



Well it's week 3 in what everyone's acknowledging are unprecedented times; our office is shut, we have no face-to-face activity, we're all working from home, and we're getting used to the new world of Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

Is it business as usual for us or a chance to try something different?

A bit of both really - we're going to try and keep the show on the road as well as try some new ways of working and accelerate some of the virtual conferencing tools that we had in the pipeline. Read on for more details.

To start off today we want to refer everyone to some work being carried out by our friends at the [Race Equality Foundation](#) about COVID-19 pandemic. They've listed the disproportionate effect of coronavirus on black and minority ethnic (BME) communities. These range from prevailing health conditions which place more people from BME background at risk, to BME workers to be more likely to be at risk of exposure to the virus, as they are a significant part of the frontline workforce.

This makes sobering reading but is essential in informing your response to the pandemic, especially if your organisation has a high proportion of tenants from a BME background or you work in very diverse neighbourhoods.

Please do get in touch if you want to discuss your planning for COVID-19 in more detail, by clicking on the button below.



### **HDN Welcomes New Board Member**

We're delighted to announce that Alison Inman has joined the HDN Board.

Alison is no stranger to those in the housing sector and was President of the Chartered Institute of Housing in 2017/18. She is a Board Member at two East Anglian HAs, as well as the housing engagement organisation TPAS.

She is the former Chair of Colchester Borough Homes and the National Federation of ALMOs and is a co-founder of SHOUT, the social housing campaign.

Alison tells us that she spends far too much time on Twitter and likes spending time by the sea.

Debansu Das the Chair of HDN stated 'I'd like to welcome Alison to the Board, and

I'm sure that her wealth of experience and expertise will be an asset to the team'.

Alison is a must-follow on [twitter](#).

### Introducing the First Season of HDN Webinars

We've moved our existing events online (and added a few new ones) so that our experts can come to you to discuss the most pressing diversity issues of the day. Our programme will develop over the coming weeks, but the following are confirmed:

Mental Health - Are We Doing Enough? Monday 20th April at 2pm

Coffee with Joanne Lockwood - Talking About Trans Inclusion - Tuesday 28th April at 11am

The Gender Confidence Gap - Monday 18th May at 2pm

Diverse Boards are Better - So How Do You Make One? Tuesday 2nd June at 2pm

HDN Members can book on our [Eventbrite](#) page.

### Housing and Mental Health

We know that housing is a key factor in people's mental health. Good quality affordable housing is a vital component to good mental health, as well as support being made available to those with existing conditions.

At our forthcoming webinar Tony Stacey, Chief Executive of SYHA will talk about 'Five ways to wellbeing – the SYHA approach to good work, good mental health and good systems.'

Tony will cover SYHA's whole person and whole system approach and will cover their Randomised Control trial on work and mental health, their Housing First and other housing and mental health schemes and their approach to staff wellbeing.

Anita Birchall from HDN will lead a conversation about mental health and explore ways to become more aware, more confident and therefore more inclusive in our personal and professional lives.

To get you thinking about the subject read Anita's [blog](#).

If you want to discuss how we can help your staff working at home, at this difficult time, around any mental health issues please get in touch by clicking on the button below.

### **Consultation Responses**

HDN has recently responded to two consultation documents issued firstly by the National Housing Federation and secondly by the Regulator of Social Housing.

in both responses we emphasised the importance of housing organisations reflecting the communities that they serve. This includes staffing establishments, seniority in decision-making and governance.

Read our responses [here](#).