How to set up an erosh network

Dear Colleague

Our local networks are one of our most popular resources, enabling members to come together regularly to share best practice, common problems, and solutions. We have designed this toolkit to help you to set up your own local erosh network.

Erosh welcomes networks of all sizes, regional and local, urban and rural. We currently have several networks operating around the UK taking forward erosh's aims and objectives in the local area. With the current changes and challenges impacting on the older people's housing and support sector, it is more important than ever that erosh members come together locally to disseminate information and share good practice.

If you would like to be involved in a network or help start one, please contact us so we can register your interest and help you with the organisation of your first meeting. Once you have established your network, please keep us up to date with your activities regularly so we can showcase your progress and achievements on our website. We can also promote your events through our regular e-zine and post information about your events on our website.

If you need any help or advice, please contact us on 0333 011 5804 or email at info@erosh.co.uk

Best wishes and good luck!

Rebecca Mollart
Chief Executive
ceo@erosh.co.uk 07803 176957
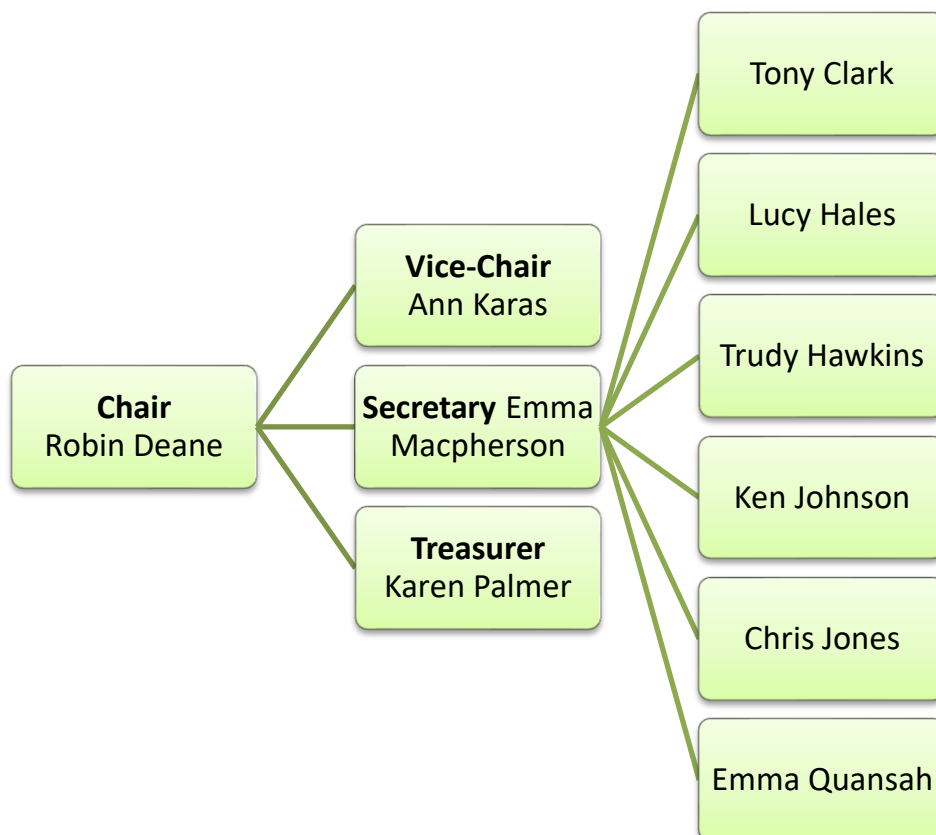
Our structure

Our patron

Our patron is TV presenter and campaigner Dame Esther Rantzen DBE.
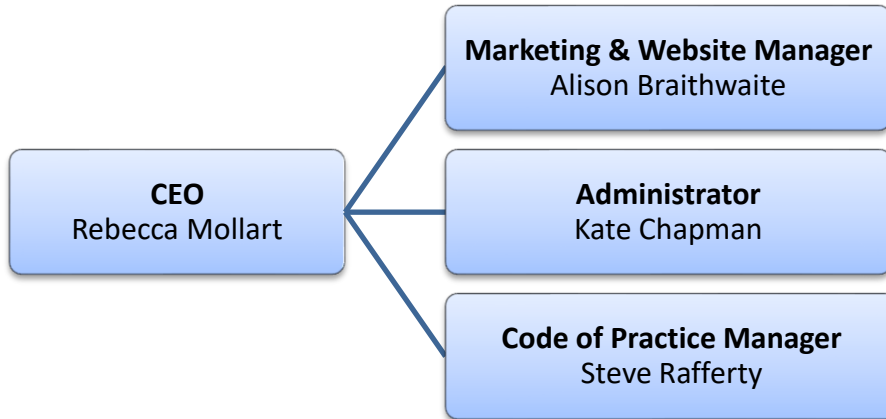
Our trustees:

