

## Carolyn Hirst

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A well regarded specialist in conflict prevention, handling and resolution. An experienced and skilled mediator. A knowledgeable Board Member committed to good governance and service delivery. A clear thinker who is articulate and outcome-orientated and has substantial experience of organisational change. Astute with sound judgement and good political awareness.

### CURRENT WORK POSITIONS

- Hirstworks, Own Business – Independent Consultant, Researcher and Mediator
- Lecturer in Ombudsman and Complaint Handling Practice (p/t), Queen Margaret University
- Lay Member of Employment Tribunals (Scotland)
- Housing Member of the Private Rented /Home Owner Housing Panels
- External Mediation Practice Supervisor for Cyrenians
- Mediation Panel Member: Scottish Legal Complaints Commission,
- Mediator: Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education
- Mediation Panel Member: Edinburgh Sheriff Court (voluntary role)

#### Hirstworks (Own Business)

**October 2007 to present**

Work to date has included:

- Interim Management - Principal Ombudsman at Ombudsman Services (p/t from July 2014 to March 2015)
- Independent Complaints Reviewer for Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
- Independent trainer on complaints handling and investigation approaches
- Review of complaints handling for NHS, council, housing and care organisations
- Conflict analysis and coaching for individual staff and for whole organisations
- Provision of advice and guidance to organisations on challenging behaviour
- Conflict coaching for Board Members and staff at all levels in an organisation
- Development coaching and mentoring for senior staff
- Mediation and facilitation of individual and team workplace disputes
- Community mediation (landlord, tenant and service users)
- Public sector, voluntary sector, legal and commercial mediations
- Mediation practice supervision
- Workplace and Governing Body investigations
- Whole Board Appraisals, Governance Reviews and Business Process Reviews
- Independent Researcher – ‘The current activities and future direction of the British and Irish Ombudsman Association’ (now Ombudsman Association)
- Independent Researcher – ‘The use of informal resolution approaches by ombudsmen in the UK: A mapping study’ – Nuffield Small Grant
- Running Development Centres, Master Classes and Learning Sets for Emerging NHS Leaders from the BME Community in the North West of England
- Delivering a wide range of conference talks, workshops and seminars

**Lecturer (p/t) Queen Margaret University**  
**Visiting Lecturer, Queen Margaret University**

**November 2013 to present**  
**2009 to October 2013**

Work has included:

- Design and delivery of the Ombudsman Association accredited Award and Certificate courses in Ombudsman and Complaint Handling Practice
- Design and delivery of the Public Services Complaint Management Award
- Design and delivery of Modules on the MSc in Dispute Resolution
- Design and delivery of bespoke Accredited Qualifications in Complaint Handling or in Investigative Practice for: Scottish Police Complaints Commission, Northern Ireland Ombudsman, Irish Ombudsman, Legal Ombudsman, Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, Financial Ombudsman Service, Welsh Language Commissioner, University of Wales, Nursing and Midwifery Council and a major Scottish Bank
- Masterclasses in Apology and Working with Challenging Behaviour
- A review of Audit Scotland's arrangements for dealing with correspondence from members of the public and key stakeholders – with Ipsos MORI
- Research into the Impact of Complaints on Outcomes for Service Users (for the Scottish Care Inspectorate), on Designing Consumer Redress for the Legal Ombudsman and on Defining Consumer Ombudsmen for Ombudsman Services

### **WORK RELATED QUALIFICATIONS**

- OPP Training on the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Instrument (2012)
- TCM Practical Investigation Skills – ILM Accredited (2009)
- CMP Certificate in Mediation Skills (2007)
- Core Certificate of Competence in Mediation Skills (2006)
- Chartered Institute of Housing Professional Qualification (1986) *Dissertation on the Training needs of Committee Members*

### **BOARD/COMMITTEE MEMBER EXPERIENCE**

#### **Current**

- Non-Executive Director of NHS Lothian
- Member of the Law Society of Scotland Administrative Justice Sub-Committee
- Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution Advisory Board Member

#### **Former**

- Senior Non-Executive Director of the Accent Housing Group
- Board Member of Edinburgh Council for Single Homeless
- Chair of the inter-agency Lothian Homelessness Forum
- Committee Member of Pilton Citizens Advice Bureau, Edinburgh
- Committee Member of Lowlands Housing Association (statutory appointee)
- Board Member and Deputy Chair of Tung Sing Housing Association
- Non-Executive Director of the Scottish Mediation Network
- National Housing Federation Council Member

### **FORMER EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

**Scottish Public Services Ombudsman**

**2002 to September 2007**

*Deputy Scottish Public Services Ombudsman*

Appointed by the Crown on nomination from the Scottish Parliament. Investigated complaints about Scottish Public Bodies. Particular responsibility for Housing,

secondary responsibility for Health and Local Government. Executive Board Member. Lead responsibility for Quality Assurance, Equalities and Human Rights. Achievements included: Leading the integration of four Ombudsman offices; Investigating complaints with outcomes leading to change in policy and process at central and local government level; Commissioning and carrying out research on complaints; Giving evidence to Parliamentary Committees, Speaking at conferences and seminars, Delivering training and publishing articles; Producing guidance on unacceptable actions by complainants, complaint handling and effective apologies; Building and maintaining relationships with audit, scrutiny and regulatory bodies; and Negotiating Annual Budgets with the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body.

**Edinvar Housing Association**

**1999 to 2002**

*Deputy Director and Director of Housing Services*

Senior Management Team member of an innovative and dynamic organisation which specialised in person-centred support. Provided high-level advice and information to the Board and Chief Executive on professional, sensitive and business issues. Overall responsibility for Housing Management and joint responsibility for Housing Support (150 staff). Projects including developing housing for older people with dementia and younger people with acquired brain injury; Instigating over 30 lease and management agreements with statutory and voluntary providers; Developing internal and external communication strategies including tenant newsletters and handbook; and National Judge for the CIH Good Practice Awards in Housing.

**Castle Rock Housing Association**

**1984 to 1999**

*Director of Housing Services*

A 15 year career history with a leading regional housing supplier and developer providing mainstream, sheltered and supported housing for rent and sale. Six internal promotions and ultimately responsible for Housing Management (50 staff), service complaints, rent budgeting and accounting, staff discipline and grievance, neighbour disputes and tenant participation. Winning Team Member for competitive regeneration projects; Set up and managed areas offices; Developed and managed a hostel for young, homeless people and shared living for older former rough sleepers.

**HIGHER EDUCATION**

**The Open University**

**1994**

Managing Voluntary and Non Profit Organisations – Diploma

**University of Edinburgh - Masters in Business Administration**

**1989 to 1992**

*Dissertation on the use and relevance of performance indicators*

**University of Edinburgh**

**1979 to 1984**

Post graduate research in Geology – part-time

**University of Leeds B.Sc Hons Geography and Geology 2:1**

**1976 to 1979**

**CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS**

- Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing
- Scottish Mediation Network Member and Accredited Mediator
- Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA)