



Brief for the appointment of a Resident Board Member



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Welcome to Southern Housing

Thank you for your interest in wanting to join the Board of Southern Housing.

At Southern Housing we positively welcome the involvement of our residents in our governance. We see this as a strength and one that leads to better decision making. Having four places on the Board reserved for residents and with over 100 residents involved in our governance is something unique for a large housing association. We believe this helps us to stay grounded and better connected with our residents – their experiences and what matters most to them.

Southern Housing has a long history of commitment to helping people who are not able to access the wider housing market and who may have additional support needs. We want to take advantage of the benefits from our recent merger to deliver better and more cost-effective services for our residents and to invest in maintaining safe and sustainable homes. Following our recent inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing, in which we received the second highest judgement (C2) for meeting Consumer Standards, the Board is keen to build on this and has set a priority to achieve the top C1 rating by the time of, or ahead of, our next inspection.

Therefore, we want to strengthen our Board by adding a member with current experience of living in our social housing; someone who can reflect residents' perspective strategically in Board discussions and decision making without representing tenants directly.

Southern Housing is committing to making significant investment in our existing homes and improving services, partly in response to changing regulations, but also in an operating environment that is difficult for both us and our residents. Therefore, the new Board member will need to have, or develop, an appreciation of this to understand the implications for Southern Housing and help the Board navigate the best way forward.

We are open to someone from any tenure – leaseholder or renter. What's important is that you share our values and purpose and that you have a desire to support the Board in leading an organisation of our size and ambitions for the benefit of our current and future residents.

If the above introduction to Southern Housing and the role is of interest to you, then we look forward to hearing from you.



Sir Peter Dixon
Chair, Southern Housing Board



Our organisation

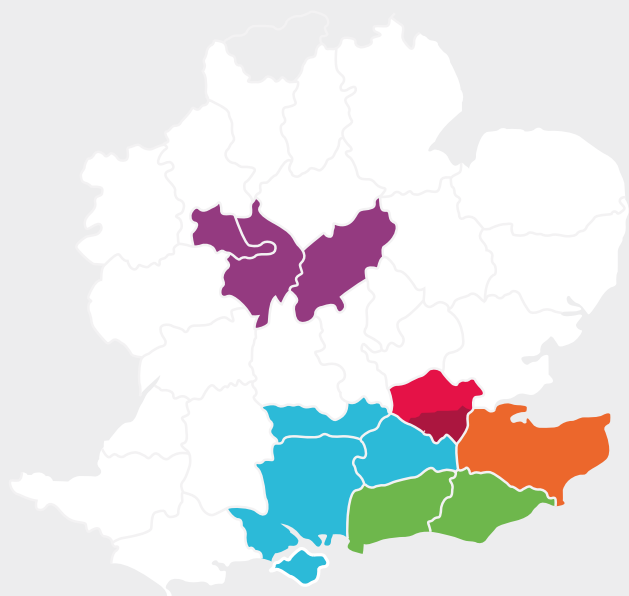
Southern Housing is a new housing association formed in December 2022 following the merger of Southern Housing Group and Optivo. We're now one of the largest housing providers in the UK with more than 79,000 homes across London, the South East, the Isle of Wight and the Midlands, over 167,000 people with somewhere affordable to call their own.

We're both large and local, with the merger enabling us to strengthen our ties within key communities. At Southern Housing, we understand the impact safe, secure and affordable homes can have on people's lives. Whether it's traditional social housing, shared ownership, affordable rent, private market rent, student accommodation, care and support or outright sales, we offer a range of services.

OUR HISTORY

We've a long and proud history of providing affordable homes that dates back to the early 20th century. With residents at the heart of everything we do, our social purpose of helping those in housing need remains as relevant today as it was when we started.

