



Abbeyfield & Wesley Housing Association

Board Recruitment Pack 2024

Thank you for your interest in becoming an Abbeyfield & Wesley Housing Association Board Member.

Abbeyfield & Wesley provides a range of housing across Northern Ireland, making time for our residents and aiming to enhance their lives by bringing everyone together in homely, friendly accommodation which has links within their community. From the formation of the Abbeyfield movement in 1956, there has been a recognition that older people should maintain their social and community connections in order to prevent and alleviate the loneliness which can come with later life and can have such an impact on health and well-being.



*Eileen Stewart,
Chair of Abbeyfield & Wesley*

Working in partnership with the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team, the Board is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the association, playing a vital role in ensuring that the association provides high quality housing and support for older people.

The key priority over the last two years has been to move on from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and rapidly escalating costs and to reduce voids in our accommodation.

It has been a period of change and uncertainty, but we have an outstanding team of passionate and dedicated staff, volunteers and Board Members who have demonstrated an amazing level of commitment and resilience. Hopefully, we are now getting back into a more normal operating mode and can plan for the future.

I have found being a Board Member to be challenging, but immensely rewarding and interesting. To work most effectively, the Board needs to be made up of a wide range of people with a variety of experience and knowledge. If you would be interested in the opportunity to contribute to the Board, and would like to find out more, please do contact us.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eileen M Stewart".

**Eileen Stewart
Chair**

1. General Introduction to Abbeyfield & Wesley

Abbeyfield & Wesley provides a range of housing and support for older people and is:

- ◆ a housing association, registered with the Department for Communities (DfC No 46).
- ◆ an Industrial & Provident Society, IP 244.
- ◆ registered as a charity – Charity Registration Number – NIC106288.
- ◆ a member society of the Abbeyfield movement.

The main activities of the organisation are:

- ◆ Management, maintenance and development of a range of housing for older people including care home, supported sheltered, sheltered and general needs elderly.
- ◆ Provision of support to help residents improve their quality of life by enabling them to have more independent lives within the community.

Abbeyfield Guiding Principles

Abbeyfield believes:

- Older people have an important role to play amongst their families, friends and in the community;
- Overcoming loneliness and insecurity can make all the difference to an older person's well-being and quality of life;
- Local people have an essential part to play in helping older people in the community.

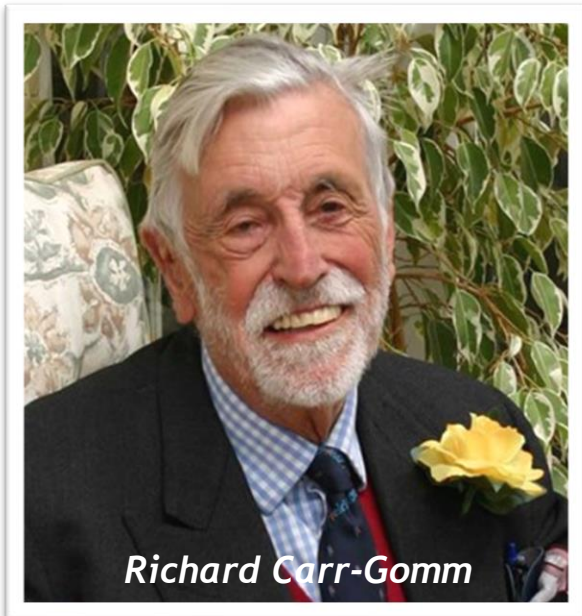
Abbeyfield residents can expect:

- A proper home of their own, within the security and companionship of a homely 'family' household;
- Encouragement and support to remain independent and enjoy a full life;
- Respect for personal freedom, rights, privacy and dignity;
- Support in response to their individual needs and choices;
- Help to secure the care they need and make Abbeyfield a home for life, wherever possible.

2. History of Abbeyfield & Wesley

The Abbeyfield movement has been providing housing for older people for over 65 years.