Erosh has a Board of voluntary Trustees which meets quarterly. Trustees are elected at our Annual General Meeting with representation from large and small housing associations, local authorities, and other key players in the sector. Representatives from other organisations may also be co-opted at any time to, for example, help us with a particular focus or project. After each meeting, our CEO prepares a briefing for network chairs which is useful for updating members at your events.

Chair
Robin Deane

Vice-Chair
Ann Karas

Secretary Emma Macpherson

Treasurer
Karen Palmer

Tony Clark

Lucy Hales

Trudy Hawkins

Ken Johnson

Chris Jones

Emma Quansah

Find out more about our Trustees **here**.

Our team

We are supported by three part-time staff, employed on a consultancy basis.

Marketing & Website Manager
Alison Braithwaite

CEO
Rebecca Mollart

Administrator
Kate Chapman

Code of Practice Manager
Steve Rafferty

Find out more about our Team **here**.

Our current networks

We currently have 9 networks across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These are:

Read more about our Networks **here**.

How our networks operate

The ways in which our networks operate varies depending on what works where. Some networks are more formal with a constitution, business style meetings, minutes etc; others are event style with guest speakers; and others are more informal get-togethers. The style of the network is up to those involved and what works best depending on geographical spread, nature of organisations involved, chair etc. Each network has a chair who reports on network activities to the quarterly Trustee meetings and reports back information from Trustee meetings to the network meetings.

Please keep us updated about your meetings/events and send details, agendas, notes, presentations etc. to Kate Chapman at **info@erosh.co.uk** so we can post information on our website.

Setting up a new network

You might wish to set up an initial "investigative" meeting to test the appetite for a network in your area. You might also invite potential members (see **4d**) and encourage attendance by inviting one or more guest speakers (see **4f**). If this meeting is successful, you can hold a "launch" event and invite a wider range of people. A representative from erosh e.g. CEO, Chair, Vice-Chair or a Trustee, will try to attend so please liaise with Kate Chapman, **info@erosh.co.uk** to agree a date for your first event.

Where

Meetings/events tend to be held at provider organisation's premises; in sheltered schemes, training rooms or head offices. Many organisations are willing to provide a venue free of charge, teas and coffees and sometimes lunch, but this is not compulsory and of course depends on meeting times. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many meetings have successfully been held virtually.

When

Each network operates differently to suit its own area/members. Some vary the day of the meeting/event to avoid excluding members already committed on a particular day; most hold a half day event either in the morning (finishing with lunch) or in the afternoon (starting with lunch) so members are not committed for the whole day avoiding Mondays or Fridays, rush hours etc.

Membership

Kate Chapman, **info@erosh.co.uk** can provide you with list of members in your area and contact details. Depending on location of your event, you might wish to include contacts in neighbouring regions as well as potential members with a view to encouraging them to join. Please make it clear that, whilst non-members are welcome to come along to one or two meetings, we do expect them to join. As an incentive, we offer a 20% discount on their first year's membership fee if they join in the month after they have attended a network meeting.

Publicity information and registration forms

Kate Chapman, **info@erosh.co.uk** can provide you with erosh postcards (and other promotional material/merchandise if available) for your event as well as registration forms for those attending the for the first time to complete as well as anyone whose contact details have changed. This helps us keep our records up to date. Please send any completed forms to Kate as soon as possible after the event.

Speakers

If you decide to run your networks as events rather than meetings, you may want to invite guest speakers. You could invite the hosting organisation to showcase some good practice as well as inviting network members to suggest people willing to speak free of charge. Previous winners of erosh awards are also often willing to come and share their good practice. We can provide you with a list of ideas based on speakers used at other network meetings. Unfortunately, erosh is unable to pay speakers' fees or travelling expenses.

Publicity for your event

Please send details of your meeting/event to Kate Chapman at **info@erosh.co.uk** so we can include the information on our website. If you would like us to include details of an event in our e-newsletter, please email Alison Braithwaite, **alison@evergreenmarketing.co.uk**.

Formal meetings

If you decide to run your network as a semi-formal/formal meeting, standard meeting arrangements would apply. If your network decides it would like to have a formal agreement in place you may want to develop your own terms of reference and constitutional agreement. We have however provided a sample agreement (**Appendix A**) for you to use if you prefer.

