



CANDIDATE BRIEFING PACK

Chief Executive

*Making a positive difference by
empowering people & communities*



Strand Road

Contents

1	A Message from the Chair	3
2	Who We Are	4
3	About the Role	8
4	Job Description	10
5	Person Specification	12
6	Summary of Terms and Conditions	14
7	Selection Process Timetable	16
8	Guidance Notes on Completing Your Application Form	18

If you require this information booklet in an alternative format please contact recruit@headstogether.com or telephone 028 9042 4030.

1 A Message from the Chair

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in joining Ark Housing Association as our new Chief Executive. Following the planned retirement of our current Chief Executive, we are seeking an exceptional and visionary leader to guide Ark Housing through the next chapter of our development. This is a unique opportunity to shape the future of a purpose-driven organisation and to deliver lasting impact for the people and communities we serve.

Over the past 10 years, under the leadership of our outgoing Chief Executive, Ark Housing has built a strong reputation as an ambitious and values-led Housing Association. Through bold strategic decisions and a clear focus on our social purpose, we have become one of the fastest-growing social housing providers across the UK and Ireland. Our continued investment in homes, services, and innovation is enabling us to reach more individuals in need and strengthen the communities in which we operate.

As Chief Executive, you will provide strategic leadership to the organisation, working closely with the Board and Senior Executive Team to build on this success. You will ensure Ark Housing remains financially resilient, operationally excellent, and responsive to an evolving environment, while maintaining a strong focus on delivering high-quality services and meaningful outcomes for our customers.

If you are an inspiring leader with the vision, experience, and commitment to drive forward a progressive and forward-thinking organisation, we would be delighted to hear from you. In return, you will be supported by a highly skilled and dedicated staff team and a committed Board, all focused on achieving Ark Housing's vision of making a positive difference by empowering people and communities.

I look forward to receiving your application.



TOM DORAN
Chair

2

Who We Are



Ark Housing Association is a registered Housing Association with the Department for Communities and is registered with the Financial Conduct Authority and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

We are an independent, not-for-profit community benefit society operating under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act (Northern Ireland) 1969. We were established in 1987 as Down and Connor Housing Association to provide social and affordable homes for people in housing need. In 1999, the organisation was renamed Ark Housing Association to reflect our history and growing ambition.

We are based in Belfast but provide homes and services across Northern Ireland. In addition to general needs housing, we provide specialist accommodation and support services for older people, homeless families and individuals requiring supported housing, helping people to live independently and sustain their tenancies. All permanent allocations are made in accordance with the Common Selection Scheme for Northern Ireland administered by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. We work in partnership with a range of specialist agencies and statutory bodies, including Threshold, Inspire Wellbeing, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, Supporting People and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. We also provide a Floating Support Service for families experiencing or threatened with homelessness and deliver community-based Shared Housing programmes.

Our new build developments are funded through a combination of private finance and capital grant funding from the Department for Communities, with a number of specialist services supported through programmes such as Supporting People and Shared Housing. Our vision is to make a positive difference by empowering people and communities. As at March 2025, Ark owned and managed 867 homes across Northern Ireland and has a substantial development pipeline that will significantly increase housing supply over the coming years.

We employ approximately 40 staff across housing, support, development and corporate service roles, working together to deliver excellent services and create lasting positive outcomes for tenants, residents and communities.



Our Vision, Mission, and Values

At Ark Housing Association, we pride ourselves on being an innovative and progressive organisation. We nurture open and honest internal and external relationships and we value partnership, collaboration, and professional development. We empower and trust our people to deliver and in return we actively support them through a myriad of forward thinking policies and practices.

