



Housing 21

Appointment of Board Members

May 2024 - UAQAFB

Saxton Bampfylde

Welcome from The Chair of the Board, Elaine Elkington

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Housing 21 as a Non-Executive Director.

Housing 21 is an exceptional place – made so by its residents, staff and commitment of Board Members. Our devolved service model, with local Housing and Care teams means that hearing residents' views is part of our normal operational practice. Staff and Board members share a mission and passion to provide quality retirement living and housing with care which is affordable for our current and future customers.

Since 2021, Housing 21 Board has agreed to only develop our own new homes at social rent, focused in the most deprived and diverse areas of England where, traditionally, our resident base has been lower. We are proud to be on site currently with our first co-Housing scheme at Chain Walk, in Birmingham, partnering with a dedicated group of local residents and the City Council to demonstrate how co-production can work for older people, from all communities. This ambitious priority is underpinned by sound commercial decisions and choices.

Our tenant satisfaction levels are high (85%+), but we are not complacent. We have already recognised that partnership working with residents is business critical in responding to our Regulators' Consumer Standards; importantly they provide effective and transparent challenge at Committee and Board level. Consequently, alongside this Board Member recruitment process, we are also looking to appoint two new Resident Board members to join the Group Board to ensure residents' views really are at the centre of Board decision-making.

Our retained recruitment consultants are supporting us to find the

necessary skills and expertise required. These are set out in the application pack and were identified from a recent Board skills audit. As Housing 21 celebrates its 60th Year, we want to ensure our Housing and Care offer is fit for the next 10 years, and we retain our G1/V1 standard. However, just as important as your experience and skills are your values and determination to help eliminate the housing inequality experienced by many older people in later life.

As a new NED, you will find us to be a friendly and welcoming Board with a professional attitude and positive outlook; we relish robust and open debate and an exchange of new ideas which means we can deliver more opportunities, for example on new property acquisitions which expand choice and service quality in our core operating areas.

If you believe your values and experience match our ideal candidate profile or you could bring other exceptional qualities which would support Housing 21's mission, we look forward to hearing from you.

Elaine Elkington
Chair Housing 21 Group Board



About Housing 21

At Housing 21, our vision is to ensure that older people who most need it can access high quality housing with support or care, whilst being involved and empowered to ensure the services provided meet their individual needs and preferences now and in the future.

Everyone has the right to live in high-quality housing and we passionately believe in the Retirement Living and Extra Care services we provide. From enabling residents to regain independence, to allowing couples to stay together despite differing care needs, we see the value of our services demonstrated time and time again.

We're an organisation with people at the heart and constantly strive to be better and listen to our residents and employees. We want to make sure we continue to be a great place to live and work and are proud of our achievements, including being named Best Older People's Landlord at the 2022 Inside Housing UK Housing Awards for the second time, and joining the two percent of organisations accredited by Investors in People to attain the highest 'Platinum' rating in 2020.

Housing 21 has a great story to tell; our roots lie with the Royal British Legion (RBL) and 2024 sees us turn 60 years old. We'll be taking this opportunity to shine a light on our services through the decades, the difference they've made to the lives of thousands of older people, as well as the employees and partners who have helped us achieve this along the way.

Our guiding principles

We launched our [Strategic Commitments](#) in April 2022 to provide a 'golden thread', connecting the roles and activities we undertake back to our vision. Central to these commitments are our three guiding principles: 21, Better and Experience. We seek to apply these to all that we do.

21: We're committed to providing a modern, forward-thinking 21st century service which includes updating and modernising our existing housing, as well as [developing](#) new and innovative property designs. We think differently, embracing the disruptive potential of new technologies and the challenges and opportunities of social change.

Better: Despite our achievements and [awards](#), we know there's always room for improvement. We're never complacent and constantly challenge ourselves to do better and achieve better performance, quality and value for money to provide excellent services that we are proud of and our residents deserve.

Experience: Understanding the experience of residents and their satisfaction with our properties and services is crucial for our success. We aim to provide a consistently excellent service and a great experience for all the people we serve. We engage and empower residents to make choices and exercise control over the services they receive and devolve decision making to local managers whenever possible. We're committed to acting ethically and openly in all that we do, being ready to acknowledge and learn from mistakes.

What we do – Housing with Support and/or Care

There are many different approaches to the provision of housing, support and care. Services which have the same name or label may vary across providers, as can the terminology used to describe them. We describe our core services as Retirement Living and Extra Care.

