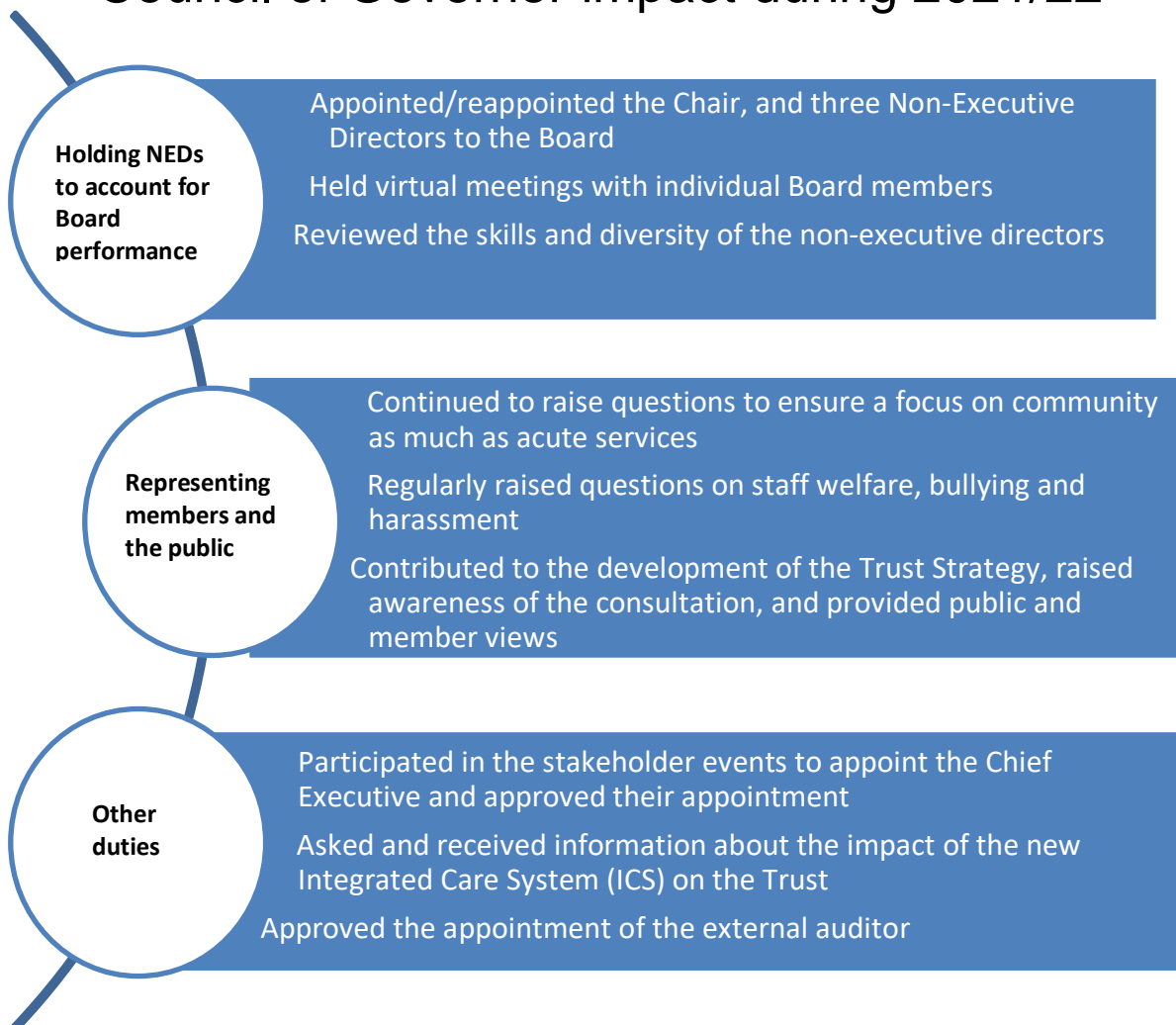


# Become a governor and make a difference

## Information and guidance for prospective Governors

### Council of Governor impact during 2021/22



## Message from Sir John Gieve, Trust Chair and Jo Boait, Lead Governor



Sir John Gieve

We are looking for public and staff members who would like to become more involved with the Homerton Trust to join the Council of Governors. It is a great opportunity to influence the future direction of our Trust and to represent the interests of the public, members, and our staff.