Our vision

“Making a positive difference by empowering people and communities”

Our Mission

“In partnership, provide quality homes and support services to meet housing need and contribute to the wellbeing of communities”

Our Values

P	Progressive – Forward thinking, supporting change and transformational
R	Respect – Treat everyone with dignity and esteem
I	Integrity – Maintain the highest professional and personal standards
D	Diversity and Equality – Value diversity and equality in everything we do
E	Excellence – Strive to deliver the highest standards of quality and customer care

Our Strategic Ambition

Ark Housing Association is a progressive and ambitious housing association operating across Northern Ireland. Guided by its vision of “Making a Positive Difference by Empowering People and Communities”, Ark provides quality homes and support services that meet housing needs and contribute to the wellbeing of the communities it serves. Its mission is to work in partnership to provide quality homes and support services that meet housing needs and contribute to community wellbeing. The Association’s Corporate Strategy 2022–2027 established a clear framework for growth, service excellence and long-term sustainability. Built around five strategic themes, the strategy focuses on being a Leading Employer; Better Homes, Greater Diversity; Engaged Communities, Greater Impact; Service Excellence, Satisfied Customers; and Corporate Governance, Sustainability.

At the heart of the strategy is a commitment to investing in people, developing and improving homes, strengthening communities, embracing innovation, and maintaining strong governance and financial stewardship. The strategy also outlines ambitions to increase housing provision, invest in both new and existing homes, diversify housing products and services, and develop strategic partnerships to enhance impact and reach. Underpinning everything Ark does are its core values of Progressive, Respect, Integrity, Diversity and Equality, and Excellence, which guide decision-making, service delivery and relationships with tenants, partners and stakeholders.

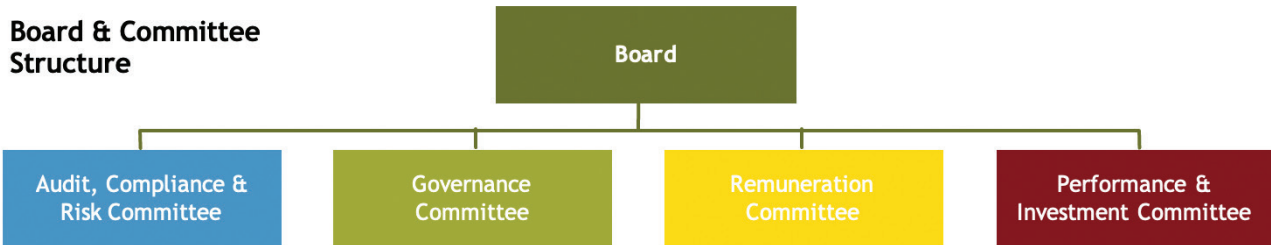
As the organisation looks beyond the current strategy period, it remains committed to delivering high-quality homes and services, maintaining strong governance and financial resilience, and making a lasting positive difference to people and communities across Northern Ireland.

Our corporate publications can be found here: [Publications - Ark Housing](#)

