



CHAIR Information
Pack

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Introduction

Dear Candidate

Thank you very much for your interest in becoming Chair of the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations – NIFHA.

Formed in 1977, NIFHA is the representative body for NI's 20 registered housing associations. NIFHA is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. Addressing inequalities in housing has been at the core of all our work.

We are always trying to improve and adapt our organisation to meet the challenges of a changing environment. One of our imperatives is to ensure that we have an exceptionally well-motivated board with a flexible range of skills to lead the organisation into its next phase of development. To that end, we hope to recruit a dynamic and forward-thinking Chair with a sound knowledge of housing-related matters.

We are pleased to be working with Engage to help with our recruitment process. If you have any initial queries relating to the post in the first instance, please contact Patrick Minne patrick@co3.bz or 07792 509003.

We are looking for an exceptional individual with experience of committee management, who is willing to dedicate time and energy to our organisation, and share our passion to make the changes we want to see for people served by our members across Northern Ireland. You will be joining a dedicated team of people who care deeply about the difference our organisation makes.

This is a great opportunity to support housing associations to continue to make transformational contributions to Northern Ireland's future. If this sounds attractive to you, we look forward to you joining us on this exciting journey.

Dr John McPeake
Chair

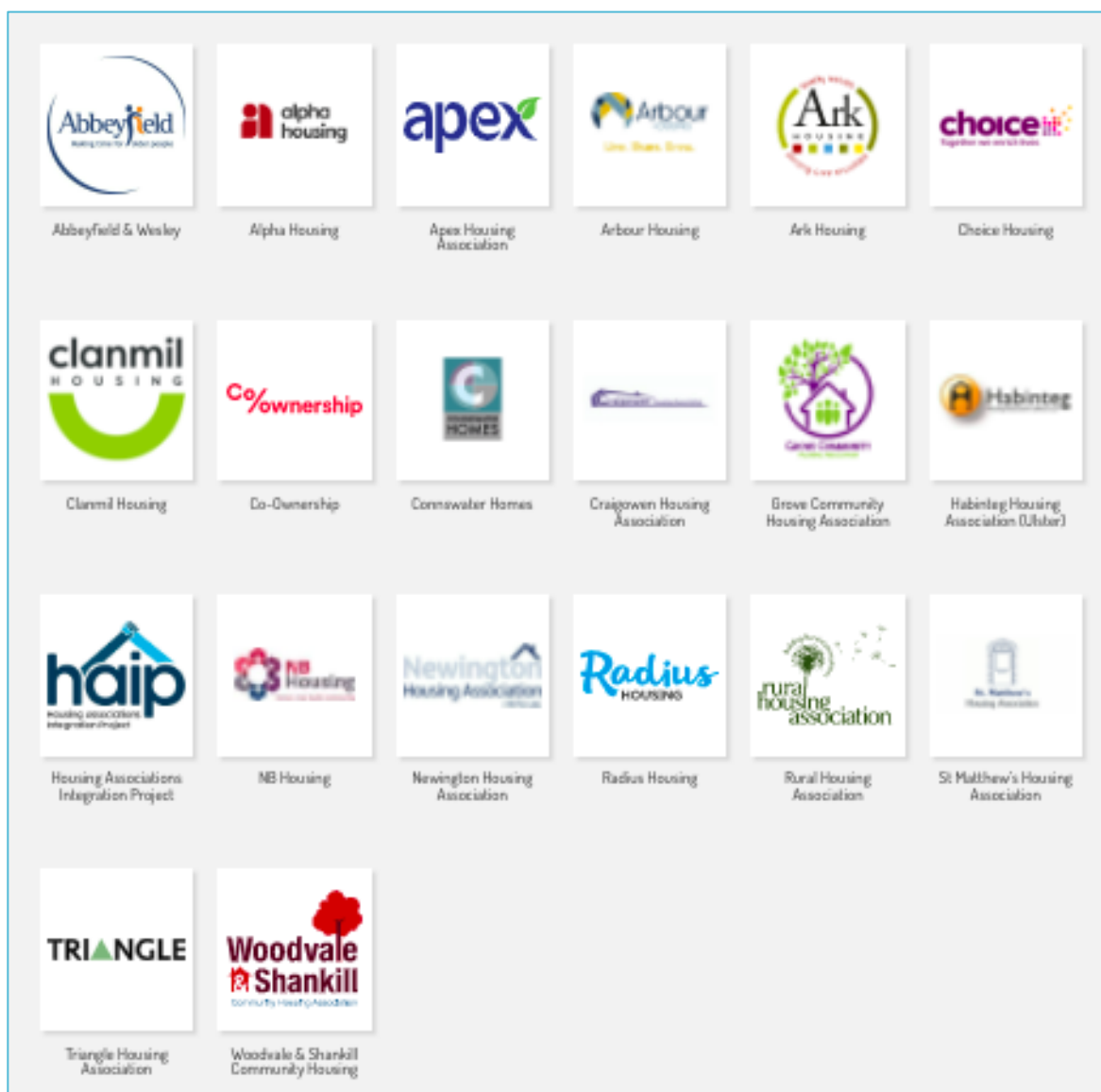


Who we are

NIFHA is the representative body for housing associations in Northern Ireland. Our 20 members manage around more than 57,000 social and affordable homes including family accommodation, sheltered and supported housing and shared ownership homes. We also invest millions every year in providing vital services and facilities for local communities.

Our members provide more than 57,000 social and affordable homes, along with high quality care and support, and invest millions each year in community services. In addition to building homes for social rent, housing associations help people who don't qualify for traditional mortgages or social housing find new ways to get on the property ladder, including Co-Ownership and Fairshare.

