

Your guide to being an erosh trustee

erosh

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1. Introduction

You have expressed an interest in becoming an erosh trustee or are a new trustee. We hope this 'pack' provides you with enough information about the role and answers your questions but please do contact us if you have any further queries (see [Section 9](#) for contact details).

2. Who we are

Erosh is a [Charitable Incorporated Organisation](#) (CIO) with a formal [constitution](#) and two overarching 'objects':

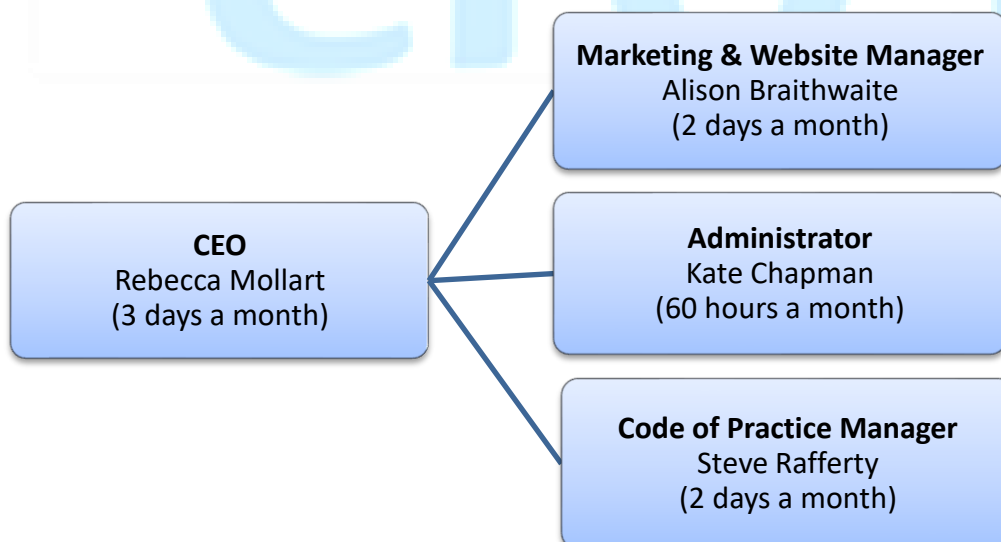
- Promoting the education of the public in the provision of older persons housing and services in order to relieve the needs of older people
- To relieve the needs of older people by promoting the effective use of resources by charities and non-charitable organisations within the older persons housing and support sector

We are regulated by the [Charity Commission](#) and follow the principles in its [Good Governance Code for Smaller Organisations](#).

We champion good quality older people's housing and support and provide practical resources for those working with older people and their service managers. Read more about who we are [here](#).

We have our own Code of Practice enabling sheltered and supported housing providers to demonstrate the quality of their services against nationally recognised standards Read more about what we do [here](#).

Our patron is TV presenter and campaigner Dame Esther Rantzen, and we are supported by a small [team of part-time self-employed staff](#) who work with us on a consultancy basis, and a board of [voluntary trustees](#).



We also have our very popular national and regional networks which give members the opportunity to be more actively involved at a local level. Read more about our networks [here](#).

We don't believe in reinventing the wheel or duplicating others' activities, so we work in partnership with a wide range of people and organisations including:

- Scheme managers and other housing/support staff
- Older people themselves and their relatives and carers
- Housing providers including local authorities, housing organisations, charitable trusts etc.
- [Chartered Institute of Housing \(CIH\) and CIH Cymru](#)
- [National Housing Federation \(NHF\)](#)
- [Centre for Housing and Support \(CHS\)](#)
- [Elderly Accommodation Counsel \(EAC\)](#)

We are also kindly supported by a [number of partner organisations](#) who enable us to deliver the valuable resources and practical advice to our members, which ultimately ensures we achieve our objectives.

3. How we operate

We work to a 5-year **Business Plan** which sets out our previous achievements and current plans as well as how we manage risk. Our business plan is supported by an annual **Action Plan** which trustees use to monitor progress against objectives. Read more [here](#). In November each year we set the budget for the following year which we monitor at every trustee meeting. We publish an annual report and accounts at the AGM.

4. Our Trustees

a) Role overview

As a trustee, you are ultimately accountable for achieving our charitable aims and managing our resources in line with the Charity Commission and Code of Good Governance. It is a rewarding role with a focus on strategic direction; objectives and financial management; and holding our staff to account. You also ensure we comply with charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations. As we are such a small charity, there is definitely a hands-on element to your role which generally means contributing your knowledge of the sector and expertise.

