Brent and Hertsmere Borough Council and in the process of a major development programme in Hounslow.

We have a turnover of £4.1m with a quarter of this coming from support grant from local authorities and housing assets of £24m. 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

‘Providing homes to improve lives and enabling people to live independently.’

We aim to achieve this through four strategic objectives:

1. To provide services that support and enhance the lives of our residents.
2. To have more and better homes.
3. To be an employer of choice.
4. To manage our finances well and improve our ways of working.

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.





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.

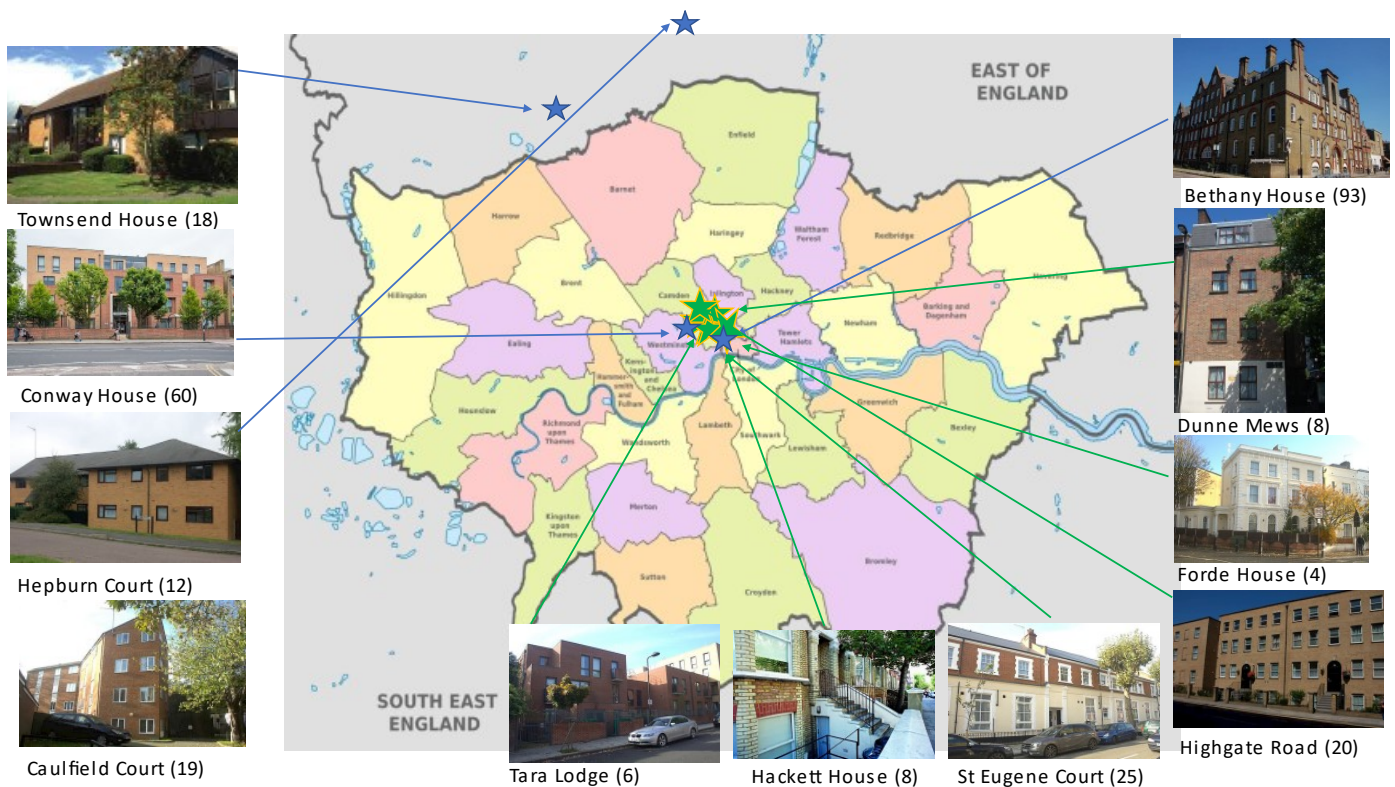
Sapphire acquired **Bethany House**, our 93 bed all-female hostel, in 1999 from the YWCA along with **Townsend House** from the Girls Friendly Society (GFS) in 2003 and **Hepburn Court** from the YWCA in 2006.