Our sector employs more than 3,200 people and manages housing assets worth more than £4bn. Our annual Sector Global Accounts give more information on development and economic impact.



What we do

With record numbers of homelessness and more than 26,000 people living in unsafe or unsuitable accommodation across Northern Ireland, there is an urgent need for more social and affordable housing.

As the representative body for Northern Ireland's registered housing associations, NIFHA works for its members to

SHOWCASE the role of quality social and affordable homes

CAMPAIGN with policymakers to ensure the sustainability and vibrancy of the housing association sector

ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION and the **SHARING OF BEST PRACTICE** across the sector

ENGAGE with stakeholders to provide thought leadership and horizon scanning on key issues affecting the sector and its members

On behalf of our members, NIFHA is actively pursuing the following policy priorities: increasing the supply of affordable homes, creating sustainable housing; helping combat climate change through delivering Net Zero Carbon homes; delivering care and support in communities; and delivering services to our members.



Our Strategy

Our 2021-24 Strategic Plan identifies four Strategic Pillars.

SUPPLY

- Ensuring that housing associations have the right conditions to provide new social and affordable homes. This will encompass the SHDP, infrastructure, planning, land, innovative construction and interaction with the wider social housing sector

SUPPORT

- Ensuring the sector is there for tenants and customers by working to ensure
- Supporting People and the welfare system are fit for purpose for the sector's needs, and that the sector can provide good tenant engagement and tenancy management.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Ensuring we can play our part in combating climate change through the renovation of existing homes and the building new homes to a high environmental standard to reduce the sector's carbon emissions
- Ensuring that that we can create and maintain sustainable tenancies and communities through a Common Selection Scheme that is fit for purpose, advocating on Housing for All and tackling ASB
- Ensuring that our members are sustainable businesses, with accountable boards and that they demonstrate value for money and showcase all that housing associations do