Retirement Living

The vision for Retirement Living is to make it an exceptional place to live where we listen to residents, invest in their homes, and provide consistently high standards of service to create a strong sense of safety and community, whilst still treating everyone as an individual. Retirement Living offers residents the opportunity to live independently within their own properties with their own front door and their own private space. We offer an on-site Local Housing Manager service and opportunities to be part of a wider community. This is a unique housing service with residents' wellbeing at its heart. As well as providing high-quality, comfortable and safe housing, residents are afforded the peace of mind that comes from a personal service relationship that offers support as and when needed. We are proud of our Local Housing Manager service and see this as the essence of our Retirement Living offer.



Extra Care

The vision for Extra Care is for older people to aspire to live in one of our properties and where residents can expect to receive a high-quality housing and care service and feel valued and listened to. At the same time, we want to ensure employees feel appreciated and inspired and are seen as sector leaders in the housing and care market for older people. Extra Care seeks to provide an alternative to residential care that enables residents to maintain their independence and autonomy, but still have access to high quality care, meals and social interaction on their own terms. We engage with each resident as an individual, respect their opinions and preferences and ensure they are listened to and able to have a say regarding the way services are delivered and developed. Extra Care is a place where older people can live independently in their own apartment within a welcoming community setting with the added peace of mind that comes from knowing there is a professional care service on site and available 24/7 to meet any planned or emergency care and support needs.

Our Finances

We achieved a turnover of £252 million in 2023 (an increase from £224 million in 2022) and an operating surplus of £26.4 million. Our loan book and financing arrangements are relatively simple, meaning we are not subject to onerous financing terms. Our gearing as at March 2023 was 40.7 percent.

In August this year, S&P reaffirmed our long-term issuer rating as A- with a stable outlook. They commented that Housing 21 will continue to see strong and increasing demand for its services in Retirement Living and Extra Care, which will drive stable and predictable rental revenue and support financial performance.



Our Developments

We continue to have one of the largest development programmes for older people's housing in England with a development pipeline to deliver up to 400 affordable properties per annum, with 75 percent for affordable rent and 25 percent shared ownership, with at least 20 percent for Retirement Living. We are proud of our social housing roots and do not develop commercially to cross-subsidise social housing developments. We do not bank land and instead work closely with stakeholders to identify and provide for the needs of an older population.

We have recently acquired properties from Clarion and Notting Hill Genesis, the latter being 427 Extra Care properties (7 schemes) in London, strengthening our presence across London.

This deal marked the largest transfer of Extra Care in the sector in recent years, with further acquisition forming a key part of our growth and commitment to providing high-quality housing with support or care for older people of modest means in the coming years.





The Board Roles

These roles report to the Chair of the Board and will provide leadership to Housing 21.

Being a Board Member is a key leadership role that requires a high degree of emotional intelligence and confidence. We operate with a culture of openness, willingness to listen and appreciation of the insights and expertise that other members of the Board may offer. Board Members should have an ethical mindset and be able to demonstrate high standards of conduct whilst embracing a collaborative approach to governance.

It is essential that Board Members have a strong sense of connection with our social purpose and values. Particularly focusing on helping those of modest means and setting high quality standards, even if this isn't necessarily the most profitable option. The dynamics of the relationship between Board Members and the Executive is particularly important. A professional attitude, outlook, and independent mindset, providing challenge and rigour, whilst acting as a 'critical friend' to the executive is an important part of this role. As a Board Member, you should be able to inspire others in pursuit of Housing 21's values and goals.

Most of our Board members Chair one of our Board Committees at some point through their tenure as a Board Member. Sometimes we recruit directly into a Chair role, or with a particular Chair position which will be arising quite soon in mind. We hope all those putting themselves forward would seriously consider a Chair role sooner or later.



Key Responsibilities for all Board Members

- Work with the Chair of the Board and other Board Members to ensure strong and effective governance arrangements that deliver the aims, objectives and intended outcomes of Housing 21.
- Provide professional advice and challenge.
- Work with the Executive team outside of formal Board meetings to fully understand the activities of the business as appropriate as a member of the Board.

Key Attributes for all Board Members

- A genuine commitment to the social purpose for Housing 21 and dedication to helping older people of modest means to live well in later life.
- Being a guardian of Housing 21's heritage, a champion of change and willingness to carry forward its ongoing commitment to modernisation, growth and best-in-class quality.
- Demonstrating commercial acumen, sound business judgement and the credibility and confidence to support, guide and be a 'critical friend' to the Executive in the leadership and management of a complex asset and service organisation.
- As an ambassador for the organisation, willingness to engage, influence and connect with stakeholders at all levels, especially with residents and older people.
- An enabling and inclusive style of leading and working that embraces and values diversity, to ensure that Housing 21 has a strong and vibrant Board that can assess risks and embrace opportunities.
- Passion and aspirations to develop and deliver more and better housing, care and support services for older people.
- Understanding of, and passion for, the sustainability agenda with the ability to bring useful insight and thinking.

