



Board Member  
Information Pack  
2014



# CHISEL

## Board members needed

Be part of shaping our unique and forward thinking Housing Association as we work to make ourselves truly tenant led and improve the services we provide to our residents.

CHISEL is 222 households strong with a diverse range of homes across SE London, Brighton and Colchester. We have particular interest in co-operative, self-build and shared accommodation and are committed to delivering high quality resident focused services. We proudly endeavour to keep the spirit of co-operation alive.

We warmly welcome volunteers who will bring their skills and knowledge to key roles and help deliver our vision – *driven by our residents, their needs and aspirations, to deliver sustainable homes, services and communities which make us all proud.*



We are keen to recruit volunteers who can commit to 6 evening meetings and 2 planning days each year at or near our offices in SE4 and have experience in:

- Resident Engagement
- Maintenance & Asset Management
- Finance & Risk Management
- Governance

Email [chair@chisel.org.uk](mailto:chair@chisel.org.uk) or call 020 8692 5258 to arrange an informal discussion with our Chair or download an application pack from [www.chisel.co.uk](http://www.chisel.co.uk)



Above all, you must have passion and enthusiasm for upholding our values:

**C**ollaborative and Co-operative  
**H**onest, Open and Transparent  
**I**nvolved and Inclusive  
**S**ensitive, respectful and fair  
**E**xcellence in everything we do  
**L**ocal

..... Building Trust

## **About CHISEL**

CHISEL is a community based housing association with offices in Brockley, SE4. We have recently revised our vision and values and are committed to now embedding these into all our operations. Board members will play a key part in helping achieve this and to realise our vision to be led by our residents, their needs and aspirations.

Historically CHISEL was formed and operated on co-operative principles. Although we are no longer a co-op we still uphold these principles and strongly believe in the rights of our tenants and all our residents to be involved in the management and upkeep of their homes. We actively encourage resident engagement at all levels of our operations and are committed to achieving a high level of satisfaction in the services we provide.

While our commitment is to our existing homes and residents, opportunities for growth will be considered as they present themselves, and will be looked upon favourably where they make financial sense, help realise our vision and are in keeping with our values.

CHISEL is registered as a social housing provider with the Tenant Services Authority under the Housing Act 1985 and with the Financial Services Authority as an Industrial and Provident Society under the Industrial & Provident Societies Act 1965.

You can find out more about CHISEL's history at our website: [www.chisel.org.uk](http://www.chisel.org.uk)

### **Our Homes**

We own 222 homes, 158 of which we manage directly and, 64 managed by two managing agents. In addition we provide management services for 18 homes for a number of other housing associations. Our homes are varied in nature, including 71 self-build homes across a number of different schemes. These were constructed by our tenants, most of whom are still residents. The rest of our stock is a mixture of new build and refurbished properties made up of houses, flats and 34 units of shared accommodation for single people. Most of our homes are in SE London with a few schemes in Brighton and one in Colchester.

64 of our properties are managed by two managing agents, Three Boroughs Housing Co-op and Lewisham Family Self-Help Association (LFSA), under management agreements with CHISEL. In addition, we have three active tenants' co-ops, which between them part-manage 39 homes, doing their own allocations and/or some of their own maintenance. We actively encourage tenants to form management co-ops under flexible agreements that allow them to take on as much, or as little,

management work as they choose. We also permit tenants to carry out maintenance on their own homes, subject to certain conditions. It is our commitment to enabling and encouraging the active involvement of residents in the provision and maintenance of their homes that we believe makes us unique.

Our housing has all been developed or refurbished since 1988 and is therefore of a reasonable standard. We are committed to keeping our homes in good condition and planned and responsive maintenance work to our homes represents our largest financial outlay each year. We have a long-term stock improvement plan that details what we will need to spend on our properties in the future to ensure that they will continue to be of a good standard and meet the governments' Decent Homes Standard.

Nearly all our income comes from the rents that we collect from our tenants and it is critical that we manage our homes efficiently to ensure the long term financial future of the association. In addition we have been strengthening our financial position by supplementing our rental income through an expansion of the management and maintenance services we provide to other housing associations and co-ops.

### **Staffing and office**

We currently employ 8 staff, (all part-time) equivalent to 4.2 full-time posts. We aim to create a friendly working environment, with a strong emphasis on teamwork and mutual support.

Our office premises are near Brockley Overground and train station, and are shared with two of our managing agents. The office does not have disabled access.

### **Decision Making**

CHISEL is governed by a Board which meets about five times a year and is made up of a mixture of tenants, representatives from member organisations and individual members of the association. The Board has one committee, Finance, which meets 4 times a year.

The Board currently has a membership of 9 (out of a possible maximum of 12). Of these, 4 are either tenants or representatives of member organisations.

The association is managed by the managing director, assisted by a housing manager and a finance manager.

**If you would like to know more about our work and your role as a Board Member please contact [chair@chisel.org.uk](mailto:chair@chisel.org.uk) to arrange an informal discussion with the Chair or Vice Chair.**

## For information only

this form **does not need to be returned** at the time of application  
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### **Nomination Form and Obligations of Being a Board Member of CHISEL**

No one may act as a member of the Board until they have signed and given to CHISEL a promise to comply with this document.

#### **I declare that I:**

- Am not employed by CHISEL (or have not been employed in the previous 3 years) nor have close relationship with any member of CHISEL's staff;
- Do not have any current financial interest in any contract or other financial transaction with CHISEL either personally or professionally; this does not include being a tenant or representative member;
- Am not currently engaged in any legal proceedings or in active dispute with CHISEL;
- Am not bankrupt or subject to a creditors agreement;
- Have not been convicted of a criminal offence in the last 5 years.

#### **As a member of the Board, I agree to:**

- support the vision, values and aims of CHISEL at all times;
- attend all training and board meetings;  
*Failure to attend 4 consecutive meetings without special leave of absence will result in membership being automatically withdrawn.*
- make time for, and fully participate in, the board annual appraisal process; both collective and individual appraisals;
- give apologies and submit any comments to the Chair in advance if unable to attend a meeting;
- prepare for meetings by reading the information sent and bringing it to the meeting;
- promote equality and diversity at all times and not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, gender, marital status, age, religious beliefs, cultural background, sexual orientation, political opinion or disability;  
*Discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language will not be tolerated.*
- act in the interests of CHISEL as a whole and seek to be accountable to all residents of CHISEL

- ensure private or personal interests do not influence decisions and not discuss personal issues at meetings.
- not use position as a CHISEL board member for personal gain
- declare any conflict of interest, and if appropriate withdraw from voting or be prepared to stand down from the Board if necessary.
- recognise and value individual's differences and strengths and foster an environment where all members feel they can contribute
- work as a team; encouraging and valuing contributions from others, seeking consensus and accepting compromise where appropriate.
- respect others at all times, acting in a way that is non-judgemental, non-aggressive and non-confrontational;
- adhere to CHISEL's confidentiality policy at all times;
- operate within the rules and policies laid down by the Board;
- not contact or give any statement about CHISEL to the press or any other external body without express permission from the Chair;
- accept and abide by any corporate decisions made by the Board whether you are present or not;
- not bring CHISEL into disrepute in any way.

**I agree to comply with these obligations as a Board Member of CHISEL.**

**Signed .....**

**Dated ..... (candidate)**

**Signed .....**

**Name:..... (nominating shareholder)**

**Dated .....**