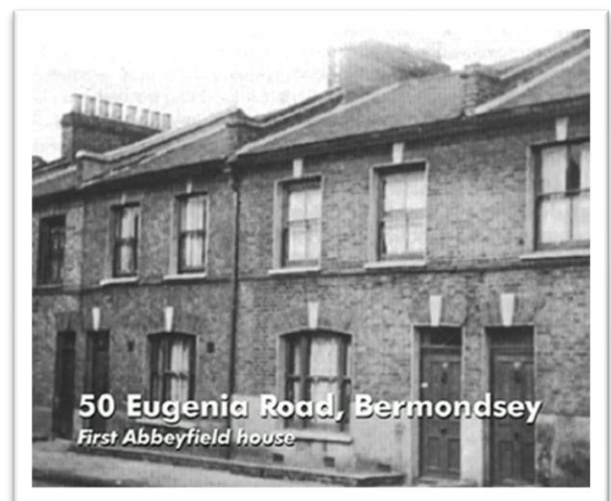
The Founder



In 1956, a young Coldstream Guard visiting Bermondsey was concerned by the number of sad elderly faces he saw staring from windows. He resigned his commission and became a home help. Discovering that loneliness was the main problem he bought a house for just £350 and invited four lonely people to join him. By Christmas 1956 Richard Carr-Gomm had become Abbeyfield's first housekeeper!

He won the support of several local people and they met at a house in Abbeyfield Road, hence the Society's name. The movement quickly spread throughout the United Kingdom, with houses being set up and managed in local areas by societies which were members of Abbeyfield, although legally independent.

The idea also spread internationally with houses in thirteen other countries including Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and Belgium.



In Northern Ireland

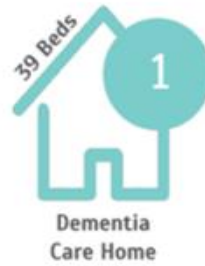
The idea spread to Northern Ireland in 1960, with the first house in Belfast and then quickly spreading across the province. In 2003 thirteen individual societies merged to form Abbeyfield UK (NI) and in 2013 joined forces with the Wesley Housing Association, which was formed in 1947, creating Abbeyfield & Wesley. There are two separate Abbeyfield societies in Northern Ireland – Abbeyfield & Wesley and Abbeyfield Belfast. **We are recruiting for Abbeyfield & Wesley.**

3. Abbeyfield & Wesley Services

Service Provision

Abbeyfield & Wesley provides a range of housing across Northern Ireland. We make time for our residents and aim to enhance their lives by bringing everyone together in homely, friendly accommodation that has links within their community.

Abbeyfield & Wesley is more than a home, *it is a neighbourhood, a community, a family.*



Ballycastle
Ballymena
Banbridge
Bangor X3
Donaghadee X2
Downpatrick
Greenisland
Lurgan
Carrickfergus

Ballyclare
Ballymoney
Holywood
Merville

Wesley Court,
Carrick /
Fleming & Stutt,
Belfast /
Bryans House,
New Mossley

Palmerston Care
Home, Belfast

Tennent Street /
Geoffrey Street,
Belfast

Sheltered

Sheltered housing is independent living with support and has been designed for retired, elderly people, both singles and couples. There are communal facilities which may include laundry facilities, guest room, and tenants' lounge/kitchen area. Schemes are linked to emergency Careline. The schemes have a team of Support Managers and other staff who work during office hours.



Residential Care

Palmerston, is a purpose-built 39-bed residential care home which specialises in dementia care.



Supported Sheltered

Abbeyfield & Wesley's supported sheltered housing is a mid-way option between sheltered housing and a care home. This can be an appropriate and successful alternative for an older person who doesn't need the level of care provided in a registered care home but who would benefit from:

- a higher level of support than would be provided in sheltered housing (support staff from 8.00am or 9.00am until 2.00pm, 4.00pm to 6.00pm and overnight from 10.00pm to 8.00am);
- home cooked meals eaten with company; and
- companionship.

Residents have full independence, but with the security of on-site support and alleviation of isolation through communal meals and activities.



General Needs (Older People)

A small independent living gated scheme, built to Lifetime Home Standards.

4. How Abbeyfield & Wesley is Governed

The Management Board is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of Abbeyfield & Wesley, ensuring the effective management of the Association and monitoring activities to ensure the aims and objectives as laid down in the governing document are met. The Chief Executive provides the link between the Board and the Staff.

Key functions which cannot be delegated include:

i. Vision & Leadership

To determine the overall direction and development of the Association through clear strategic planning.

ii. Accountability

To be able to account for everything the Association does and demonstrate to stakeholders that appropriate policies, procedures and systems are in place to achieve the objectives.

To monitor performance in relation to plans, budgets, controls and decisions.

iii. Compliance

To ensure compliance with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements and the values and objectives of the Association.

iv. Financial Oversight

To ensure that all money, property and resources are properly used, managed and accounted for, and suitable systems are in place.

v. Managing Staff

To deal with the appointment and appraisal of the Chief Executive and senior management team and determine the remuneration of the Chief Executive and other senior staff as appropriate.

vi. Delegation and Internal Control

Setting and regularly reviewing a framework of delegation and internal control.