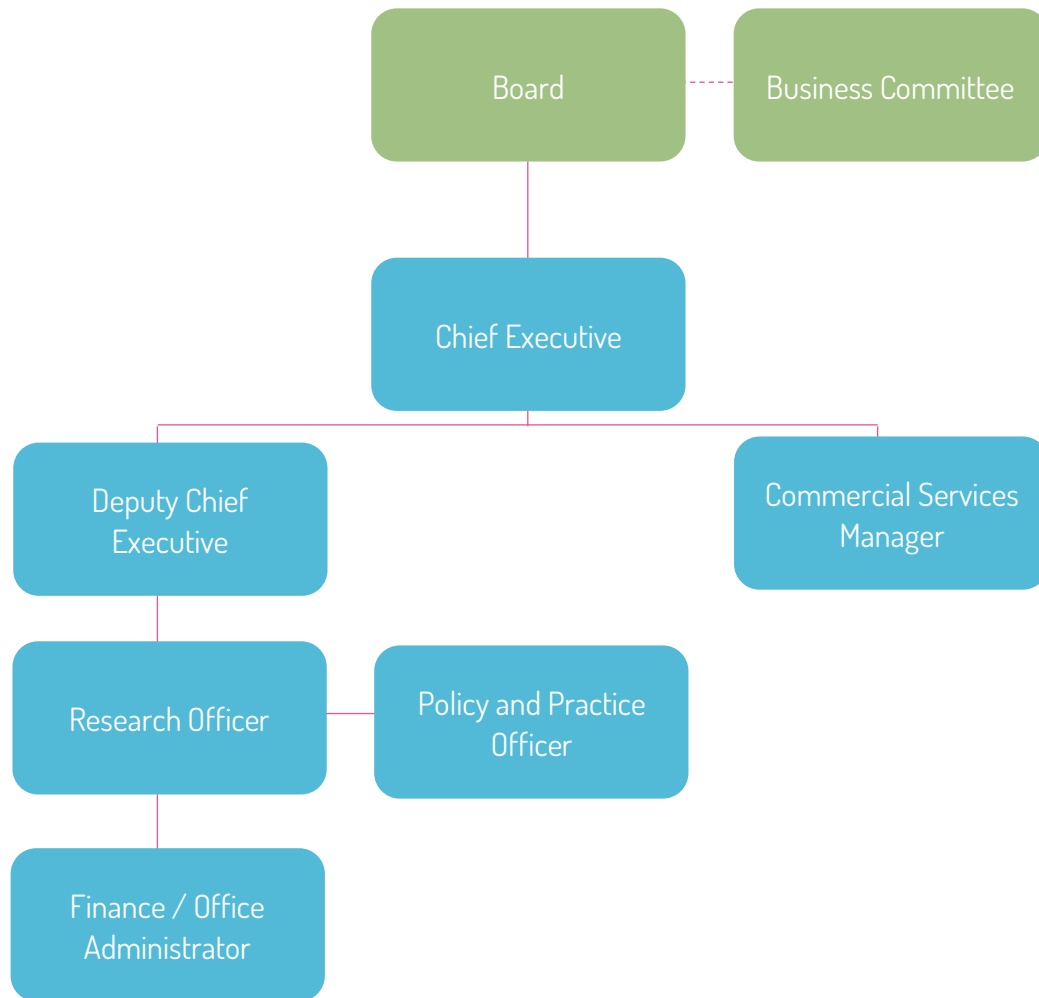
SERVICES

- Ensuring NIFHA provides a strong voice for its members and delivers on a range of focussed, relevant outputs
- Assisting our members through a range of core services such as benefit data transfers, research and statistics, sector communications and PR. NIFHA will provide training, seminars and conferences, and deal with external queries on behalf of members to provide a service that adds value, is timely and meets our members' needs.

You can view more details from this link to our corporate plan:

[NIFHA Corporate Plan](#)

How we are organised



Our Finances

NIFHA is primarily funded through fees from its members and revenues from its commercial activities.

You can get the full detail of our finances by downloading our last three years' financial reports by clicking the links below. In common with many organisations in our sector with a defined benefits pension scheme, we are taking actions to mitigate the risk of pension liabilities:

Here's a summary of our most recent published annual profit and loss report:

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Turnover		576,842	772,138
Gross profit		576,842	772,138
Administrative expenses		(568,685)	(802,512)
Operating profit/(loss)	4	8,157	(30,374)
Interest receivable and similar income		93	441
Interest payable and similar expenses		(15,116)	(10,738)
Loss before tax		(6,866)	(40,671)
Loss for the financial year		(6,866)	(40,671)
Other comprehensive income			
Actuarial loss on defined benefit schemes	15	(255,000)	(89,000)
Other comprehensive income for the year		(255,000)	(89,000)
Total comprehensive income for the year		(261,866)	(129,671)

Annual report to March
2021

Annual report to March
2020

Annual report to March
2019

Meet the Board



John McPeake *Chair*

Former CEO of NI Housing Executive (NIHE), former CEO of Helm Housing. Member of Wales & West Board. Appointed February 2014.



Mark Graham *Vice Chair*

CEO Co-Ownership. Mark joined Co-Ownership in 2015 as Executive Director, Property and Development, before taking up the role of Chief Executive in 2016. Appointed September 2018.



