

Mind Stretch sessions

DIN board & executive leadership



“We engaged DIN to help us run an all-day session with our Board to kick off planning for the development of our new vision and strategy. Jenny and Matthew brought lots of ideas and creativity to the discussion, and kept us on track so we achieved the outcomes we hoped. 12 months on and everything has continued to go to plan!”

Paul Harris
Executive Director Customer Experience
Curo Group



Choose DIN Mind Stretch for your next board event or executive strategy or planning day

In a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world organisations need to both deliver in the now and keep informed about the changes on the horizon.

We are in new territory.

- The government is intent on redressing the power imbalance between landlords and residents
- The quality of the homes provided has never been under such scrutiny
- And technology is constantly changing everything

Social housing is no longer in control of the story. It is being driven by the media, social influencers and the government. As if that's not enough, expectations of what constitutes good service are rising, and at pace.

Just because housing isn't perceived to operate in a competitive environment where dissatisfied customers can get up and move to another supplier does not mean that boards and executive teams shouldn't be focussed on delivering a similar customer experience to Apple, Amazon, IKEA, John Lewis, Uber etc.

If you are challenging your current approach, revisiting your strategy or at least think you should, DIN can offer your senior leadership and Board events to help your Board ask the right questions and make the right decisions.

Innovation is a muscle and just like any muscle it needs exercising in the right way to be of value. Our work is informed by what is happening beyond just the world in which social housing operates.

Our ambitions match those organisations which are disrupting and innovating in the world of retail, finance, transportation in fact all those real-world experiences you, your tenants and residents experience every day.

No one has been here before. **Are you sure you have the skills and knowledge you need to assure your continuing success?**

If you want to avoid the danger of being a zombie business and thrive in this new dynamic world, then we'd love to work with you on Mind Stretch.

Remember innovation is your best insurance against irrelevance!



What's the offer?

We understand the importance of strategic foresight in helping leaders focus on, not in, the business. Never has the need for long term thinking been more important at a board and executive level.

Tailored to your priorities we create a bespoke event involving experts and thought leaders from DIN and our partners. In a range of formats, we bring insight, challenge and inspiration to your next board or executive away day or strategic event.

We offer a range of possibilities:

- Full or part facilitation throughout the event
- Sessions from a half a day to a 24-hour lunchtime to lunchtime sprint
- We can bring the event to you or your preferred location, or we can source venues that are a little different from the norm to help create a great back drop for a Mind Stretch
- We can even make the event virtual as a primary plan or contingency option

What's the offer?

We don't offer modules on things like risk appetite or the inner workings of treasury policy: we know you cover all this good stuff in other ways. Our approach is about stretch, provocation, discussion and connection – leading to applied thinking and better questioning that moves your business forward. The better the question, the better the answers.

How we do things

We offer choice and options when it comes to 'the how'!

We build the methodology based on how you and your board learn individually and together. Our range goes from content rich presentations with open sharing, Q&A and case studies, to more participatory creative group exercises like scenario planning and storytelling. We can even bring some gamification to the delivery if you are up for it. The most important thing is that we design this to help you maximise what you learn, take away and implement.

We don't just leave it there We create a unique post-event 'play back' pack which captures the key topics, take away learning and the actions you committed to. We want to make sure the outputs and benefits don't sit in a draw or on a drive but really come alive and make their way back to your strategic planning and actions.

The themes we can build your event around;

- **Seeing around corners** - The big picture context and a look at what's coming over the horizon. We cut across Technology, Leadership and Culture and provoke questions about how aligned and ready all these areas are in your organisation to serve future needs. We encourage thinking over three-time horizons: now, next and beyond and why dealing with all 3 simultaneously is a pre-requisite of successful organisations. Your future customers, colleagues and buildings will all fare better in a future-ready organisation. This will help ensure you are remembered as a 'good' ancestor.