Our Governance & Organisational Structure

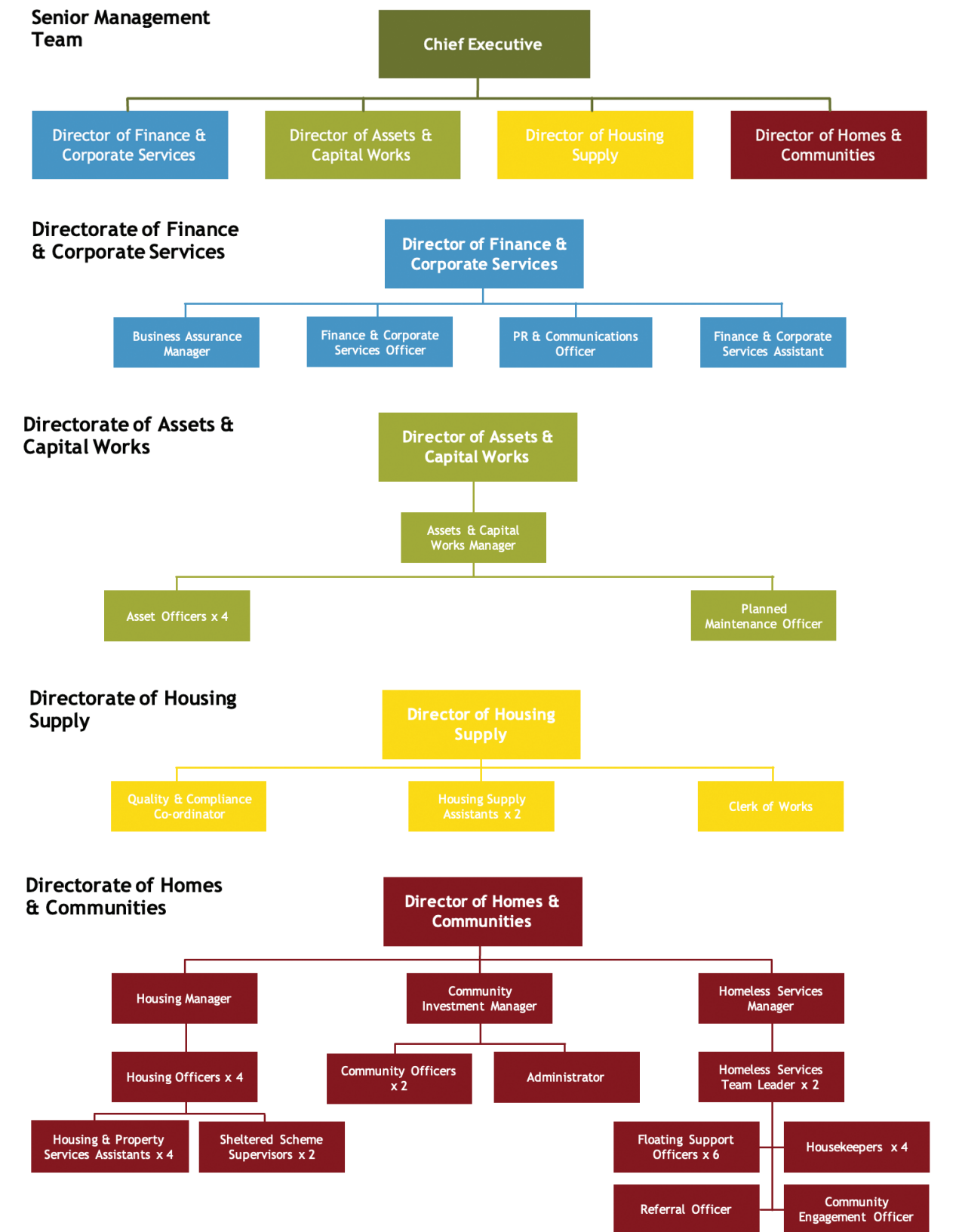
Ark Housing Association is governed by a voluntary Board and its Committees whose role is to lead, direct, and control the work of the Association. The Board ensures the delivery of the organisation’s agreed strategic objectives and corporate plans within the framework of statutory and regulatory compliance.

Board & Committee Structure



Organisational Chart

The Board is supported by the Senior Management Team, which is led by the Chief Executive.



3

About the Role

As Chief Executive of Ark Housing Association, you will provide inspiring, strategic and decisive leadership at a pivotal moment in the organisation's development. Working in close partnership with the Board, you will help shape and deliver Ark's long-term vision and strategic priorities, ensuring the organisation continues to grow sustainably while remaining firmly focused on its social purpose. Building on nearly 40 years of strong performance, Ark Housing is entering an ambitious new phase of growth, including plans to deliver 600 new homes by 2032 through an investment of approximately £120m. With an established turnover of close to £9m, and a significant development programme, this role requires a leader who can balance strategic ambition with operational excellence, ensuring that growth is underpinned by financial strength, effective delivery, and high-quality services to tenants and communities.