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.



Map of Sapphire Properties



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 in 2019. The disposal of St Louise has enabled us to achieve our strategic aim to provide new modern affordable homes. In 2021 we were pleased to have purchased a mixed tenure scheme of 15 homes in Camden at Park Place. The scheme has a mixture of general needs rented flats, intermediate rented flats and four shared ownership flats. This is a new tenure for Sapphire. We are currently developing 100 homes across 19 sites in Hounslow and the first of these schemes started on site in early 2023. This is a huge undertaking for Sapphire, particularly in the current macroeconomic environment.





Governance at Sapphire

Sapphire's Board meets five times a year. Following recent appointments, we will have twelve members on the Board by September 2023. They 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

Sapphire is a signatory to the NHF 2020 Code of Governance and undertakes regular reviews of Board effectiveness.





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 is also Chair of Croydon Churches Housing Association (CCHA) in South London, an Executive Committee member of the G320 Executive Committee for smaller housing associations and a corporate member of the Chartered Institute of Housing. Heather has a Masters in Organisational Behaviour and 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 – Director of Operations

Jesse joined Sapphire in 2018 and joined the Executive Team in February 2019 as Operations Director. He has over 12 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.

He is the Chair of the National Housing Federation's National Smaller Housing Association Network, and is a national representative on the Regulator of Social Housing's Small Provider Panel.

He is a Board Member for Gloucester City Homes, where he is also the Vice Chair of their Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee.

John McNiece – Finance Director

John is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland and joined Sapphire in September 2022 having worked in a number of Finance Director and Senior finance roles in Social housing since 2014. He draws on 20 years of senior finance experience from Telecommunications, Utilities and Charity sectors with significant exposure to financial and property management and development. His roles in Social Housing have drawn heavily on this experience in terms of transformation activities, strong financial management, financial planning and treasury improvements.

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, and her focus is on organisational development, governance and leading on the organisation's communication and marketing strategy.



Job Description	
JOB TITLE:	Director of Operations
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Chief Executive
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	4 x Operations Managers
PURPOSE OF ROLE:	
Lead responsibility for housing management, support, leasehold and asset management services; ensuring a high-quality service, working in partnership with residents, colleagues, the Chief Executive, Executive Management Team, the Board and key external stakeholders in line with Sapphire's values and mission.	
MAIN DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. As a member of the Executive Management Team (EMT) play a major role in helping Sapphire achieve its strategic objectives by working closely with the Chief Executive and the Board.2. To ensure Sapphire provides excellent services which are financially viable and deliver the best possible service levels to residents.3. To maintain an up to date knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting social housing, regulatory matters and legislation.4. To ensure that directorate services are delivered in accordance with necessary statutory and regulatory and contractual requirements.5. To ensure there are comprehensive policies and procedures which are implemented and updated.6. To provide leadership, support, direction and motivation to direct reports and colleagues.7. To have overall responsibility for the effective setting and management of operational service budgets.8. To lead the development and delivery of SIH's asset management strategy and health and safety management systems achieving high standards of service, regulatory compliance and value for money.9. Assist in making decisions about Sapphire's growth and management of new homes.10. To lead on the resident engagement strategy and ensure the involvement and engagement of customers in shaping, delivery and scrutiny of services.11. To ensure the effective management of the Leasehold, and other non-standard tenancies in accordance with the association's objectives, policies and procedures.12. To act as an ambassador for SIH and foster effective relationships with a variety of external stakeholders, partners, funders and other agencies to maximise the growth and success of SIH.13. Alongside other members of the Executive Management Team, to have collective responsibility for the overall identification and control of risk across SIH and to ensure compliance with all legislative, regulatory and contract funding requirements.	