The Governors on the Council have a wide range of skills and experience - we are looking for ideas, interest and enthusiasm, rather than experience of the NHS. We hope that you will consider joining us.



Jo Boait

In this document, you will find out more about becoming a Governor and what to do if you want to stand for election. Whether you decide to stand for election or not, we still need you to have your say on the Trust's future. Members in constituencies with vacancies (City of London, Hackney, clinical and non-clinical staff) will receive a voting pack in September.

Please use your vote to ensure we have the best possible representation on our Council.

*Sir John Gieve*  
Chair of the Trust

*Jo Boait*  
Lead Governor

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## Our Values as an NHS Foundation Trust

Our four core values form the framework for how we deliver services and relate to one another. Each of the values is accompanied by a set of behaviours which were developed by staff from across the organisation and with the input of our patients and service users. By making a personal and team commitment to live up to our values, we can ensure our services meet and exceed the expectations of our patients and service users. We have the following values:

**Safe:** We will do everything we can to make our services as safe as possible and create a positive learning environment.

**Personal:** We will provide care which addresses individual needs and focuses on our patients, service users, their families and carers, and our staff.

**Responsibility:** We will take responsibility for our actions and any problems that we come across – we lead by example

**Respectful:** We will treat others as we would expect ourselves or our families to be treated and cared for.

## About Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust received authorisation in 2004. The Trust runs Homerton University Hospital and provides a wide range of community health services in Hackney and the City of London. We have a reputation as an innovative, friendly, and high performing organisation. We work closely with GPs, our local authorities and others to provide better and more integrated care for local people and are collaborating with neighbouring NHS Trusts to improve health services for north east London more generally. The Board, Governors and Members agreed to change our name from Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust at a Special Members' meeting in March 2021 in recognition of the importance of our community services and our work with partners to provide integrated care.

## What is a Foundation Trust?

NHS foundation trusts were first set up in 2004 as part of the Government's drive to make sure NHS organisations:

- make more local decisions
- have more financial freedom
- are more accountable to local people for the services they provide.

NHS foundation trusts are also accountable to:

- the Integrated Care Board (ICB) which are part of the Integrated Care System (ICS). The ICB decides on how the NHS budget for their area is spent develop plans to improve health and care, deliver higher quality care and value for money
- Parliament (each foundation trust must lay its annual report and accounts before Parliament)
- the Care Quality Commission (through the legal requirement to register and meet the associated standards for the quality of care provided)
- NHS England/Improvement, the regulator for NHS foundation trusts (through the NHS provider licence)

## How is the NHS changing?

The Health and Social Care Act came into force on 1 July 2022. The Act makes significant changes to the structure of the NHS, replacing an 'internal market' in which different NHS trusts compete for contracts from local commissioners, with a collaborative approach based on partnerships of local health and care organisations within new regional **Integrated Care Systems (ICS)**. Integrated Care Systems are made up of **Integrated Care Boards** and **Integrated Care Partnerships**.

Integrated Care Systems exist to achieve four aims:

- **improve outcomes** in population health and healthcare
- **tackle inequalities** in outcomes, experience and access
- enhance **productivity and value for money**
- help the NHS support broader **social and economic development**

Homerton Healthcare is part of the **North East London Integrated Care System**, and part of the **City and Hackney Health and Care Partnership**. The lead executive for the Partnership is also the Homerton Healthcare Chief Executive.

Foundation Trusts will continue under the new arrangements but with a new statutory duty to collaborate.

The statutory role of the Council of Governors has not been changed by the Act and remains the same as before the ICS was established. However, it means governors will need to understand how Homerton Healthcare is working effectively as part of the North East London system. Governors may also need to consider they may be representing the interests of members and 'the public at large' which means everyone in the North East London ICS.

NHS Providers has produced Frequently Asked Questions and helpful information on the basics of system working and what it means for governors at [gof-fags.pdf \(nhsproviders.org\)](https://www.nhsproviders.org/gof-fags).

## How does a Foundation Trust Work?

As a Foundation Trust, we are a not for profit, membership organisations. We aim to respond to the needs of our membership and work closely with local communities to improve services and standards for local people. Regulators ensure that we are well-governed, legally constituted, financially viable and provide a high standard of care.