The Chief Executive will bring strong financial and commercial acumen, with responsibility for overseeing significant investment programmes, securing funding, and ensuring robust financial management, value for money, and long-term sustainability. They will translate strategic goals into clear, measurable outcomes, ensuring the organisation has the capacity, capability, and resources to deliver on its ambitions. Operating within a highly regulated environment, you will ensure that Ark Housing continues not

only to meet regulatory standards, but to exceed them. This includes maintaining effective governance, compliance, and risk management frameworks, and working closely with the Board to provide assurance, insight, and strategic advice. The Chief Executive will act as the primary link between the Board and the organisation, supporting strong and transparent governance at all levels.

A deep understanding of the housing sector, particularly the social and affordable housing environment, policy landscape, and regulatory framework, will be an essential requirement. This insight will enable Ark Housing to respond proactively to emerging challenges and opportunities, ensuring it remains resilient, strategically relevant, and well-positioned within an evolving external context. You will have overall responsibility for organisational performance, leading a capable and committed Senior Management Team and wider workforce to deliver high-quality homes and services that improve lives. Through visible and inclusive leadership, you will foster an engaged and high-performing culture, supporting staff development and continuous improvement across the organisation.

Externally, you will act as Ark Housing's principal ambassador, building and sustaining strong relationships with regulators, government bodies, funders, delivery partners, and local communities. You will enhance the organisation's profile and reputation,



Derrytrasna

advocating effectively for the needs of tenants and the wider communities Ark Housing serves. Critically, as the organisation grows, you will ensure it does not lose what makes it distinctive. Ark Housing's culture, rooted in its values, commitment to people, and focus on delivering meaningful outcomes, will remain central to everything it does. You will lead in a way that protects and strengthens this culture, ensuring that growth is not only ambitious, but also responsible, inclusive, and true to its purpose.

600
new homes by 2032

£120m
planned investment

£9m
established turnover

4

Job Description

Job Title	Chief Executive		
Responsible To	Chair of the Board		
Scope of Role	Responsible for the day to day operational management of the organisation, providing strategic leadership to the Board and senior management team and for the delivery of the organisation's corporate objectives.		
Number of direct reports	4	Number of indirect reports	40+
Size of budget for which the role is responsible	£30m annually	Level of financial authority with regard to expenditure	Approved Budget

Main Purpose of the Role

To ensure effective management of Ark Housing by providing strategic direction and leadership to Directors and all staff and strategic guidance and support to the Board and its Committees, including policy formulation and implementation.

Key Responsibilities:

1. To provide advice and assistance to the Board in setting strategy and planning, directing and controlling the Association's affairs.
2. To prepare and regularly review the Business Plans as the framework for the Association's strategic and operational objectives.
3. To provide clear and progressive leadership through culture change, where necessary.
4. To deliver and develop services in line with Business Plans, performance targets and budgetary parameters.
5. To ensure the continued financial stability and viability of the Association and to ensure that all financial covenants are met.

6. To identify, follow up and secure new business opportunities to support organisational growth and the achievement of strategic objectives.
7. To ensure that the Board is given the information and advice necessary to perform its duties, in particular on matters concerning compliance, constitution, risk, the law and financial matters.
8. To assist the Chair in ensuring that the business of the Board is properly conducted; and to supervise, with the guidance of the Chair, the preparation of key documents for consideration by the Board.
9. To ensure the Association is staffed by personnel with the abilities and standards necessary to deliver a quality customer service.
10. To develop and sustain effective business relationships on a local, regional and national basis where appropriate.
11. To promote the Association and seek opportunities for its enhancement.
12. To represent the Association with DfC, NIFHA, NIHE, the media, professional bodies, local authorities and other appropriate statutory and voluntary agencies.
13. To ensure the full operation of diversity and equal opportunities throughout the Association.
14. To maintain overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with health and safety requirements.
15. To promote a positive image of Ark Housing through the development and maintenance of excellent professional working relationships with customers, partners, colleagues and key stakeholders.
16. To provide visible leadership that demonstrates a clear commitment to the organisation's social purpose, delivering meaningful outcomes for tenants and communities.
17. To act as an effective ambassador for the organisation and articulate its vision, impact, and priorities to a wide range of audiences.
18. To keep abreast of developments in legislation and good practice in relation to property development, asset management, procurement and regeneration and update the Ark Housing policies and practices accordingly.
19. To carry out any other task or responsibility as directed by the Chair and the Board that is commensurate with the status and scope of the role and within the expected capabilities of the post-holder.