John McLean

CEO of Radius Housing since 2017 and Fold Housing Association prior to that.



Sheena McCallion

CEO of Apex Formerly the Director of Housing and Care Services at the organisation, Sheena has worked for Apex for more than 20 years. Appointed March 2020.



Donall Henderson

CEO in the hospice movement, and key influencer across the UK, as well as being a former employee of NIFHA. Appointed May 2021.



Will Chambré

Runs his own public affairs agency; board member of NB Housing; previously worked in Westminster. Appointed March 2020.



Neville Armstrong

Former Chair and current board member of Rural Housing. Community Support Officer for Fermanagh & Omagh District Council. Appointed May 2021.



Darren McKinney

CEO of Habinteg Ulster, former Director of Development at Habinteg. Appointed May 2018.



Michael McDonnell

CEO of Choice, former director of Helm, accountant by background. Appointed January 2021.

What we are looking for

NIFHA has a team of Board members who between them bring a wide range of excellent skills and competencies to their positions as trustees and directors. We are looking for an exceptional Chair to lead that team.

Experience

- You will have a demonstrable track record of leadership in a substantial company, charity or public sector body
- You will have had experience in developing your own professional networks
- You will be experienced in working collaboratively at senior level

Knowledge

- You will have a working knowledge of the housing, planning or property sector in Northern Ireland
- You will understand the key motivating factors that drive the board members' commitment to NIFHA
- You will understand the strategic considerations that drive not-for-profit organisations in housing, and the ways in which those considerations differ from the private and public sectors
- You will be able to focus on facilitating NIFHA's vision ahead of other priorities when guiding the NIFHA board

Skills

- You will be adept at chairing meetings that get the optimal contribution from all the individuals with a view to reaching consensus
- You will understand when to exercise diplomacy and when to be more assertive when representing NIFHA to its stakeholders
- Your excellent interpersonal skills will allow you to constructively perform the challenge function needed for a healthy Board, and to lend support to your Board colleagues and the executive team when needed
- You will be at ease with the ambassadorial role that being a Chair of the Federation entails

This is not an exhaustive list and if there are other skills and qualities that you feel relevant that would add value to the NIFHA board, we encourage you to make an application. We are inviting people from across all sectors who have the relevant skills and who connect with the mission and values of NIFHA to submit their CV.

NIFHA is committed to diversity and equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Time Commitment

Period of appointment

The Chair of the Board shall be elected at the annual general meeting by the members of the Federation for a term of office of three years from annual general meeting to annual general meeting, and shall be eligible for a further term of office of three years provided that they shall not serve more than six years consecutively as Chair.

Meeting Facilitation

It is anticipated that the Chair will commit approximately 2-3 days per month to NIFHA.

There are normally 5-6 Board meetings per year and the Chair will also attend other meetings as required.



Induction

An induction and familiarisation programme will be provided and will be tailored to your specific needs. Training will be discussed and provided as necessary.

Remuneration

The NIFHA Chair will not be remunerated. The Chair will be will be paid reasonable out of pocket expenses including, travel, mileage and overnight accommodation in line with NIFHA's expenses policy.

Potential conflicts of interest

You will need to give details of any business or other interests or any connections which, if you are appointed, could be misconstrued or cause embarrassment to NIFHA.

Equality and diversity

NIFHA has a positive approach to diversity and encourages applications from all sections of the community.

National Housing Federation Codes of Governance

The NIFHA board will be guided in its operations by the National Housing Federation codes of governance Excellence in Governance and Code of Conduct for Board Members. All board members are expected to abide by and uphold these standards. Further details are available upon request.



Chairperson Role Profile

Political Independence

To maintain NIFHA's independence, we are not able to accept candidacies from some people:

- Those who hold any political position as a local councillor
- Members of the Legislative Assembly
- Members of Parliament
- Members of the European Parliament
- Members of Oireachtas (Dail Eireann or Senate)
- Those with a leadership role in a political party
- Those employed by a political party
- A board member or employee of a member of the Federation or
- A board member or employee of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)
- People who have been an employee, or board member of a member of the Federation or a board member of NIHE for a year before they apply for the position of Chair.

Overall Purpose of the Role

The primary role of the Board is to manage the business of the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) and maintain its financial viability and compliance with the law. The Board will ensure that the Federation meets its Aims and Objectives and its Mission Statement.