Your key responsibilities are to:

- Ensure we have a clear vision, strategic direction, and objectives
- Manage our performance
- Ensure we comply with legal and regulatory requirements
- Ensure our governance is of the highest possible standard
- Promote the benefits of erosh membership whenever possible
- Safeguard our reputation
- Grow membership and proactively seek opportunities for our development

And, more specifically to:

- Agree our vision, strategic direction, and objectives
- Ensure the business plan and budget reflect the agreed strategic direction and objectives
- Ensure we have control systems and procedures to review our level of risk at least annually
- Monitor our progress against key business objectives
- Promote erosh and act in our best interests
- Use your expertise to support other trustees and our consultants
- Represent us at events, to network and promote our work
- Contribute to specific objectives/projects as required

b) What we need from you

- If you are not already, you need to become an erosh member, through your organisation if you are employed or as an individual
- Commitment to attending trustees' meetings regularly
- Knowledge of housing/support for older people or a related sector e.g. health or social care
- Commitment to improving older people's housing and support
- Commitment to promoting erosh and increasing membership
- Ability to work collaboratively as part of a dispersed team
- Ability to analyse information and make strategic decisions
- Commitment to contributing to our work to help us maintain existing and develop new services
- Commitment to our values and key messages

c) Our expectations

Being a trustee takes time and commitment (about one day a month) so please ensure you have enough time to give to us, and, if necessary, check your employer is happy for you to become a trustee.

Trustees meet four times a year, usually in central London. We expect you to come to meetings and prepare by reading papers. We also expect you to contribute to development of services and support our chief executive; usually by e-mail and occasionally a virtual or real project group. We may also ask you to represent us at meetings or events.

We expect you to support your nearest erosh network (several trustees are also network chairs) and, if there is not a network in your area, play a key role in helping to establish one.

We are a very small charity with part time input from a small number of staff so a 'hands on approach' is essential as is a commitment to communicate regularly by email.

This is not a paid post. Travelling expenses up to £300 a year can be paid to trustees who are retired, unemployed or who do not have an employer willing/able to meet costs of attending meetings.

5. Our meetings and AGM

Trustees meet quarterly, usually in central London, with often one other event elsewhere e.g. our 2019 AGM is in South Wales. Meetings usually start at 11.30 am and finish by 3pm.

6. Current trustees and their roles

We currently have 11 trustees with five officer roles: chair, vice-chair, treasurer, vice-treasurer, and secretary. Trustees normally serve for 3 years; after this they can be re-elected for up to 9 years' continuous service. Read more about our Trustees [here](#). You will have joined us as a trustee because of your particular area of knowledge or expertise. When you apply to become a Trustee, we will ask you to complete a skills audit (which we will update periodically) so we know your specialist areas and how you might help us.

7. Induction, training and development

For new trustees we usually provide a 'virtual' induction i.e. telephone (or Skype) sessions with the current chair and chief executive. Subject to availability, location and resources we may be able to do this in person. Anyone interested in becoming a trustee but not yet decided is welcome to come along to a trustee meeting as an observer before deciding to apply.

As a very small charity, we don't have the resources to formally support you with training and professional development, so rely you to keep up to date with housing and older people issues. We may however, subject to availability, be able to offer a mentoring arrangement with an existing trustee and an opportunity to visit their organisation. If you feel you have a particular knowledge gap, we can point you in the right direction including the following useful organisations, as well as of course our own website www.erosh.co.uk



[Chartered Institute of Housing](#)

[Cymorth Cymru](#)



[Elderly Accommodation Counsel](#)

[Guardian Older People's Housing Network](#)



[Independent Age](#)

[International Longevity Centre](#)

[Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)

**NATIONAL
HOUSING
FEDERATION**

8. Key policies

As we are such a small charity, we have decided to keep our policies proportionate to our size. Therefore, rather than having lots of lengthy document, this section summarises our key policies.

