

Midlothian IJB Board Member Biographies

Val de Souza

Val de Souza is a Social Worker by profession and has held a number of senior leadership roles in health, social care and social work in Scotland. She spent the last 5 years as Chief Officer for South Lanarkshire's Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), and Director of Social Services, working across NHS Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Council. In these roles Val was responsible for community health services, primary care, palliative care, allied health professionals and social work services. Prior to this she was acting Chief Officer for Stirling and Clackmannanshire HSCP and the Chief Social Work Officer for these two local authorities, which included responsibility for two national prisons, Glenochil and Cortonvale. Val was instrumental in introducing and implementing the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 and continues to have a keen interest in all aspects of Public Protection and social justice. With over 30 years' experience of strategic and operational management she is committed to promoting interagency collaboration and multidisciplinary working. She is a graduate of University College Dublin and holds postgraduate qualifications from the Universities of Edinburgh and Robert Gordon Business School. Val has recently been appointed Chair of the Bairns Hoose, and is a professional adviser for Positive Help, an Edinburgh based charity supporting child and families affected by HIV and Hepatitis C.

Nadin Akta

Nadin Akta holds a MSc degree in Intercultural Business Communication and TESOL. Her interests are in cultures, cross cultures, barriers and challenges for ethnic minorities in Scotland and she has a wide knowledge from working with BME communities through her previous jobs in a professional capacity and through volunteering with charitable organisations across the Lothians. Nadin previously work with East Lothian Council and other charity organisations as an Integration Coordinator and TESOL Teacher. More recently, she has been working at the University of Edinburgh as an Outreach and Projects Coordinator for the BME communities in the Lothians.

Miriam Leighton

Miriam trained as an occupational therapist and worked for NHS Lothian and City of Edinburgh Council before qualifying as a community education worker. Miriam has since gained over 15 years' experience working in Scotland's third sector and is currently part of the management team at Midlothian Third Sector Interface (TSI). In this role, Miriam oversees the promotion of volunteering, the development of the local third sector, and specialises in community development and health and wellbeing approaches. Miriam is currently leading on the implementation of the new Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund in Midlothian that takes an innovative approach to the distribution of funding that supports mental health and wellbeing in communities across Scotland. Miriam is a skilled cross-sector collaborator and enables people from marginalised communities or those with lived experience to be more involved in driving forward change. Miriam is very much looking forward to being part of the IJB and supporting health and social care provision in Midlothian.