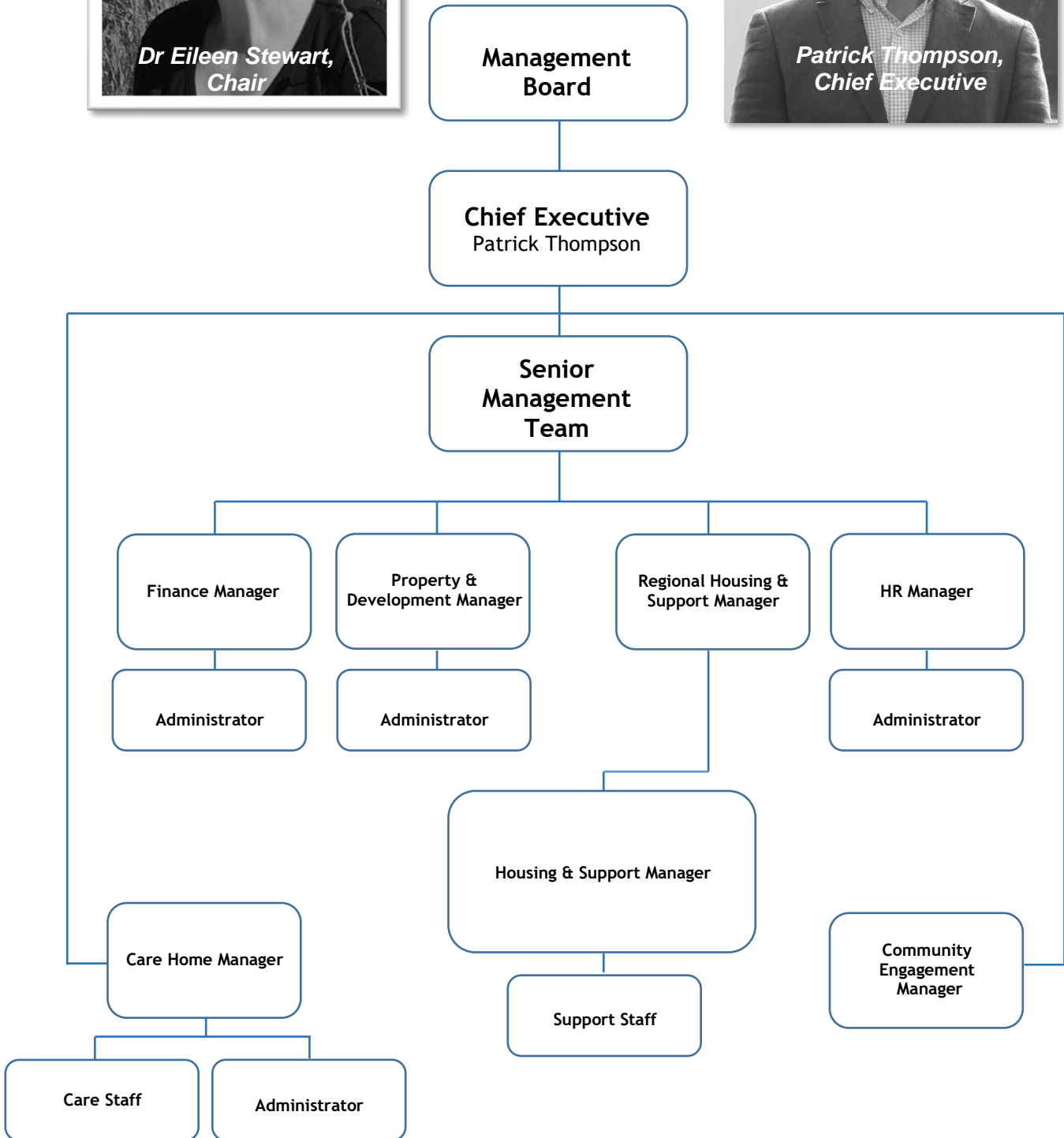
Management Board @ 01/08/24

Dr Eileen Stewart - Chair
Mr Malcolm Beattie
Dr David Capper
Mr Ken Gordon
Mr Billy Graham
Mrs Paula Sands
Dr Gillian Turner
Mr Kevin McParland
Mrs Margaret Bunting

The following sub-committees assist the Board

**Finance
Governance & Audit
Property & Development**

Abbeyfield & Wesley – Organisational Structure



How the Board works in practice

The Board delegates day-to-day administration of the association's services to the Chief Executive and staff team.