Code of Conduct

We expect you to:

- Act in accordance with our constitution, policies and procedures, and within the law.
- Support and champion our objects, act in the best interests of erosh and its members and avoid bringing erosh into disrepute.
- Declare conflicts of interest so these can be managed appropriately and effectively.
- Respect confidentiality in relation to the organisation, trustees, staff and individual members, and in accordance with Data Protection legislation.
- Keep up to date with our objectives and activities and the environment we operate in as well as with our policies and procedures.
- Prepare for and attend trustee meetings sending apologies where non-attendance is unavoidable after considering other ways of participating e.g. skype, conference call etc.
- Actively, constructively, and courteously participate in meetings and activities outside of trustee meetings.
- Vote where necessary and be prepared to accept and stand by a majority decision.
- Support and work considerately with trustees, staff and customers, and with respect to different roles and professional boundaries.
- Not gain materially or financially from your involvement with erosh unless specifically authorised to do so.
- Not to accept gifts, bribes, or inappropriate hospitality.
- Claim any expenses in accordance with our policy and procedures.
- Actively contribute to the continuous improvement of our governance activities
- Not make public comments about erosh unless authorised to do so and then in accordance with our policies and procedures.

Confidentiality & Privacy

We are committed to ensuring that members' information is collected, stored and used in line with data protection legislation and expect all staff and trustees to comply

- We obtain the minimum amount of members' information fairly, in accordance with law, and for a specific purpose.
- We seek members' consent to keep and process their personal data.
- We securely store paper and electronic information about our members and allow access only to erosh staff and trustees.
- We only use members' information for the reason it was collected and keep for as long as necessary.
- Members have the right to obtain confirmation at any time of why and how their personal data is kept and processed; and whether it will be passed to a third party.
- We keep members' information up to date and accurate as far as we can; and members have the right to have their data corrected.
- We don't distribute members' information to third parties unless we have specifically asked for and been given permission to do so.
- We do not refer to individual or organisational members in written information unless we have been given permission to do so or the information is publicly available.
- Members have the right to request that their data is no longer kept or processed.

Confidentiality may be set aside in relation to criminal activity, safeguarding, and health and safety.

Equality & Diversity

We are committed to promoting equality & diversity and to ensuring that no individual is discriminated against in the planning and delivery of our activities

- We have a strategic commitment to equality & diversity and opposing any form of direct or indirect discrimination across the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
- We are mindful of equality & diversity in relation to our business planning activities and in relation to our partners, contractors and customers.
- We ensure our meeting and event venues are accessible.
- We ensure our member services are accessible, are not discriminatory, and are inclusive and representative in terms of language and imagery
- We present information in plain language and can make available in alternative formats and languages on request.
- We adopt a zero-tolerance approach discriminatory attitudes or behaviour, and to bullying, harassment or any other form of unwanted behaviour.
- We recruit trustees and staff based on qualifications, experience and abilities.
- We carry out equality impact assessments proportionate to our size and nature of our activities.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest does not necessarily reflect negatively on the integrity of the affected trustee provided it is properly addressed.

- All trustees have a legal duty to take act only in the best interests of the charity.
- A conflict of interest may arise where a decision needs to be made where a trustee has a personal or other interest e.g. benefits (directly or indirectly) financially or otherwise; or their duty to the charity competes with a duty or loyalty to another person or organisation.
- We adopt a 3-step approach:
 - **Identify:** we have a standard item at the beginning of every meeting for trustees to declare actual or potential conflicts of interest.
 - **Prevent:** we will find an alternative approach which doesn't involve the conflict of interest or take appropriate steps to manage the conflict e.g. the trustee affected does not take part in discussions and decisions; and follow any relevant legislation and good practice.
 - **Record:** we will keep a written record (usually in the minutes) of the conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest and how it has been dealt with.

Complaints and disputes

We value all feedback and are committed to resolving issues fairly, timely and efficiently, as well as to continuous improvement

- Customers (including Trustees) can make a formal complaint by contacting in the first instance the erosh Administrator, info@erosh.co.uk, 0333 011 5804.
- We acknowledge a complaint within 48 hours.
- If the Administrator is not able to resolve the complaint or dispute, or the customer is not satisfied with the resolution, it will be forwarded to the erosh CEO.
- If the CEO is not able to resolve the complaint or dispute, or the customer is not satisfied with the resolution, it will be forwarded to the board of trustees (or the chair if the complainant is a Trustee).
- If the customer is still not satisfied with the resolution or the complaint involves a serious risk of harm to the charity or people it helps, they may raise a concern with the [Charities Commission](#).
- We aim to resolve a complaint or dispute as quickly as possible. We keep the customer informed of progress at all stages of the process and request further information from them if necessary.
- We keep records of all stages in the process.
- We maintain records of all complaints or disputes and use these to identify trends or issues, and to review our policies and processes.

9. Any questions

If you would like to discuss the trustees' role further or have any queries, please contact either our chief executive, Rebecca Mollart on 07803 176527 or ceo@erosh.co.uk; or our current chair, Robin Deane on 0208 7715476 / 07504 334457.