- **Emerging technologies** - All baubles and no strategy? In the wake of an ongoing wave of offerings all purporting to offer the best solutions in areas from net carbon zero to compliance and customer service, we help by increasing understanding to enable better board questioning. Questioning that can inform investment decisions in emerging tech solutions and what you need to think about before you do. We can cover regulatory positioning, legal standing and social aspects in areas around smart homes, and help stretch your thinking on how technology can support the delivery and management of customers homes
- **Business model review** - Developing the right game plan. This challenges the existing operating models currently used and what this might look like. The Regulator and the Ombudsman may have new powers and new expectations, but its your job to decide the best way of organising your business. Now is the perfect time to challenge and review the assumptions and expectations that informed your last operating model.

Please separate in separate para and bold the text

Then continue as is from “What has changed for tenants etc boards to challenge and review the organisational business model. What has changed for tenants and colleagues in the last 18 months? Is the model still fit for purpose? Should you stop measuring customer satisfaction and move to measuring customer expectations? How does data affect the operating model design? We also reflect on circular operating models from home and in Europe Designing from the edge. Why the “happy path system design” leaves some of your customers at an extreme disadvantage. And what to do about it.
- **Leadership and culture** - The capability that got us here won't get us there. We help boards consider the organisational climate as a key to high performance across the business. We stretch thinking to help Boards make a shift from leadership of the future to leadership into the future and help them answer questions around how match fit they are for the journey ahead. Our focus on leadership and culture supports boards to explore the wider organisational capability that will enable people and the business to thrive. How managing energy is a strategic priority, why future thinking is an essential skill and how to get digital into your organisations DNA, we will explore the newest thinking on leadership and culture in its broadest sense.
- **A data driven organisation?** - Questions before answers. How do you use data? Where would data help you improve your decision making? What role does data bias play? How can you extract the most value from your data? What are the new risks to be managed in a highly connected world? We can explore with Boards how to ask the right questions and use data to guide decision making. We will challenge boards on how much they value the data they have, identify the data they need and prompt questions around the appetite of the business to be data driven.
- **Paying attention to your intention** - Do you “sweat the small stuff” while the big picture goes unremarked? Do you have creative tensions round the Board table or is everyone in violent agreement? And do you discuss dilemmas in real-time or rubber stamp decisions made elsewhere in the last quarter? Effective Boards operate the whole time, not just when gathered round the Board table. We show you how new models of governance that are fit for a VUCA world can work and how a relentless focus on the important magically ensures that the urgent also gets taken care of.



Our Contributors



Ian Wright
Founder and CEO

Ian is the Founder and CEO of the Disruptive Innovators Network, a forum he established in 2018 for leaders wanting to understand and respond to disruption threats and develop their corporate innovation capabilities. He has worked at senior executive level as a Deputy Chief Executive/Director for the last 20 years, most recently at HouseMark the UK social housing sectors data and business improvement organisation. His expertise lies in building cross sector business experience programmes and leaders' networks. In his work he has developed close partnerships with the likes of Apple, Google, Microsoft, Amazon, John Lewis, IKEA, Telefonica, Microsoft, AO.com and Salesforce to name a few.

He led on the establishment of the social housing sectors first crowd funded start up accelerator, Evolve. An innovative programme involving 18 social housing providers which attracted over 80 submissions from start-ups across the world wanting to develop solutions for social housing.

He has a particular focus on business innovation, organisational culture, new technologies and the customer experience. He has extensive relationships with a range of businesses sectors and has built numerous leadership programmes to support existing CEOs and Exec teams as well as future leaders. He is currently retained by a number of the largest housing providers helping them build capacity and capability in the innovation space.



Matthew Gardiner
Associate Director

After a 40+ year career in social housing Matthew is expert in the business of social landlords. He has direct experience of building new homes, managing and maintaining large property portfolios and securing institutional investment into the sector for organisations based in London, Merseyside and Greater Manchester. As CEO at Trafford Housing Trust for 14 years, he grew the organisation from its roots within a single Borough to one operating at scale across much of the NW of England.

