



# Trustee Information Pack

**Hopian**  
domestic abuse & sexual  
exploitation support & refuge  
accommodation services

**Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Trustees at Hopian.**

We find ourselves at an exciting stage for the charity and welcome new trustees to support and further the work of the organisation, which, thanks to the work of previous and current trustees, is well-positioned to take place.

This document is intended to support you in making your decision to apply for a Trustee Role and understand the expectations and requirements for the role. This information will also support your introduction to the board if successfully appointed as a Trustee.

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Serving on the Board of Trustees has been a very fulfilling learning experience for me and I am grateful for having the opportunity to work with such a worthwhile and professionally run charity.

Trustee

## Get in touch

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Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions about becoming a Trustee. Email: [enquiries@hopian.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@hopian.org.uk), or phone: 030 2020 571.

 [hopian.org.uk](https://hopian.org.uk)

Hopian is a Charity registered in England & Wales: no. 1141699, and registered as a Company limited by Guarantee: no. 07441391.

Our Head Office is based at 18 High Street, Rotherham, S60 1PP.

# Introduction by our CEO

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I appreciate your interest in joining the Board of Trustees at Hopian. We hope that Trustees find their time on the board both interesting and rewarding.

We are an independent charity that has provided services for survivors of Domestic and Sexual Abuse for over 44 years. During this period, we have developed and expanded specialist support for individuals, children, young people, families, and the community. Over the years, the charity has evolved and expanded services and activities to support our core vision to develop and deliver high-quality services that meet the needs of those affected by Domestic Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation.

The Board of Trustees, along with myself, feel that we need to increase the reach of our vital work and build on new areas, such as community engagement, to ensure a sustainable organisation and playing a valuable role in making sure we deliver high-quality services for those affected by Domestic Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation.

At Hopian, we work together towards the same goal: helping individuals, families, and communities survive abuse.

The charity has always had, and still has, trustees that care deeply and passionately for the work and vision of the charity. As a trustee, you will be a board member; responsible for working alongside the other trustees to aid the organisation's strategic direction, ensuring sound governance, and staying true to the charitable objectives.

We have developed this Trustee Information Pack to support your consideration and introduction to the role on the Board.

If successfully appointed, it is anticipated that this information complements attending board meetings, training and accessing support from trustees and myself to further develop your understanding, experience and skills as a trustee. I would invite you to read the information in this pack. Thank you again for taking the time to consider and potentially become a trustee for Hopian; your contribution will be valued and appreciated.



Sue Wynne, CEO, Hopian

# About Hopian

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## Background

**Hopian, established in 1976, is a registered charity that provides refuge accommodation and support services for adults, children, young people and families who are affected by Domestic Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation.**

We deliver high-quality trauma-informed services for those affected by Domestic Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation. At Hopian, we are working together towards the same goal: helping individuals, families, and communities survive abuse.

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## Our Vision

A society where relationship violence, abuse, and sexual exploitation is not accepted or tolerated.

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## Our Mission

To support and promote the right to have healthy, safe relationships, free of violence, abuse and sexual exploitation for all in society, helping individuals overcome trauma and thrive and grow.

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## Our Values

### Resilience

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“Resilience is to overcome and ultimately thrive.”

- ★ To foster resilience in people, children, young people, families and the community by working collaboratively. To adapt and grow by pro-actively improving and developing relevant and effective services.
- ★ To persistently advocate for the rights of people, children, young people and families to be free from violence, abuse and sexual exploitation.

### Integrity

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“Integrity is the foundation on which all relationships should be built.”

- ★ To demonstrate commitment, passion, pride and positivity, showing tenacity when advocating for the needs of people, children, young people and communities.
- ★ To act with purpose based on values consistently and professionally in every situation.
- ★ To be clear with your communications with others.

### Strength

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“We are stronger together.”

- ★ To value each other’s differences and unique qualities, focusing positively on strengths through our inclusive practice.
- ★ To commit to strong evidence-based and effective practices to benefit the needs of individuals and families.