Our current Chair of Audit has had to stand down slightly early, because of a change in personal circumstances. This role reports to the Chair of the Board and will provide leadership to the Audit Committee and represent Housing 21 to the Regulator, lenders and other relevant stakeholders. As Chair of Audit you will stay abreast of legislative changes and contributing to policy discussions which impact on the work of the Committee.

Key responsibilities

- Work with the Chair of the Board and other Board members to ensure strong and effective governance arrangements that deliver the aims, objectives and intended outcomes of Housing 21.
- Advise the Board on compliance with all relevant legal, regulatory and governance requirements.
- Ensure Housing 21 has an effective, robust and prudent risk and control framework.
- Provide professional advice and challenge within the audit and risk functions.
- Provide assurance to the Board on the integrity of financial information.
- Oversee the effectiveness of frameworks of delegation and systems of internal control.
- Oversee the effectiveness of the risk management framework, ensuring that the Board is involved in considerations of risk appetite, risk assessment and relevant mitigation plans.
- Lead on the selection of external and internal auditors.
- Produce a Chair's Report for the Board from each Committee meeting and an annual report of the Committee's activities.
- Work with the Executive team and finance function outside of formal Board meetings to fully understand the activities of the business.

Person specification

Whilst specific sector experience or skills are helpful it is key that a Board Member has a general awareness, commercial acumen and ability to prioritise and balance multiple positions, perspectives, external and internal pressures and priorities.

The skills we are looking for in particular

We have several Board members completing their terms of office over 2024/25, and after undertaking an assessment of the skills we need, as well as awareness of the expertise that departing Board members take with them, we are looking for the following skills across a number of appointments:

- **Finance expertise:** We will appoint one or two Board members with complementary strategic finance expertise, who will likely be qualified accountants, and bring strong commercially minded acumen. One will be invited to Chair our Audit & Risk Committee. A couple of our Independent Audit Committee Members also complete their terms soon, so people interested in this membership without the Board role are also welcome.
- **Experience of property asset management:** This Board member will be able to help decisions of prioritising our property management, strategic risk and compliance management and environmental responsibilities.
- **Experience of property development:** We develop about 600 properties a year, and experience of joint ventures within social housing, whilst building quality homes will be helpful.
- **Specialist housing extra-care:** This Board member will have experience they can share with us, of successfully delivering extra-care in resident's homes.

General characteristics we seek in all Board Members:

- The ability to understand complexity and identify the central issues in Board discussion.
- Good interpersonal skills.
- Forward thinking, capable strategist.
- Self-aware with a desire to learn and improve.
- Financial and commercially capable.
- Strong commitment to organisational values.
- Team player.
- Sound judgement.
- Empathy.
- The ability to challenge constructively.
- Demonstrable integrity and high ethical standard.
- Risk aware.



Terms of Appointment

The term of office is three years, renewable subject to a satisfactory appraisal and to the Board's skills requirements at the time.

Members are restricted to a maximum of six years' service.

The estimated time commitment for the role of Board Member is up to 25 days per annum. This includes preparation for and attendance at Board and committee meetings; the annual strategy event; the Annual General Meeting; any lead Board Member input; attending corporate events and visiting sites around the country. Time must also be allowed for induction on appointment and on-going training in accordance with existing skills and knowledge.

We also work with Board members outside of formal meetings to draw on their expertise and areas of interest. Additionally, members are invited to attend pre-Board meetings which focus on a topic of interest or training up to twice a year.

Board members are remunerated at £15,000 per annum plus reimbursement of expenses.

2024 Board dates

The Board meets four times a year at Tricorn House, Birmingham which includes dinner and an overnight stay. Occasionally there are less formal meetings held on-line to discuss specific topics (we will provide you with all necessary IT equipment). The remaining dates for 2024 are:

- Tuesday 21 May – informal Teams session to discuss the Business Plan
- Tuesday 4 June/Wednesday 5 June
- Thursday 1 August – Teams session on the Financial Statements
- Thursday 19 September/Friday 20 September
- Thursday 5 December/Friday 6 December

Housing 21 has five committees which meet every other month either on Teams or in person. As a Board Member you will have the opportunity to contribute to those committees which best reflect your interests and abilities:

- Governance, Transformation and Treasury Committee
- Audit and Assurance Committee
- Investment and Development Committee
- Extra Care Committee
- Retirement Living Committee

How to Apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Housing 21 on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **UAQAFB**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Wednesday 12th June**.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.



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