Meetings

- The Board meets as a minimum four times a year, usually in person
- Usual venue for meetings is Wesley Court, Carrickfergus.
- Reports and background papers are sent to Board Members by email, usually at least a week in advance. Some or all of the papers can be supplied in hard copy.
- Meetings are currently held on the second Monday of March, June, September, December from 6.15pm to 8.15pm.

Committees

Board members may wish to be a member of a committee (Finance, Governance & Audit, Property & Development)

- Meetings are usually held quarterly, at a time arranged to suit committee members.
- Some meetings are by video conferencing and some held in person.

Length of Commitment

All appointments to the Board are for an initial three-year term, renewable by agreement with the Board for a maximum of two additional three-year terms.

Volunteer Role

All Board Members participate on a voluntary basis and are not remunerated, however, reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

Management Board Members – Role Outline

The Management Board is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the Association, ensuring that the organisation meets the aims and objectives as laid down in the governing document.

Board Member – Role Outline

Key Responsibilities:

- To ensure compliance with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements and the values and objectives of the organisation.
- To determine the overall direction and development of the organisation through clear strategic planning.

Main Tasks:

1. To attend Board Meetings which are held at a minimum on a quarterly basis, and to work with other Board Members to form an effective governing body.

To give adequate time and energy to prepare for meetings and attend training seminars and other events as appropriate.

2. To ensure the organisation complies with legislative and regulatory requirements such as health and safety, employment, equality, housing regulations.
3. To maintain sound financial management of the Association's resources, ensuring expenditure is in line with the Association's objectives. This includes approval of budgets and accounts.
4. To monitor and evaluate the work of the organisation.
5. To ensure the organisation is committed to resident/tenant consultation and involvement.

Commitments:

1. To act reasonably at all times in the interests of the association.
2. Remain independent and not come under the control of any external organisation or group of individuals.
3. Adhere to the Abbeyfield & Wesley Code of Conduct, including the Seven Principles of Public Life as laid down by the Nolan Committee.

Why become a Board Member?

- You get satisfaction from contributing to the local community.
- You can make a positive difference to the lives of older people.
- You can apply existing skills, learn new skills and broaden your experience.

Do you need experience of being a trustee or on a Board?

Previous Board experience is not essential.

There is a perception that to be a charity Board Member you need to be an older professional, but we consider that to govern effectively, the board should be diverse and have a range and skills, knowledge and expertise.

Insight of the lived experience of older people and residents can be a valuable asset for the board.

What are we looking for in a Board Member?

1. Commitment and an interest in older people, housing, care and support.
2. An ability to exercise general independent judgement.
3. Willing to debate constructively and challenge vigorously while working to achieve a shared consensus.
4. Ability to review and comment on strategic, financial and operational matters.

Where to find further information

There are a number of on-line sources of information about charity, governance and board members, which you may find useful, including:

- strictlyboardroom.com
- diycommittee.org
- charitycommissionni.org.uk
- NICVA

For more information on Abbeyfield & Wesley and the movement:

www.abbeyfieldandwesley.org.uk

www.abbeyfield.com

5. How to Apply

Step 1: Expression of Interest

If you are considering a Board Member role, please submit an expression of interest either using the proforma provided or in a short letter.

Please note the following:

- Name, address, telephone number, email
- Why you wish to join the Board of Abbeyfield and Wesley
- What experience and expertise you would bring to the Management Board
- If there would be reasons which would prevent you from becoming a company director or charity trustee:

e.g unspent conviction for an offence involving deception or dishonesty, an undischarged bankruptcy or has made an arrangement with creditors; previously removed as a charity trustee; subject to disqualification under company legislation.

Step 2: Informal Discussion

Your application will be considered and the Chair will nominate a Board Member or Chief Executive to have an informal meeting to clarify your understanding of the role and discuss the skills, attributes and experience you would bring to the role.

Step 3: Board Approval

The outcome of the informal meeting will be reported back to the management board and a decision will be taken whether to co-opt you, pending possible election at the next AGM.

Step 4: Induction

Induction training will be provided including:

- Information such as accounts, budgets, strategic plans
- Visit to houses
- Meeting board members and staff

Please send your expression of interest form to:

Chief Executive, Abbeyfield & Wesley, 2 Wesley Court, Carrickfergus, BT38 8DH

or email - pthompson@abbeyfieldandwesley.org.uk
marking the subject header "Board Recruitment"

Closing date is 5pm on Friday 23rd August 2024

If you require any further information, please do contact us.