## Who leads Foundation Trusts?

Our Board of Directors is responsible for the leading and running our Trust.

The Board is led by an independent Chair and composed of a mixture of Executive Directors and Non-Executive Directors. All Board members bring a range of individual skills and experience. Together they provide the strategic direction for our Trust and are accountable for the quality of our services and how they are run. They are accountable for the Trust's performance, managing risk, and for meeting national standards and financial requirements.

Non-executive directors are people with a connection to the area that the Trust serves. They are not employed by the organisation, rather they bring wider experience and an

independent perspective to the Board.

Executive Directors are full-time employees of the organisation, with executive management responsibilities. Their management role means they are responsible for running the business operations of the Trust and they are accountable to the board of directors and the Chief Executive.

Both Executive and Non-Executive Directors have collective responsibility. This means they share the same liabilities and joint responsibility for every decision of the Board; and all Directors therefore bear full legal liability for the operational and financial performance of our Trust.

## **Who are members of the Foundation Trust?**

We want our membership to be representative of the communities we serve. Trust staff, students in training at Homerton Healthcare and members of the public over the age of 16 with an interest in the services we provide and who lives in one of our constituencies can apply to be a member of the Foundation Trust. Membership is free, without obligation and will have no bearing on the care received. Members can receive information on the Trust, be consulted on plans for future development, elect representatives to the Council of Governors and nominate themselves for Governor.

## **Our Council of Governors**

Elected and appointed Governors make up our Council of Governors. The Council does not run our Trust and is not responsible for its day-to-day management. This is the responsibility of the Executive Directors on the Board.

However, the Council performs an essential role of holding the Non-Executive Directors to account, both as individuals and as a group, for the performance of the Board. It is also Governors' responsibility to represent the interests of members and the public, particularly when it comes to the strategic direction of the Trust.

Together Governors bring a wealth of expertise, experience, ideas, and views which are essential for the continuing effective development of our Trust.

## **What is a Governor?**

Governors play an important role by helping the Trust to be responsive and accountable to local people, staff and partners. Governors use their knowledge, networks, and experience to inform the Trust's priorities and strategic direction. There are 26 Governors in total and together they form the Council of Governors which has specific responsibilities.

The Council of Governors provides an important link between the Board of Directors and members.

## **How the Board and Council of Governors work together?**

The Chair is a Non-Executive Director and leads both the Board and the Council and is the link between the two. The Chair has a key role in ensuring Directors and Governors are fully aware of their respective roles and responsibilities, and for building meaningful relationships between both groups.

The Council is the **voice of the local community, staff and wider members of the public**. It plays a central part in shaping the Trust's future, communicating local needs and priorities to the Trust, and in communicating the work of the Trust to the wider community.

## The specific powers and responsibilities of Governors and their commitments

Governors work within the Council of Governors. Their duties are laid down in law and are set out in our Constitution. At Homerton Healthcare, we regard our Governors as our **critical friends** working together in the best interests of the Trust and the communities it serves.

Some of the most important powers of the Council of Governors are listed below:

- The Council holds the Non-Executive Directors both individually and collectively to account for how well the Board of Directors is performing in managing the Trust
- The Council appoints and if appropriate removes the Chair and other Non-Executive Directors. It also sets the remuneration and terms and conditions of the Chair and Non-Executive Directors
- The Council approves the appointment of a new Chief Executive
- The Council ensures they can effectively represent the interests of the Trust's Members

The Council carries out its work in several ways. It holds meetings in public at least six times a year and Governors are expected to attend these so that they can effectively carry out their duties. Governors may also be involved in other activities, depending on their previous experience or interests. Meetings are currently held by videoconference (the Trust can support Governors who do not have the necessary equipment to take part in online meetings with guidance) but we hope to move to a more blended approach as we emerge from the pandemic.

You can:

- Be a member of one of three Council of Governor committees
- Visit various services. These provide the opportunity for Governors to meet service users and staff to better understand the Trust and give feedback that helps us improve (currently suspended due to Covid-19)
- Attend Board meetings held in public to observe the contributions of the Non-Executive Directors and ask strategic questions during the public questions section of the agenda
- Attend events such as the Trust-wide *Improving Quality* sessions and the annual Patient Safety Conference
- Seek out and represent the views of members and local communities, particularly the views of the members in the constituency they represent to ensure the Trust remains sensitive to the needs and wishes of the community we serve
- Share information about important discussions and key decisions the Trust is making with the members they represent
- Help develop and promote membership of the Trust
- Provide a Governor perspective on the Trust's plans and strategies through opportunities provided
- Form your own judgments and take decisions in the **best interests of the Trust, not for self-interest or the interests of other organisations**
- Form a good working relationship with members of the Board

- Participate in training and development opportunities.