In parallel with his executive roles within housing associations he has developed non-executive career in education, housing, and entrepreneurial tech companies.

He now works as an advisor at the interface between properties and technology, with experience of how communications infrastructure, devices and data can be integrated to transform the experience of residents and the efficiency of landlords.



Helena Moore **Associate Director**

Helena has versatile skills and experience in both corporate and operational services in the housing sector most recently at Director level in HR, Organisational Design & Development, Transformation Sponsorship, Communications, and Facilities.

She is accomplished in developing and changing organisational culture and alignment to strategy and purpose through new approaches to leadership, effective communications, engagement and collaboration. A combination that brings about change that people buy into and strengthens business performance.

Since 2011, Helena has been involved in consultancy assignments predominantly working with global innovation companies supporting agendas around leadership development, cultural change and customer experience across a number of sectors including pharmaceutical, utilities, engineering and hospitality sectors.

Helena's strength is an ability to bridge the gap between innovation and current reality with capability to present this in an engaging way that stretches thinking and leadership teams about new possibilities and strategic directions.



Jenny Danson **Associate Director**

For over 25 years Jenny Danson has been leading transformational change and service improvement in CEO, COO, Executive Director and Programme roles. She has worked for companies of all shapes and sizes, from startups to multinational brands including BAA plc, Boots Opticians, Lovell, Ilke Homes, Fortem, and a number of Councils and Housing Associations

In 2017 Jenny founded Danery, which provides capacity and capability to support organisations in delivering service improvement and transformation and in 2018 joined Ian as an associate with DIN.

Jenny is a qualified executive coach, a NED with Aspire Housing and a strategic advisor to two technology companies.



Jason Wickens **Associate Director**

Jason has more than 20 years' experience in managing technology and business transformation across numerous sectors including Housing, Financial Services, Retail, and Not for Profit. He's held permanent, consulting and interim roles at an executive level and driven improvements across people, process and technology.

Within social housing, his experience includes the role of Chief Information Officer at Southern Housing Group where he transformed both the colleague and resident digital experience. During his tenure he delivered key enhancements including an omni-channel servicing platform, a new resident portal and a market-leading Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution. He is currently enjoying a portfolio career and supporting organisations including Saffron Housing Trust as a fractional CIO.

A regular guest speaker and adviser, Jason leverages his multi-sector experience to enable social landlords to deliver strategic change and increase the value they provide to their residents.





With evidence of what works in both inside and outside the sector, our team bring their expertise and experience of technology, leadership and culture to lead your exploration of just how transformative true innovation can be.

If you want to include a specialist speaker at your event, our 'portfolio' is extensive and carefully sourced. If you've worked with us before you'll know we work with credible and incredible authentic professionals who are not the usual suspects! We love to bring a real range of perspectives, and dare we say it, fun to events and can match our speakers to your individual needs and budget.

To find out more:

As each mind stretch experience is bespoke to your business's requirements, we always insist on discussing these first to understand the issues you want to address. Once we are confident, we understand the 'problems to be solved' we can then provide you with a personalised programme and fee.

In the first instance if you are interested in booking the DIN team for a mind stretch session, please contact Michelle Wright:

E michelle.wright@disruptiveinnovatorsnetwork.co.uk



Appendix 1

About us

The Disruptive Innovators Network is a membership community for leaders and organisations interested in investing in innovation with a focus on the areas of technology, leadership and culture. Members benefit from a range of services designed to help them navigate business disruption and take advantage of new operating/business models, utilise new technologies and support the development of an innovative culture.

We collaborate regularly with different sectors and organisations to learn from how they shape their businesses and deliver their services. This includes looking at customer experience, culture, leadership, decision making, risk and opportunity management etc.

Organisations include:

- Apple UK
- John Lewis
- IKEA
- Amazon
- Google
- Microsoft
- The Eden Project
- Virgin Atlantic
- Metrobank

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