As a board member you will be working in a team setting the strategic direction of the Federation and the housing association movement. This will include setting and monitoring the annual business plan. You will ensure that the views and the issues of our member organisations are within the political and public administration system. You will also ensure that the board is fully accountable to the members for the decisions it has taken and actively engages with them to demonstrate this accountability.

The Chair will take the lead on managing and appraising the Chief Executive, on behalf of NIFHA's Board and members.

The key responsibilities of a board member are to ensure sound corporate governance and uphold the good reputation of the association. You will be expected to;

- attend Board meetings and any strategy meetings, including Board away days, fully prepared and be able to participate in discussion.
- have a collegiate approach to working with the board and share responsibility for decisions taken
- treat Board information and discussions as confidential until advised to the contrary.

As **Chair** of the Board you will have the added responsibilities;

- Provide leadership to the Board

- Chair Board meetings
- Ensure that all Board resolutions are enacted
- To ensure the efficient conduct of the Board's business and the Association's general meetings, and that all Board members are given the opportunity to contribute and express their views before decisions are taken.

The Chair may optionally attend the Business Committee or any new committee that is created ex officio.

Specialist Competencies

Competence	Description
Leadership	○ Has the ability to lead the Board by developing and agreeing a clear strategic direction. ○ Has the ability to create an effective team at board level and to communicate our shared purpose with the wide range of stakeholders that the movement works with. ○ Has the ability to constructively challenge the Board and the management team to deliver the Federation's purpose and objectives.
Influencing and Networking	○ Has proven ability to influence government thinking in support of delivering the vision of the housing association sector ○ Has strong influencing and networking skills in working with other stakeholders particularly in housing, health and welfare.
Strategic Thinking	○ Has the ability to scan the environment and understand the implications of the economic and political environment ○ Has experience of managing at a strategic level through focusing on the main issues and ensuring there are clear decisions at Board meetings. ○ Has the analytical skills to critically assess the information and recommendations brought to the Board by the management team. ○ Brings challenge and innovation to Board discussions
Communication and interpersonal skills	○ Has the ability to work with the Chief Executive as well as the rest of the Board to drive the business forward in a positive way. ○ Proven ability to build and maintain good relationships and networks within the sector and with Federation staff. ○ Has the credibility and interpersonal skills to represent the Federation and its members and engage effectively with stakeholders.
Governance	○ Has experience as a Non-Executive Director and understands the role of a Board in scrutinising the business and financial performance of an organisation. ○ Understand the need to personally demonstrate the highest standards of ethics, integrity and probity and to comply with the Federation's code of governance and code of conduct.

Eligibility

Candidates must disclose any information about their personal or professional life which in the trustee board's perception could bring NIFHA into disrepute, including removals from previous governance roles, current or previous membership of organisations which may conflict with the aims, principles and values of the organisation, or behaviour which might be seen to undermine public confidence and trust.

Candidates must also disclose if they have been convicted of a crime, which debars them from acting as a company director, or they are an undischarged bankrupt or disqualified to act as a company director.

Candidates must disclose any information which could give rise to a perception of conflict of interest with their role as a NIFHA board member. This will not necessarily result in an inability to serve on the board.



How to apply

- Application is by submission of an up to date CV by email to patrick@co3.bz by email before the provisional closing date of noon, **Monday 23 May 2022**.
- Your submission may be followed up with a conversation with Engage to talk you through the main roles and responsibilities.
- That is followed by a 'conversation with a purpose' with the Interim Chair and the board members to discuss how you meet the criteria set out in the role description and the level of commitment you are able to make to this role, provisionally scheduled for **Wednesday 8 June 2022**.
- The appointment will be subject to ratification by the full board, and the appointee will be co-opted onto the Board at the June 2022 Board Meeting, and officially appointed at the September 2022 AGM.

Please address any enquiries relating to the advertised position, and your submission, to NIFHA's recruitment partners:

Patrick Minne

ENGAGE
EXECUTIVE TALENT

Tel: 07792 509003
Email: patrick@co3.bz

www.engageexec.co.uk



Enquiries unrelated to this recruitment can be addressed to:

NIFHA

6c Citylink Business Park
Albert Street
Belfast
BT12 4HQ

Tel: 028 9023 0446

Email: info@nifha.org

Registered Company NI 11996