This list is not complete; we also recognise that Governors will have different interests, knowledge and time to contribute.

## Training and support

It all may sound a bit daunting but if you are elected, you will find much support from the Trust, Trust staff and your fellow Governors.

We will usually arrange a buddy system for your first Council of Governors meeting, pairing you with a more experienced Governor to welcome you to and support you during the meeting.

As part of your induction, you will also meet with the Chair, staff and experienced Governors, during which time you can share your interests and identify what individual training and development needs you may have.

We also run various training and development sessions starting with a mandatory induction, currently scheduled for 12 October 2022. We encourage Governors to attend national conferences to network with their colleagues from other Trusts. Governors can take advantage of these training and development opportunities to ensure they can be effective in their role.

## Different types of Governors

There are three types of Governors who sit on the Council of Governors. They share the same responsibilities and work together as a unified group. They bring knowledge of their constituents whilst considering the needs of all those we serve. There are:

- **14 Public Governors** who live in and who are elected by members in one of our local constituencies namely the London Borough of Hackney, the City of London or the outer area. The outer area constituency comprises Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Newham, Redbridge, Barking, Havering, Camden, Islington, Haringey, Enfield, Lambeth, Southwark, Westminster and Epping Forest District). Public Governors play a crucial role in bringing a local perspective to the planning and development of services, acting as the link between the local community and the Board.
- **6 Staff Governors** who are elected by the people who we employ – almost all of our staff are also members of the Trust. They bring knowledge of widely held staff views to Council debates and can bring first-hand experience to strategic discussions about quality. Staff Governors do not deal with any individual or personal issues that may involve staff; the role is very different from trade unions, professional bodies and staff-side organisations.
- **6 Appointed Governors** who are nominated by our partner organisations, (local authorities, education and statutory). They bring expert insights which are valuable, particularly when considering education and integrated care.

## What Governors can't do

Governors have an important role in the governance framework of the Trust; however, their role is in contributing to plans and holding to account. In practice this means:



- Governors do not get involved in the day-to-day operation of the Trust's services. This is the responsibility of the Executive Directors. However, they can influence services by communicating the views of local communities
- The Council cannot overrule decisions made by the Board of Directors, because in law the Board is responsible for the Trust. However, the Board draws on the contribution of the Council of Governors when considering strategy
- Governors should not deal with patients' complaints – although they can tell people about the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and the Trust's complaint system; they can, however, consider whether the Trust's complaints system is working well
- Governors do not inspect the Trust's services. This is the responsibility of our regulators, the Care Quality Commission; however, they may go on site visits to inform their own thinking about the Trust's services
- Governors cannot act as advocates for individual patients, individual staff, or themselves if they are receiving services from or are employed by Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust – although they can point people in the direction of appropriate advocacy organisations or relevant Trade Unions
- Governors do not act as representatives of the Trust to the media
- Governors are volunteers and do not get paid or given preferential treatment for their work
- Governors do not use their role to advance personal or specific political or other ideological messages.

## Who can be a Governor?

We aim to have Governors who are representative of all walks of life; you do not need special skills or qualifications to become an effective Governor. We need people who are passionate about the NHS, care about their local services, have the enthusiasm and the willingness to represent the views of the people in their community or staff group, who have the time to commit to the role and can work well as part of a wider team.

Governors must be able to challenge the Board to seek assurance and consider the strategy, so it could be useful to have some skills you may have developed at work or as a volunteer or in your personal life, such as reading reports and working with people.

You will also be expected to work in a way that reflects Homerton Healthcare's values which are "Safe, Personal, Respectful, Responsibility."