This job description is provided for illustrative purposes only and does not encapsulate the full breadth of duties and responsibilities of the post-holder.

The successful candidate will be required to carry out any other reasonable duties as required by the post and as directed by the Board, and as appropriate to the grade of Chief Executive.

5

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential/ Desirable	Testing Mechanism
----------	-------------------------	----------------------

Qualifications / Management Experience

An undergraduate degree (or equivalent qualification) in a relevant area, for example housing, business, finance or management and 3 years' relevant senior management* experience, gained within the last 7 years, demonstrating evidence of senior input into organisational strategy, translating vision into action, and delivering successful business and operational outcomes. Or 5 years' relevant senior management* experience, gained within the last 7 years, demonstrating evidence of senior input into organisational strategy, translating vision into action, and delivering successful business and operational outcomes. <i>*Senior management experience is defined as experience operating at a senior level including direct reporting to a Board or Chief Executive Officer within an organisation with comparable levels of budgetary responsibility and substantial growth plans.</i>	Essential	Application form and selection process
Evidence of continued professional development (CPD), for example membership of a professional body such as the Chartered Institute of Housing or the Chartered Institute of Management, demonstrating a commitment to maintaining and enhancing professional knowledge, skills and best practice relevant to the role.	Desirable	Application form

Criteria

Essential/
DesirableTesting
Mechanism

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Demonstrable experience as a senior leader in managing financial responsibilities, ensuring financial sustainability, effective resource management and value for money.	Essential	Application form and selection process
Experience of working effectively with Boards, with a strong understanding of governance, compliance, risk management and organisational accountability.	Essential	Application form and selection process
Outstanding leadership and people management experience, with a proven ability to build high-performing teams and foster a positive organisational culture.	Desirable	Application form
Exceptional communication and influencing skills, with experience of representing an organisation at a senior level and building effective relationships with a wide range of stakeholders.	Essential	Selection process
Strong understanding of the social and affordable housing sector, including relevant policy and regulatory frameworks, together with a commitment to social purpose, customer focus and high-quality service delivery.	Essential	Selection process
Experience of working within the social housing sector or in a comparable regulated environment.	Essential	Selection process
Experience of managing organisational growth, transformation, regulatory engagement and operating within a publicly accountable environment.	Desirable	Application form
Understanding of Northern Ireland housing policy, funding arrangements, asset management and social housing management.	Desirable	Selection process

6

Summary of Terms and Conditions

Salary

The salary offered will be in the region of £90,000 to £95,000 per annum (subject to annual review and regular market benchmarking).

Pension

The post holder will be entitled to join the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Scheme (NILGOSC). The employer contribution rate is currently 15.5%.

The Working Week

- The working week will be 37 hours per week, Monday to Friday.
- Flexible and remote working options are available.
- The working week will be variable, and there will be a requirement to work outside normal working hours where the needs of the service require it, and to attend conferences and other such events.

Annual Leave & Public & Privilege Days

The post offers 22 days' annual leave increasing to 27 days after 5 years' service and 32 days after 10 years' service, together with 13 Public and Privilege days.

Location

Head Office, 43 Stockmans Way, Belfast, BT9 7ET

Probation

This is a permanent role, subject to the appointee successfully completing a six-month probationary period.

Other Benefits

The post offers a comprehensive benefits package, including;

- Essential Car User Allowance: £1239 Per Annum
- Mileage/Travel Allowance: 55p per mile
- On-site Car Parking at Head Office
- Private Health Insurance
- Electric Vehicle Salary Sacrifice Scheme
- Electric Vehicle Charging Facilities at Head Office
- Remote Working Policy supporting flexible ways of working



7 Selection Timetable

The closing date for completed applications is **4pm on Monday 28th September 2026**. Applications should be sent by email to: **recruit@headstogether.com** quoting reference **Ark CEO**.