### Empowerment

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“To support the individual to recognise their rights and strengths.”

- ★ To use a non-judgemental, compassionate evidence-based approach to enable people, children and young people to identify and build on their strengths, access their rights and fulfil their responsibilities.
- ★ To create a safe space where ideas, opinions, and experiences are listened to.

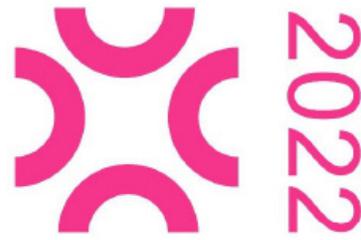
Hopian is registered as a Company limited by Guarantee no. 07441391. Membership of the Company is open to a person willing to uphold Hopian's aims. Membership gives the member limited liability of £1 in the case that Hopian was to go into debt.

As a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee, our organisation is extremely careful to ensure that stringent financial controls are in place and adhered to. Management reports and financial figures are provided for the Board meetings. All account information is independently examined to produce our annual report and accounts.

*Regulation: It's the responsibility of all trustees to ensure that the organisation fulfils its obligations to its regulators, e.g., Companies House, Charity Commission and it should have procedures setting out who will do this, when and how. Regulators commonly require annual accounts and an update and notice of changes to basic organisational information and usually have strict deadlines. The regulatory burden is likely to increase the larger and more complex your operation becomes. Failure to comply with regulatory requirements can have serious consequences.*

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## Our accreditations



LeadingLight

Three year accreditation by SafeLives



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## Overview of our services

### Domestic Abuse Coordinated Community Response Service (DACCR)

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One-to-One support

Group Work

Peer Support

### Supported Refuge Accommodation

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Crisis and short-term accommodation:

Core Refuge provision for women and their children

Community Refuge provision (dispersed properties) for adults and their children.

With access to:

One-to-one support

Support to secure move on to accommodation

Group Work

Peer Support

### Children, Young People & Family Support

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One-to-one support

Group Work

Peer Support

Activities

### Post-CSE Service

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One-to-One Support

Trauma Stabilisation

Counselling

Access to trauma-informed counselling

### Other

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Specialist BAME support

DA Training for professionals and the community

### Volunteering

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Volunteering opportunities and programmes

### Community Engagement

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Frith Space - Community Hub – [visit the Frith Space website – click here.](#)

### Activities and programmes

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Training

Awareness events on a variety of topics

Resources

Social Media



Everyone is so approachable and I feel I get listened to.

Service User

# Being a Trustee

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**Hopian is looking for trustees who can volunteer their time and strengthen our Board of Trustees by committing to meeting early evenings on a bi-monthly basis and occasional additional meetings and development meetings. Bi-monthly board meetings will have a blended approach of virtual and in-person.**

We want Trustees to use their expertise to provide the charity with strategic direction, support and governance.

Trustees will receive an induction session before their first board meeting as well as online training.

Members of governing bodies can go by a variety of names including Trustees, Executive members or 'Directors'. This name depends on the legal status, governing document and custom and practice.

Hopian is a Registered Company Limited by Guarantee and a Charity so we may refer to both the term Trustee and Director.

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## Who can become a Trustee?

You need to be over 16 years of age. You need to be committed to the vision, mission and values of the organisation. Besides this we expect our Trustees to subscribe to the Nolan Principles for ethical standards in public office (see page 8).

You cannot be a charity trustee if you're an undischarged bankrupt or have an unspent conviction for dishonesty. Other disqualifications include being removed under English Law or the courts from being a charity trustee, or a person disqualified from being a company director. For more information see the [OSCR's Guidance for Charity Trustees](#). In addition, people who have committed a serious offence against children may be disqualified as trustees.

Because we are a Company Limited By Guarantee this means that you cannot be a company director if you're an undischarged bankrupt or disqualified by a court from holding a directorship, unless given leave to act in respect of a particular company or companies.