Person specification

Education & qualifications:

- Degree level education or equivalent, ideally with a professional qualification.
- Evidence of continuing professional development.

Experience, Knowledge, Ability:

- Experienced manager with the ability and commitment to take on a leadership role working collaboratively as a member of the EMT
- Experience in one or more functional areas – housing management, supported housing, asset management, and leasehold management
- Experience in leading providing facing customer-facing services and implementing strategies, plans and projects
- Experience of providing services in a regulated and contractual environment
- Experience of leading change
- An understanding of governance and the ability to write reports and present them confidently to the Board.

Competencies:

Technical & professional skills:

- Technical expertise in one or more of the functional areas of supported housing, general needs housing, asset management and customer services
- Able to oversee a diverse range of functional responsibilities
- The ability to lead on health and safety, safeguarding and other areas of risk.

Leadership & management:

- Contributes to the culture and values for the organisation and reflects these values as a role model in own behaviour and actions with a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Motivates, enables and inspires others to succeed
- Shows strong and decisive leadership skills
- Empowers and enables individuals and teams to develop and perform.

Business awareness:

- Possesses business acumen and commercial awareness
- Seeks opportunities for new business, evaluates the strategic benefits and risks
- Understands and is able to deliver complex strategies and corporate plans.

Customer focus:

- Demonstrates a commitment to resident engagement
- Demonstrates a commitment to achieving the highest standards of service in all activities.

Ambition:

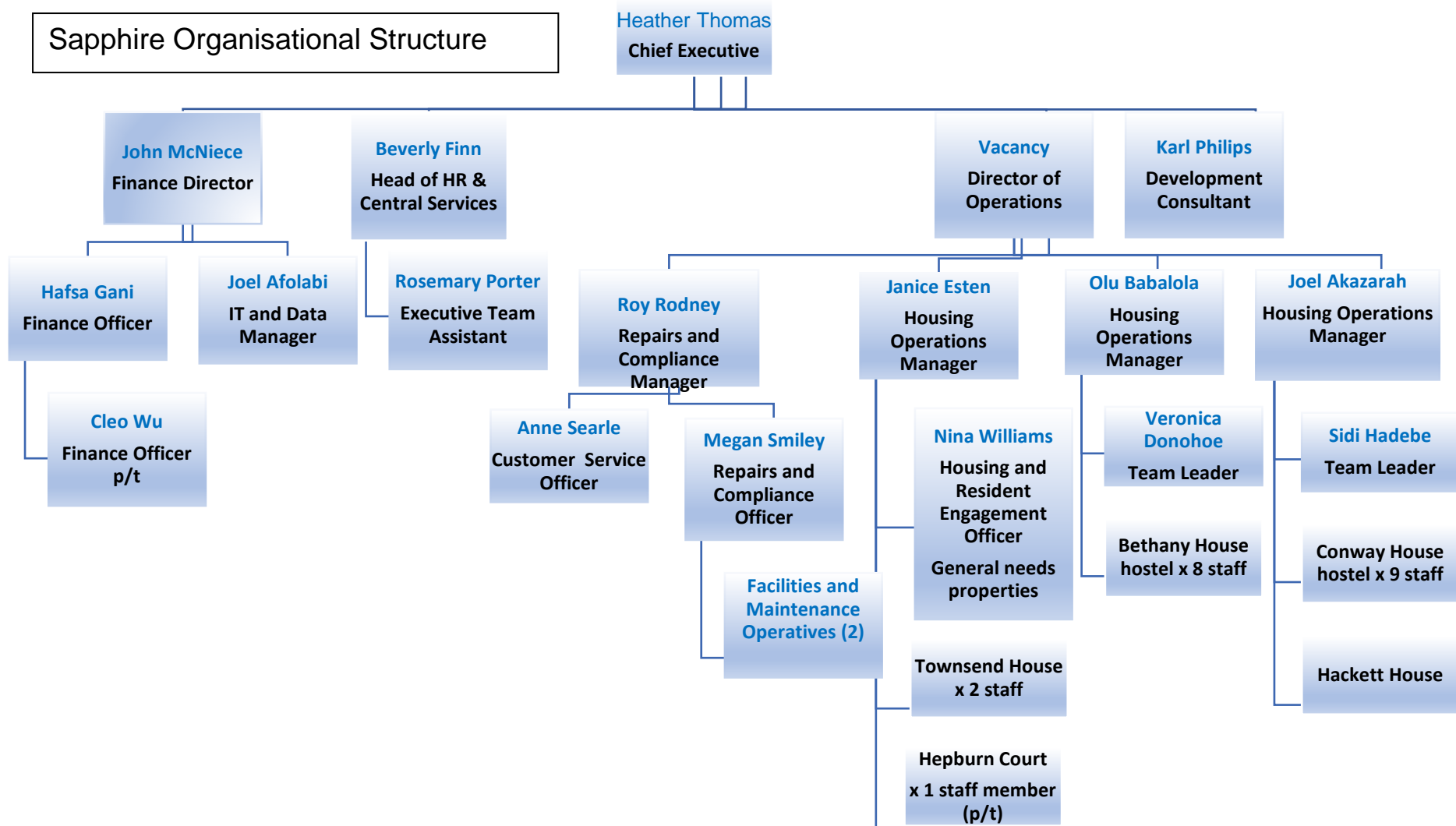
- Sets high standards for self and others and commits to clear objectives to achieve results
- Maintains focus and measures outcomes, seeks opportunities for continuous improvement.



