

Information Pack -

Joining the CHIL Board

January 2022

Our ambition and vision

CHIL's vision is for people with Down's Syndrome in Scotland to have access to person-centred, innovative, community-led housing, giving individuals real choice of accommodation and support, which enables them to live their best life and play an active part in their community.

For our vision to be achieved requires a new model for the delivery of housing to this community – one which is fully aligned with the principles of self-directed support, and which focuses on improving outcomes for the individuals. CHIL is developing this model and we now need to demonstrate its feasibility and viability by delivering a group of homes as proof-of-concept, and then building our capacity to support others.

This is an exciting time to work in community-led housing, as society seeks innovative solutions to housing affordability and supply. This is an exciting time to join CHIL, to support the development of a replicable model which will help those living with Down's Syndrome to thrive.

What we do and why we do it

CoHousing for Independent Living (CHIL) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (no. SC051399) which was established in 2021 by families of young people with Down's Syndrome who have ambitions to live independently, in the community. We identified that there is a shortage of appropriate homes and support that meet the needs of many individuals with Down's Syndrome, and a lack of innovation and ambition to maximise the potential for people with Down's Syndrome.

CHIL is designing a new model for delivering housing, using a co-design framework and development process that puts the residents and their families at the heart of decision-making. This enables true self-directed support and choice, while the collective approach facilitates the sharing of spaces and activities, leading to economies of scale and reducing the chance of isolation.

It is important that our tenant groups can build links with their future neighbours and the wider community early in the process, developing a support network which leads to better outcomes for all. One way of doing this could be to include CHIL homes in wider community-led housing projects, which would also give us access to a greater range of opportunities.

We will work in partnership with families, Councils, housing associations, support providers and impact funders to demonstrate an approach to housing that delivers outstanding outcomes for the residents, within a financially-sustainable model. We will deliver ultra-low-energy homes, reducing running costs and environmental impact. By working alongside stakeholders from the start, CHIL's model will reduce risk, build capacity and create resilience in the community.

What matters to us

- We value equity and fairness, sustainability, responsibility, collaboration, transparency, learning
- We aim to provide each person a home which they have helped design, in a thriving and resilient community
- We build trust and work with communities to deliver projects which exceed expectations
- We put the people we are helping at the centre of our work while also delivering long-term benefits to the wider community
- We aim to provide an experience which is easy, friendly, inviting, creative, energetic, encouraging, inspiring and progressive

What we need from you

We are committed to growing our Board and making sure that it includes the skills and experience we need, and that it properly represents the diversity, strength and skills of people with Down's Syndrome and their families/supporters.

We are looking for people who understand the role and responsibilities of a charity Trustee or are committed to learning about these, and who meet one or more of the following:

- Have experience of working on the Board of a charity, social enterprise or in government
- Have experience and skills in one or more of the following: social housing, finance, fundraising, policy development, impact evaluation, strategic planning
- Have connections with social housing organisations, local government, the Down's Syndrome community, social enterprises
- Ideally have a family member, or close connection to an adult, with Down's Syndrome

You also need to be over 18 years and live in the United Kingdom.

About Board meetings

Currently we have a board meeting every month, however we expect this to reduce as we become more established so that we will meet 4-6 times a year.

Board meetings usually last 1-2 hours. The commitment at the moment is around 4-6 hours each month, which includes time for reading, research and preparation. We are planning to employ a Chief Executive Officer, who will manage the development of the project, liaising closely with the Board. We meet online (Zoom) and are keen to continue this as it allows involvement of individuals across Scotland. We would hope to meet face to face at least once a year, if possible.

What is expected of a Board Member

The members of the Board are Trustees of the charity. Collectively the Board is responsible for the leadership, strategic direction and governance of CHIL, ensuring that the organisation meets its purpose and is accountable and transparent in its activities.

Individual trustees will:

1. Know and understand the duties and activities required to fulfil the role, including the legal obligations that underpin them
2. Actively contribute to the work of the Board, prepare for and participate fully in meetings, training, planning sessions and reviews.
3. Give each other support and help, and do whatever possible to manage differences constructively.
4. Engage in constructive and respectful communication and coordination with staff and volunteers.
5. Act with integrity, avoid conflicts of interest, and be worthy of the trust invested in the role by ensuring that all decisions are made solely in the interests of the organisation.

Main responsibilities

Together with other members of the Board you will:

Strategy

- Ensure our activities deliver our stated charitable purpose.
- Ensure we have a clear vision and strategy, and we are focussed on achieving our outcomes and impact (the change we seek to make through our work).
- Work with us to make sure our purpose, work and outcomes remain relevant and support the needs of the people we work with.

Regulation and compliance

- Ensure we meet all our regulatory and legal requirements.
- Ensure we manage risks to the organisation through effective and proportionate risk management and regular discussion.

Financial

- Ensure that we have good financial and management controls.
- Approve our annual budget and ensure we plan for the future.
- Ensure CHIL has a workable sustainability strategy.
- Act as a steward of CHIL's assets - physical, monetary and intellectual.

Accountability

- Make clear, reasonable and collegiate decisions acting always in the best interests of the charity.
- Ensure that CHIL delivers on all of our activities.
- Appoint the CEO and review their performance.

How to apply

If you're thinking of applying but want to talk to someone from the Board first, get in touch with us at info@chil.org.uk to arrange an exploratory chat.

To apply, tell us why you are interested in being a member of the CHIL Board with a brief discussion of the skills and experience you would bring. You can do that in writing, by audio or video.

Please send your application to us by **5pm on 28th February 2022**. We will carry out short informal interviews on Zoom at a mutually convenient time.