



## Become a Resident Board Member

***Help shape decisions about our homes, services and communities***



**Thank you - we are delighted that you are interested in becoming a Board member who is a resident of Barnsbury Housing Association.**

Barnsbury Housing Association (BHA) wants to recruit a new resident Board member to work along our existing Board members who are residents.

We know that the people who live in our homes are in the best position to help shape our services, monitor our performance and influence the work we do in our communities.

Our customers have a strong voice across our organisation and contribute to our business in a variety of ways including at Board level. That's why the role of the Resident Board Member is so important – to ensure that the voices of our residents and communities are heard at the most senior level of our organisation.

As a Resident Board Member, you'll gain new skills and abilities which may help you in other areas of your life and you'll have the opportunity to truly influence our vision and strategy and play an important role in our aspirations for the future.

If this sounds like something you'd like to take part in, you'll find more information in this pack as well as details on how to apply.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,



**Richard Hill**  
Chair



## About Barnsbury Housing Association

BHA is a small neighbourhood-based housing association, formed in 1967 to provide genuinely affordable rented housing in Barnsbury, Islington. Today we provide 300 homes throughout Islington, all bar one for social rent. We are proud of our close relationship with our residents and the contribution we make to the neighbourhood.

We are registered as a charitable housing association and are governed by a voluntary [Board](#) which is supported by two committees: Finance, Audit & Risk and Remuneration.

You can find out more about Barnsbury's [history](#) and activities on our website, where you can also read our latest annual report and latest Corporate Plan.

### Our Purpose

We want to help create successful communities: places where people feel they belong, places where they can thrive.

At the heart of this is our role in providing a safe, warm, affordable and secure home.

We will do this by being a trusted landlord, known for providing great services and well-cared for and sustainable homes; by empowering residents to support their own communities to thrive; by being connected and open to ideas; and by putting residents at our heart.



**Our three strategic ambitions** - to Connect, to Build, to Anticipate - provide a framework for how we will deliver our vision and bring about long-lasting change for our residents and communities.

### Our Values

Our culture is about the shared values, beliefs and behaviours that determine how we do things, then the ways and systems of working that help to get those things done. Our values put customers at our heart and provide the foundation for the culture of our organisation and how we work.

- We are respectful, caring and kind
- We are collaborative, and connected to our community and our residents
- We are creative, resourceful and 'can do'
- We are inclusive and fair
- We keep our promises

## About the BHA Board

### **What does the Board do?**

- Establish ambitious but realistic plans to help deliver BHA's purpose.
- Inspire and motivate the Leadership Team and staff of the organisation.
- Approve each year's budgets and accounts.
- Make sure we have effective systems and policies in place so that the organisation is properly managed and that risks are managed.
- Monitor our performance against plans and budgets.
- Ensure that we meet legal and regulatory requirements.

### **What skills and knowledge do the Board need collectively?**

- Understanding of residents' needs and concerns
- Ability to scrutinise Board papers and ask probing questions
- Understanding of housing needs
- Strategic management
- General business skills
- Finance
- Community relations and needs

We aim to ensure that the Board has a good balance of these skills.

### **Who will I be working with on the Board?**

The Board currently has ten members, including two Board members who are residents. Our current Board Members have a range of interests, skills and experience including community building, housing finance, energy efficiency, property and housing management.