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## Commitment

**Trustees are expected to attend an induction session prior to their first board meeting and complete online training. Trustees are expected to prepare and attend all board meetings which are held six times a year in the evenings.**

Additionally, trustees are invited to the AGM, recruitment and HR meetings, Business Reviews and other relevant meetings, training and events.

Trustees will be expected to attend ad-hoc meetings, training and events that align with the role's requirements and their knowledge/skill set. In addition, it is anticipated that Trustees will engage in correspondence outside of Board Meetings and peer support.

*If after joining as a Trustee this commitment cannot be achieved, we are encouraged you to discuss this with the Chair at the earliest opportunity to agree on a mutually agreeable plan that ensures the Board can fulfil its duties. Where the Chair has not been contacted, and a trustee is absent for more than two consecutive Board Meetings, the Board will consider removing them as a Trustee.*

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## Payment & Remuneration

Trustees are almost always unpaid as voluntary sector organisations are established for public benefit, and not for personal gain. A common exception is where a trustee is the best person to do a specific piece of work for the organisation, which would in any event be purchased. They may then be paid a one-off fee. Good practice dictates that trustees should not receive any routine remuneration for their time or effort, though of course all out-of-pocket expenses should be reimbursed. The Trustee Role including Executive Trustee roles are unpaid. Travel expenses can be reimbursed (subject to vehicle declaration).

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## Legal duties of a Trustee

The statutory duties of a trustee are:

- ★ To ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- ★ To ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.
- ★ To ensure the charity will carry out (or 'further') its purpose for the public benefit.
- ★ To ensure the organisation uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects: for example, the charity must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile those activities are.
- ★ To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- ★ To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
- ★ To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- ★ To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- ★ To protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.
- ★ To appoint the CEO and monitor performance.

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## Nolan Principals

An overview of the 'Nolan principals' which are the basis of the ethical standards expected of public office holders. Trustees are expected to adhere to these principles.

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### 1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

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### 2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

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### 3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

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### 4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

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### 5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

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### 6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

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### 7. Leadership

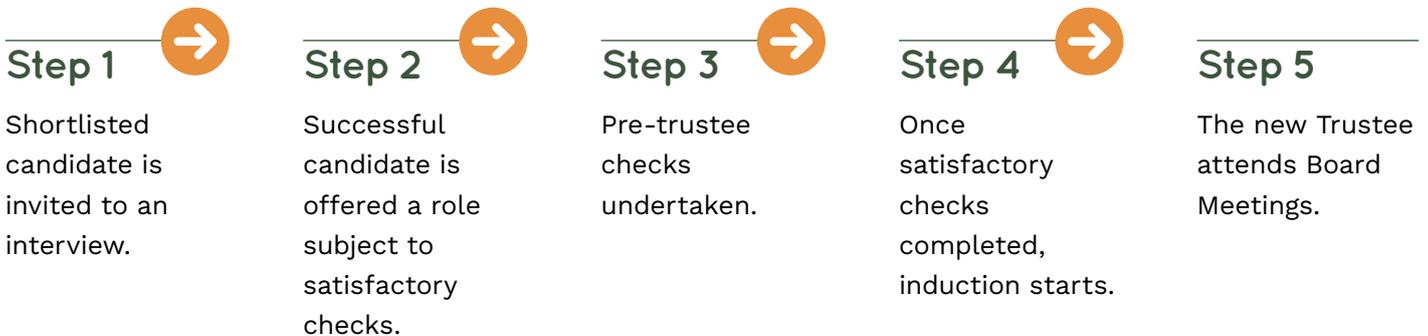
Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

# Trustee appointment

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The board reviews the board's membership and skill set regularly to inform the decision to undertake Trustee and/or Executive Role recruitment. Trustee roles are advertised locally as well as through Hopian website and social media outlets.

Recruitment to a Trustee Role can take time. If you are making an application, please be aware that the process can be lengthy.