Responses will only be accepted on the relevant application form. Please note that CVs will not be accepted.

The process will comprise of psychometric testing followed by a selection day which will involve an unseen presentation and a situational/competency interview.

Key dates

- Closing date:** Monday 28th September 2026 at 4pm
Shortlisting: Tuesday 29th September 2026
Psychometric tests: Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd October 2026
Selection process: w/c 12th October 2026

These dates are indicative only and may be subject to change. Further details will be provided to those candidates invited to participate in the psychometric testing and selection stage of the process.

Please note: Psychometric testing is a mandatory part of the recruitment process, and the dates above cannot be changed. However, the Occupational Psychologist will endeavour to be flexible with appointment times on these dates.

In the event that a candidate is invited to the selection process but is unavailable on the proposed date and time due to reasons beyond their control, the panel may endeavour to accommodate an alternative arrangement subject to their own availability, although this may not be possible and is not guaranteed unless an adjustment is required in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Demonstration of Essential & Desirable Requirements

Candidates will be required to demonstrate during the shortlisting, selection and assessment process that they satisfy the core requirements of the post as set out in the candidate information booklet.



8

Guidance Notes on Completing Your Application Form

It is important that you read these notes carefully before you complete the application form.

Job Description & Person Specification

The Job Description and Person Specification will assist you in deciding whether you meet the essential criteria for this position. Please remember that the criteria set out is a minimum requirement and that the Association reserves the right to increase the criteria used for the short listing of candidates to be selected for interview without further notification in the event of a high volume of applicants.

In terms of responding to the essential and desirable criteria stated for shortlisting purposes, please ensure that you **demonstrate with examples** how you meet those criteria when completing the relevant section of the application form.

Short Listing Candidates

Candidates will be shortlisted solely on the information provided in the application form, therefore you should ensure that you answer all sections fully.

The shortlisting panel will not make presumptions if the relevant information is not fully provided.

Confidential Equality Monitoring Form

To comply with our obligations under Equal Opportunities and Fair Employment legislation, we are required to monitor our recruitment exercises in accordance with the Fair Employment and Treatment Order. All applicants are therefore asked to complete the Equal Opportunities Form associated with this application.

Once completed, please return it by email along with your completed application form to: recruit@headstogether.com

The equality monitoring form will be separated from your application upon receipt. We will not use data from our equal opportunities monitoring form as part of the selection process.

Supporting Documents

Copies of your educational qualifications, professional membership and any other documents required to support your application will also be required if selected for the role. Please note that all documents provided must be originals.

Disclosure of Criminal Records

All applicants must complete this section of the application form fully and where criminal convictions are disclosed details must be provided of the offence(s) of which the applicant has been convicted and any relevant details relating to the offences.

You should note that Ark Housing are required to carry out checks on all persons being considered for employment with the Association through the Access NI scheme.

Data Protection

All information provided by applicants will be used solely for the purposes for which it is required in this recruitment exercise and will not be disclosed to others except where we are obliged to do so in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations.

Equality of Opportunity

Ark Housing is an Equal Opportunities Employer and we welcome applications from all sections of our community. Arrangements can be made for applicants who require additional support or assistance due to a disability or other circumstances that may hinder them in the application process. If you require such assistance, please contact recruit@headstogether.com or telephone **028 9042 4030** quoting the reference **Ark CEO recruitment**.

General Points

Do not send any additional supporting documentation with your application form other than the Equality Monitoring form mentioned above.



Making a positive difference
by empowering people
and communities

**Ready to
make a
positive
difference?**

We look forward
to receiving your
application

recruit@headstogether.com

Telephone **028 9042 4030**



Derrytrasna