Case studies

We have included three case studies in this pack (**Appendix B**) which give you a flavour of three of our networks. More information is available **here**. Network chairs, the erosh CEO, Chair, Vice-Chair will also be delighted to have a chat with you about setting up a network.

Appendix A: sample constitution

Erosh: Constitution for the _____ Network

1. Aims

- ➢ To establish a forum which enables the aims of erosh to be pursued at a local level
- ➢ To enable local members to influence the work of erosh nationally
- ➢ To promote and encourage membership of erosh
- ➢ To encourage partnership working with appropriate statutory agencies and other organisations

2. Membership

Membership is open to anyone working in, or having an interest in, sheltered and retirement housing and support for older people.

3. Officers

There will be a minimum of 3 officers including a Chair and Secretary who will meet at least 4 times a year.

4. General Meetings

There will be a general meeting open to all members at least 4 times a year. An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) open to all members will be held if at least 25% of members submit a written request to the Secretary. Notice of all General Meetings will be published at least 14 days in advance.

5. The Annual General Meeting

There will be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) at which those attending will elect new officers and vote on any proposed amendments to the Constitution. Nominations for office should be received by the Secretary at least 14 days before the AGM. Notice of the AGM will be published at least 14 days before the meeting.

6. Quorum

Meetings will not proceed unless there are at least 4 members present.

7. Voting

Voting on any issue shall be by show of hands.

8. Changes to the Constitution

Changes to the Constitution may be made at the AGM or EGM. Any proposed changes to the constitution must be given to the Secretary in writing at least 14 days before the relevant meeting.

9. Dissolution

The network may be dissolved at the AGM or an EGM called for that purpose. The date must be advertised at least 14 days in advance. At least 50% of members present must agree with a proposal to dissolve the group.

Appendix B: network case studies

South Wales

Richard Sheahan, Chair

The South Wales Network is has been going strong since March 2012 with more than 25 housing associations and support agencies represented. The group is chaired by Richard Sheahan, Independent Living Manager at Linc Cymru and supported by Elizabeth Willington, Community Living Manager at V2C. Each meeting has been lively with guest speakers and 'hot topic' discussions. Members take turn to host the meeting giving them the opportunity to showcase their organisation's good practice and innovation.

A buffet lunch is usually provided at 12.00pm giving members the opportunity to network before the start of the official meeting at 1.00pm. Members find the sessions really useful as they come together with other providers, professionals and support bodies to share experiences and learn from each other and with such big changes affecting support services in Wales this is invaluable. Over the last year, networks have taken place virtually and have again been invaluable in helping members to cope with Covid-19 related challenges.

Topics, often including presentations by expert speakers, have included the work of the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, hoarding, fire safety, remodelling of Sheltered Schemes, and of course several Covid related issues – supporting residents and staff, closing schemes, returning to schemes and opening schemes.

Erosh member Jo Lawson from United Welsh explained: "Being part of the South Wales erosh group is a very positive experience. I enjoy having the opportunity to meet colleagues, share good practice and discuss some complex and difficult issues. I'm very pleased to see regular attendance and high activity, suggesting that all those involved get a value added experience from being of the group."

For more information and meeting dates contact:

Richard Sheahan, 029 2048 2474, richard.Sheahan@linc-cymru.co.uk

or

Elizabeth Willington, 01656 762420, elizabeth.Willington@v2c.org.uk

Or click here.

North West

Ken Johnson, Chair

Erosh's Networks are an excellent opportunity for members to meet, discuss topical issues and share learning and best practice. Established in 2012 the North West Network currently attracts members from eight organisations across Lancashire, Cheshire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester. Meetings are held quarterly and anyone interested in becoming an erosh member is welcome to come along to an initial meeting before joining.

This informal forum has secured a range of excellent speakers including representatives from Age UK and Action on Hearing Loss. Members have also benefited from presentations on local and national best practice. For example, Jane Mindar, from housing and regeneration organisation the Riverside Group, came along to discuss the LiveTime initiative, which delivers services, projects and events specifically for older people and received an erosh Innovation and Good Practice award in 2013.

Keele University's Mo Ray also came to the forum to discuss the first Ageing Studies Certificate which was developed by the university and Manchester City Council's Valuing Older People's Team. This unique qualification aims to increase standards in care of older people and has attracted national interest.

For more information and meeting dates, contact:

Ken Johnson, **Ken.Johnson@riverside.org.uk**

Or click **here.**