If you make an application and are successfully appointed to the role of a Trustee, you will receive further information to support your induction to the board. It can take time to understand the role of a trustee and the organisations, and the board are here to help, providing peer mentoring to support new trustees as well as the training, information and ongoing experience from attending board meetings.

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## Skills audit

Appointed Trustees are to complete a skills audit to help us assess our needs as a board. The board of trustees collectively needs skills and experience.

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## Induction & training

Experience in governance and acting as a trustee is not essential, as we are committed to providing appropriate induction and support. This includes the issue of company documentation, including the governing Articles of Association, planning documents, policies, and Annual Accounts. In addition, we provide short briefing sessions, access to training, and support via a peer mentor, which members of our board have found to be beneficial in their development as trustees.

Following appointment to the board, a follow-up conversation will be arranged after 6 months and thereafter, an annual one-to-one meeting.

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## Trustee agreement

If appointed as a trustee you will be required to sign the Trustee Agreement. Which includes conflict of interest, conduct, time commitment and maintaining confidentiality which is essential to the work of Hopian to enable safe practice and security of the organisation, services, the service users, staff and volunteers.



**Following appointment Trustees will be registered with the Charity Commission and Companies House. This information is publicly available.**

# A trustee board

The [Charities Act 1993](#) defines charity trustees as those responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity. This is the case regardless of the terminology used to describe the role.

For Hopian the charity trustees are the board of Trustees, with occasional reference to directors.

The board comprises:

- ★ Chair,
- ★ Vice Chair,
- ★ Treasurer,
- ★ Secretary / Company Secretary,
- ★ Up to 12 Appointed Trustees

The Trustee Board appoints to executive roles; Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer from among the trustees, or makes a decision to advertise for specific executive roles. Roles are usually confirmed following nomination at the AGM, or where required mid-term. Executive roles and responsibilities are held in addition to the general responsibilities of a Trustee.

**They have helped me when I was struggling. They have helped me many times and if I needed the support again they would. They believed i could achieve my goals. They respected my wishes.**

Service User

## The role of the Board of Trustees

To enable the organisation to meet its aims, the trustees should ensure the following functions are completed:

- ★ Set and maintain the vision, mission and values of the organisation. Develop direction, strategy and planning.
- ★ Ensure the organisation has the structure and resources for its work. Policies and procedures to govern organisational activity, including guidance for the board, volunteers, and staff.
- ★ Systems for reporting and monitoring.
- ★ Manage risk and ensure compliance and accountability with the governing document, external regulators and the law.
- ★ Make certain that the financial affairs of the organisation are conducted properly and are accurately reported.

Hopian has a range of functions and systems to enable the trustees to assess that the Charity is meeting its aims. At Board Meetings, you will expect to see a report providing relevant Service and Financial information and updates; this is to create an opportunity for discussion and informed decision-making. Trustees are also included in a Schedule of Policy Review, Development Sessions, and Training.

The role of the trustee board is to help govern and steer Hopian and to ensure that the charity fulfils its aims and objectives. The trustee board must always act in the best interests of Hopian, exercising this to a high standard. The Trustee board must act as a group and not as individuals.

Duties of a trustee board member are outlined in the Trustee Role description, with additional role descriptions for Executive Roles.

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## Your collective responsibility

All trustees collectively have the responsibility for running a voluntary organisation, for its property, financial policies and procedures, staff and volunteers. They can be personally responsible for what it does, depending on the organisation's legal structure. Trustees can delegate some of their authority (e.g. to staff), but they can never delegate their responsibility.

As responsibility is collective, if there are any legal or financial repercussions from decisions made by the trustees, then all members of that group are legally liable in equal proportion. The behaviour of one trustee is the concern of all the others. If a trustee is absent from a meeting, they are still responsible for decisions made when they were not present. Their absence does not absolve them from responsibility or liability.

The Board at Hopian delegates the day-to-day management of the Charity to the Chief Executive Officer, who oversees a staffing structure to carry out the functions and delivery of services of the charity.

