Board roles, delegation and good decisions

How to share the work among a small board, delegate safely and make decisions that can be explained afterwards.

A building board is usually small, made up of volunteers with day jobs. Without a clear division of work, a few people end up doing everything and the rest stop attending. A little structure makes the work lighter and the decisions better.

Common roles

- **Chair.** Runs the meetings, keeps discussion focused and makes sure decisions are taken.
- **Treasurer or finance lead.** Oversees the bank account, the budget, the arrears and the reports. This does not have to be an accountant.
- **Compliance lead.** Owns the safety and statutory calendar.
- **Contractor lead.** Manages the main contractors and the repairs log.
- **Communications lead.** Keeps residents informed.
- **Secretary.** Handles the notices, minutes and filings, or oversees the person or firm that does.

In a small building, one person may hold several roles. What matters is that each task has a named owner and a named deputy.

Delegation

Directors can delegate work, but not responsibility. Set out in writing:

- what is being delegated, and to whom;
- the spending limit or other boundaries;
- what must be reported back, and how often;
- when the delegation will be reviewed.

Examples of sensible limits: one director may instruct urgent repairs up to a set amount; two must sign any payment above it; anything over a higher limit goes to the full board.

Making good decisions

- Circulate papers before the meeting.
- State the decision needed, the options and the cost.
- Declare any interests.
- Record the decision, the reasons and any dissent.

- Check that the decision is within the lease, the articles and the budget.

Meetings that work

Keep them short and focused. Use a standing agenda: matters arising, finance, safety, contractors and repairs, residents, other business. Agree actions with names and dates, and start each meeting by reviewing the last one.

Keeping the board going

- Rotate roles from time to time, so that knowledge is shared.
- Train new directors, and give them a handover pack.
- Recruit early, before anyone burns out.

> Share the records. If everything lives in one director's email, the building depends on that person.

Next steps

1. Write down the roles and who holds them.
2. Agree the delegation limits.
3. Adopt a standard agenda.
4. Set up a shared place for documents.

General information, not advice on your circumstances. Leasehold law is detailed and changes: check the current position and take advice before acting. Leasehold Clarity is provided by Leasehold Clarity Limited (company no. 16963931), with management and professional services from Murphy Thompson Moore LLP (LLP No. OC314041).