## What are the values and culture of the Board?

BHA BOARD MEMBER VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS FRAMEWORK		
<i>Barnsbury HA: Creating sustainable homes and thriving communities</i>		
Our Values	BHA lives this value by:	Board members demonstrate this value and create a positive organisational culture by:
<b>We Connect</b>  <i>with our residents, the community and the wider housing sector, creating close connections and a listening ear, where people feel heard and can thrive</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ being respectful, caring and kind to residents and each other</li> <li>▪ demonstrating honesty, integrity and transparency</li> <li>▪ being customer-focused, with a can-do approach</li> <li>▪ being approachable and inclusive and treating people fairly</li> <li>▪ keeping our promises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ seeking insights into what residents want and value, and putting residents centre-stage in the Board's work, ensuring that their voice is heard and that they influence decisions</li> <li>▪ actively seeking out opportunities to connect with staff and tenants, and listening to a wide range of views</li> <li>▪ fostering a culture of inclusion, connection and joint endeavour - with the local community and voluntary sector, Islington Council and the wider housing sector</li> <li>▪ being approachable, engaging with staff, stakeholders and tenants and safeguarding BHA's reputation</li> <li>▪ setting the bar high on issues of honesty and integrity</li> <li>▪ constructively challenging the Leadership Team, while respecting staff and each other</li> </ul>
<b>We Anticipate</b>  <i>fostering a culture of enquiry, creativity and resourcefulness, so we can plan for the future and meet changing needs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ thinking and planning ahead</li> <li>▪ thinking creatively and innovatively</li> <li>▪ being imaginative, encouraging new and better ways of working, using our resources to best effect</li> <li>▪ being curious and seeking assurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ being ambitious for the organisation, encouraging the staff team to raise its game</li> <li>▪ championing change, encouraging creativity and innovation and new and better ways of working</li> <li>▪ seeking assurance, foreseeing risk and seeking assurance that risks are being well managed</li> <li>▪ taking a longer-term view of opportunities and challenges and ensuring that BHA has the skills and resources needed</li> <li>▪ making hard choices where necessary and balancing the needs of existing and future residents</li> </ul>
<b>We Build</b>  <i>new homes, great places to live and a trusted, customer-focused team that delivers on its promises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ being dependable and trusted</li> <li>▪ behaving professionally</li> <li>▪ delivering on promises</li> <li>▪ working collaboratively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ being on time and well-prepared for meetings, taking attendance seriously and participating in training and development</li> <li>▪ holding BHA to promises made and seeking learning from mistakes</li> <li>▪ fostering and modelling a positive culture at meetings; a culture of inclusion, transparency, collaborative working (internally &amp; externally); being a team player and building a bond of trust with staff and other Board members</li> <li>▪ actively contributing to appraisals and suggestions for improvement, and looking for ways the Board can be more effective</li> <li>▪ supporting BHA, at and between meetings, contributing time, skills and expertise</li> </ul>

## Learn about the role of Resident Board Member from current member Janice Walsh

The role, Janice says, is bringing the tenant point of view to the forefront of all discussions.

'I can ask probing questions and I will always speak up if I want the tenant voice heard or a discussion made clearer,' she says.

'The professional members bring their knowledge and practical experience. They are really focused on making our community thrive and BHA being well run for us. We're there to say how everything they discuss affects us as tenants.'

'None of us want rent rises or neighbour problems but they know complex matters like these also have to meet state and local regulations and there are financial considerations.'

Janice makes clear that board meetings are not the place for individual grievances. 'We can talk about concerning issues and we challenge policy and practice when needed, though we also praise good stuff when it happens.'

Being a resident board member does need real commitment, she adds. 'You have to set aside time to read and absorb board papers before a meeting to have an understanding of issues.'

'But the board really does listen to us and it discusses matters in a balanced way. Time spent in the meetings is always interesting and rewarding.'



## About the role

### **What will my responsibilities be?**

Resident board members provide the Board with a resident perspective on matters and actively contribute to discussions on key issues facing BHA. Board meetings are inclusive and interactive, with everyone able to have their say and bring their own perspectives and experience.

Board members who are residents are also expected to be available to feedback to other residents' though occasional attendance at the Resident Voice, our resident group.