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## Staff & volunteers

The trustees have responsibility for the overall governance and direction of the organisation and have a duty of care for volunteers and staff. Hopian has paid staff, with separate roles and responsibilities, with policies and procedures on delegated decision making and tasks. The day-to-day responsibilities of managing the organisation is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Trustees have key legal obligations including:

- ★ Ensuring employees receive written terms of employment
- ★ Consulting with employees regarding redundancies, mergers and health and safety
- ★ Ensuring employee liability insurance is in place.

The board should have an overview of organisation. They should understand the day-to-day operation of projects and have clear knowledge of the long-term direction of the Charity.

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## The Governing Document

Trustees must be familiar with the governing document (Memorandum of Articles). It's the 'user manual' for the organisation and will set clear boundaries for its activities. This document is reviewed periodically, paying special attention to the part setting out the purpose of the organisation. In this coming year, we will be reviewing the document and updating it, with a particular focus on the duration of trusteeship.

Trustees should regularly assess the risks associated with the organisation's current and planned activities and decide whether its legal status is fit for purpose. An organisation risk register is completed.

[See our Governing Document - click here.](#)

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## Service users

Involving service users in the governance and management of the organisation can generate new ideas, challenge assumptions, increase accountability, and help ensure that services are as relevant as possible.

Involvement can cover a range of activities, from consultation to working in partnership to develop projects or services.

However, there are often many practicalities to be overcome to achieve genuine user involvement. It is important for us to consider the support needs and the barriers individual may face.



**Service User engagement is central to all our service delivery and development.**

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## Specific trustee roles

The trustee role and executive roles have full role descriptions and person specifications, to ensure that the organisation:

- ★ Pursues its stated objects (purposes), as defined in its governing document, by developing and agreeing a long-term strategy complies with its governing document (i.e. constitution or memorandum and articles of association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- ★ Applies its resources in pursuance of its charitable objects (i.e. the charity must not spend money on activities that are not included in its own objects).
- ★ Defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets.
- ★ Safeguarding the good name and values of the organisation.

Whilst each Trustee has equal legal and financial responsibility, there are specific roles such as Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. These are often referred to as executive roles. Each executive role has a role description outlining role and responsibilities which is in addition to the general responsibilities of a trustee.



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### Chair

Providing leadership to the organisation and the board by ensuring that everyone remains focused on the delivery of the organisation's charitable purposes in order to provide greater public benefit.

- ★ Working in partnership with the CEO to ensure that the board has access to relevant knowledge and skills for effective governance ensuring that there is an effective relationship between the committee, paid staff, volunteers and all stakeholders.
- ★ Having an overview of the charity and its work.
- ★ Acting as an ambassador for the charity.

Like many organisations Hopian Board also seeks to appoint a Vice-Chair to share the workload and deputies for the Chair.



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### Treasurer

It is important that all trustees collectively play their part in financial monitoring and decision-making.

The overall role of a Treasurer is to maintain an overview of the organisation's affairs, financial viability and ensure that proper financial records and procedures are maintained.

- ★ The Treasurer has oversight responsibility on behalf of the Board for the effectiveness of the Charities system of finance management, risk management, internal control and related assurance.
- ★ Working in partnership with the paid staff to ensure that the board has access to relevant information for effective governance.
- ★ Having an overview of the charity and its work,



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### Secretary

The role of the secretary is to support the Chair by ensuring the board functions smoothly. The secretary may carry out their duties directly or delegate them to a member of staff and ensure that they have been carried out.

Tasks can include:

- ★ Convening meetings and booking rooms, dealing with correspondence, and being a cheque signatory
- ★ Preparing agendas for meetings (in consultation with the Chair), taking the minutes of meetings and ensuring backup information is available where required.

# Hopian

domestic abuse & sexual  
exploitation support & refuge  
accommodation services

**We look forward  
to hearing from  
you!**