If you are considering standing for election you need to be able to show:

- You are aged 16 years or over and are a member of the constituency you wish to represent. If you're not yet a member you can join by filling in our [online application form](#) on our [Members' page](#)
- You can meet the commitment of attending Council of Governors meetings which take place at least six times a year (these are mandatory).
- You can read and interpret the content of papers and reports to be able to make informed recommendations and decisions
- You can actively listen, and you value the contributions of different people
- You can ask strategic questions in a constructive and respectful manner
- You can effectively put the needs of the community above personal preference and understand that the Governor role is broader than your own experiences
- You are willing to actively communicate with your constituents and the wider

- membership to find out their views and concerns
- You are willing to participate in Governor committees or activities and in other meetings to present the views of the members and public
- You are willing to participate in induction and training and development events to ensure you are kept up to date with what is happening in the NHS and to learn more about the Governor role
- You will uphold the 7 Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership
- You will also adhere to the Trust's Code of Conduct which outlines the appropriate conduct for Governors and addresses both the requirements of office and personal behaviour
- You are willing to complete a register of interests which is published

## Who can't be a Governor?

There are certain statutory requirements that prevent an individual from becoming a Governor. You cannot stand to be elected as a Governor if you have received a criminal conviction within the preceding five years, declared bankruptcy, been dismissed from an NHS job within the preceding two years, or received disqualification from a health-related professional body. There is a full list of these restrictions, and this will be provided when you request a nomination form.

## Terms of Office

Governors are elected or appointed for a term of three years and may seek re-election or reappointment at the end of their term. This system enables members or the appointing organisation to review the effectiveness of their Governor representative but at the same time reduces the risk of so many governor changes at one time that it damages the effectiveness of the Council. Governors may hold office for a maximum of three terms.

Elected Governors will cease to hold office if they are no longer a member of the constituency or class they were elected to represent and can be removed if they do not meet the attendance requirements.

## Expenses

Governors are volunteers and are therefore not paid a salary. They are, however, entitled to claim expenses incurred in connection with their duties such as for travel to and from meetings of the Council of Governors, training days and conferences. Our Staff Governors are also entitled to time off to attend to their Governor duties.

## Elections

An independent organisation – UK Engage is running the elections in a fair and legal manner using the 'STV' voting system to elect our Governors.

Our aim is to ensure that:

- Every voter has the opportunity to affect the result
- No vote is wasted
- No voter has a greater influence than another.

## How will elections work?

All members are advised of the nomination and voting process details before an election so that they can nominate themselves as an election candidate for a Governor vacancy (if they wish) and so that they can vote for candidates within their own constituency.

Members who wish to stand for election as a Governor will be asked to write a nomination statement of around 100 words (maximum) outlining why they think members should vote for them to become a Governor, for example explaining their reasons for standing and including any relevant skills, knowledge, and attributes. Attendance at Council of Governors meetings will also be included for Governors who are nominating themselves for re-election. The statement will appear in the election literature.

## I would like to stand for election as a Governor – what do I need to do now?

If think you could be an effective Governor for the Trust and would like to stand for election, you will need to complete a nomination form. The easiest way to do this is complete the online nomination form, which you can access by clicking the link below.

**[Click here to access the Online Nomination Platform](#)**

You can also email or call UK Engage:

- **Email:** [homerton@uk-engage.org](mailto:homerton@uk-engage.org)
- **Phone:** call UK Engage on 0345 209 3770

Nominations for this election will **close at 5pm on Friday, 19 August 2022 and your completed form must be returned by then**, so nominate yourself today.

## What is the election timetable for 2022?

Publication of Notice of Election  
**Wednesday, 27 July 2022**

Deadline for Receipt of Nominations  
**Friday, 19 August 2022**

Publication of Statement of Nominations  
**Monday, 22 August 2022**

Deadline for Candidate Withdrawals  
**Wednesday, 24 August 2022**

Notice of Poll/Issue of Ballot Packs  
**Tuesday, 06 September 2022**

Close of Poll - 5pm  
**Thursday, 29 September 2022**

Declaration of Result  
**Friday, 30 September 2022**

## I have more questions!

1. You can find useful documents or nominate yourself to stand as a Governor in the elections at <https://hub.ukevot.uk/homerton>
2. See a [Brief Guide For Governors](#) - an easy reference point on key parts of the Governor role
3. Contact the Members' Office by email [huh-tr.members@nhs.net](mailto:huh-tr.members@nhs.net) for further information or questions or Catherine Afolabi, Trust Secretary on 020 8510 5221 [c.afolabi@nhs.net](mailto:c.afolabi@nhs.net)