#### **What it's about**

- Working as part of a group to ensure that BHA is operating to be the best it can be
- Providing a resident perspective throughout the Board's decision making
- Working with BHA to improve our services to residents

#### **What it's not about**

- Working in opposition to BHA
- Focusing on your favourite problem or issue
- Trying to make changes locally all by yourself
- Getting more money for your street or block

### **How much of my time will it take up?**

We anticipate the role requires up to eight days a year of the new Board member's time. Most of the time will be preparing for and attending board and committee meetings. Preparation for meetings would include reviewing information sent to Board members ahead of meetings. Information is sent electronically.

The Board meets five times a year and are held at BHA's offices at Colebrooke Place, N1. Meetings are held on Thursdays and start at 6.30pm. There is also an awayday, usually held in the autumn, and on a Friday. Committee attendance, if a member of a committee, is in addition to this. Board members are expected to attend at least 80% of meetings.

In line with the 2020 Code of Governance, each appointment is for a three-year term. This can be renewed subject to a satisfactory performance, up to a maximum of six years' continuous service.

### **Who is eligible to become a Board Member?**

Any BHA resident who is over 18 years old is eligible to become a resident board member. There are some exceptions including anyone:

- Subject to court action for tenancy breach (e.g. substantial arrears or antisocial behaviour) or other relevant legal action (e.g. fraud).
- With a history of violence or aggression towards staff and/or other residents.
- Whose involvement may cause a conflict of interest due to another role.

## Support and benefits available for Board Members

As well as being a great service to BHA, we believe this opportunity has clear benefits for the right candidate. These include mentoring from a more experienced Board member, access to a training budget of up to £1000 per year for development related to being a BHA Board member, and insight into how an organisation such as BHA is run.

Voluntary Board members are entitled to claim reasonable expenses for travel and other costs, such as childcare, incurred due to attendance at Board/Committee meetings.

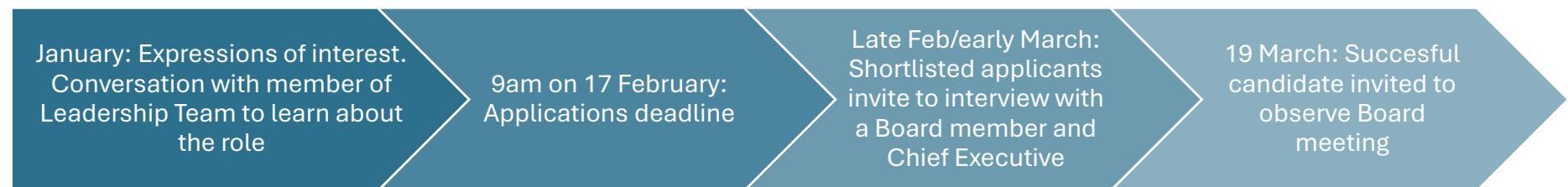
Following recruitment, the successful candidate will be supported into the role with a full induction process, including:

- Meeting with the Chair, offering an opportunity to ask questions and to gain more understanding of the Board before your first Board meeting.
- Support from the existing Board members who are residents.
- Check-ins with BHA staff to determine what support you would like to receive and how this can be delivered.
- If useful, one-to-one support, which might include sessions with staff members to find out more about specific aspects of how BHA runs.

Board members who are residents could also attend courses or events run by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), a national organisation which promotes resident involvement.

## Application process

We want this recruitment to be a success both for BHA and the successful candidate. The application process includes opportunities to learn about the role and to observe the Board, so that the decision to accept the role is made from as informed as position as possible. The stages of the process are:



To make an expression of interest, contact Cheryl Whittle, Director of Operations, on 020 7704 2324 or email [Cheryl@barnsbury.org](mailto:Cheryl@barnsbury.org)

To apply, please submit a statement (maximum 1000 words) outlining your motivation to be a Board member and what you think you would bring to the role. Applications should be emailed to Liz Meneghelli, Head of Governance: [liz@barnsbury.org](mailto:liz@barnsbury.org) by 9am on Tuesday 17 February.

Interviews will be with Susan French, Chief Executive, and two members of the Board.