Interpersonal/working together:

- Shows an awareness of other people and environment and own impact on these
- Uses interpersonal skills to build rapport with others
- Shows the ability to apply different strategies to negotiate, influence and persuade others
- Ability to foster and maintain strong relationships with a range of audiences.

Conditions Of Service	
JOB TITLE:	Director of Operations
TERM:	Permanent, Full Time
REMUNERATION:	£73,000 per annum
ANNUAL LEAVE:	25 days, plus bank holidays, rising to 30 days with service
BENEFITS:	<p>Pension scheme – <i>7% Employer contribution, 3% Employee</i></p> <p>Season Ticket Loan</p> <p>Rent Deposit Loan</p> <p>Flexible Working</p> <p>Life Insurance – <i>4 times salary</i></p> <p>Employee Assistance Programme</p> <p>Private Health Insurance</p> <p>Healthcare Cash back Scheme</p> <p>Optical assistance</p> <p>Cycle to Work Scheme</p> <p>Colleague Recognition Scheme</p> <p>Accreditations and awards</p> <p>Our staff are our most valuable resource, we believe training and development is key to our success and we encourage and support our people to undertake training and development that will improve performance and enhance their personal development.</p> <p>We are Investors in People (IIP) Gold (working towards Platinum), Customer Service Excellence (CSE) Accredited, and Disability Confident Committed.</p>



Diversity Monitoring Form

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.

How did you find out about the role?

<input type="checkbox"/> Guardian Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Inside Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> The Housing Executive
<input type="checkbox"/> TotalJobs	<input type="checkbox"/> G320	<input type="checkbox"/> Sapphire IH Website
<input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify: _____		

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 _____	

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

White

- ☐ English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- ☐ White Other

☐ Arab

☐ Prefer not to say

☐ Any other group, please specify: _____

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 specify: _____

- ☐ 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]*

- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Gay Man
- ☐ Gay Woman / Lesbian
- ☐ Heterosexual

☐ Prefer not to say

☐ Prefer to use own term please specify _____