SOUTHERN HOUSING HAS MORE THAN 79,000 HOMES AND OVER 167,000 RESIDENTS



- London North
- London South
- Midlands
- South and Isle of Wight
- Sussex
- Kent and Essex

HOMES IN MANAGEMENT AND/OR OWNED



General Needs	65%
Shared Ownership	12%
Supported, Care & HOPs	9%
Leasehold	8%
Keyworkers	2%
Non Social Housing	2%
Temporary & Intermediate	2%

35% of residents live in Houses or Bungalows

65% of our residents live in Flats/ Maisonettes

Our vision, mission and values



OUR VISION

Our vision is to create communities where everyone has a safe home in a place where they're proud to live.



OUR MISSION

We're about more than bricks and mortar – we're about building communities. With residents at the core of our services, we use our size to drive positive change in the areas where we operate.



OUR HEART VALUES

You'll demonstrate our HEART values in your behaviours:

♥ Honest

Be authentic, open and transparent in your actions and words.

♥ Efficient

Believe that by working together we accomplish more, and work hard every day to improve services, efficiency, and value for money.

♥ Accountable

Take responsibility for delivering excellence and own your own actions.

♥ Respectful

Embrace difference and put our residents, colleagues and our partners at the heart of all you do.

♥ Trustworthy

Do what you say you will and be relied upon to keep your promises.



Southern Housing in numbers



FINANCIALS

Turnover	£108m (£136m)	Surplus before fair value movements
£609m (£642m)		£3m (£40m)
Social Housing cost per unit**	Operating margin*	New sales receipts
£6,844 (£5,544)	12% (14%)	£44m (£127m)
Total assets	Current arrears**	Total debt including bonds
£7bn (£7bn)	5% (5%)	£3bn (£3bn)
Moody's Credit Rating	Fitch Credit Rating	Judgement
A3 stable outlook	A stable	G1 / V2 / C2
Operating surplus		



DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT

New home starts	New homes spend	New homes completed (including Joint Venture and market sales)
348 (952)	£257m (£269m)	776 (1,089)
Investment in existing homes	People into jobs and training	New homes in contract at 31 March 2024
£247m (£186m)	1,592 (2,081)	3,256 (3,936)
Total homes owned and managed	Capital commitments	
79,820 (78,760)	£531m (£665m)	

*Our operating margin is adjusted to exclude surplus on housing property disposals (£32 million) but includes surplus on first tranche shared ownership (£0.4 million) and market sales loss (£9 million). Our internal target operating margin excludes all sales.

** Calculated using Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) definitions Highlights 9 Southern Housing Annual Report 2023-24 Highlights 9 Southern Housing Annual Report 2023-24 Highlights For the year to 31 March 2024 (31 March 2023).



OPERATIONAL

Satisfied with overall service

67% (72%)

Satisfied we provide a safe home

78% (81%)

Satisfaction with repair service

8% (66%)

Satisfied with time taken to complete most recent repair

63% (61%)

Vacant homes available for letting
1% (1%) EPC band C and above

74% (73%)

Satisfied we provide a well maintained home

73% (75%)

Agree we treat residents fairly and with respect

81% (84%)

Satisfied we listen to residents' views and act upon them

63% (68%)

Homes meeting Decent Homes Standard

99.7% (98.2%)

Satisfied with our approach to handling anti-social behaviour

68% (70%)

Satisfied we keep residents informed

78% (82%)

Satisfied we keep communal areas clean and well maintained

69% (73%)



COLLEAGUES

Colleagues Satisfaction with Southern Housing as an employer

81% (N/A)

Average number of sickness days per employee

7 days (8 days)

Colleagues leaving for a voluntary reason

11% (14%)



Our strategic plan

Our Strategic Plan 2023-26 outlines our ambitions and vision to create communities where everyone has a safe home in a place they're proud to live.

We're excited about the difference our new, stronger organisation will have on our residents and communities.

You can read more about our aims and objectives in our Strategic Plan.



Our finances and governance

One of the motivations behind the merger was to become more financially resilient in an increasingly challenging economic and regulatory environment. We're now better equipped to improve customer services, invest in our existing homes and continue to supply much needed new affordable housing.

In 2023/24, we recorded a turnover of £609 million, an operating surplus of £108 million and an operating margin of 12%. Our total debt portfolio including bonds is £3 billion. Our credit rating with Moody's is A3 and Fitch is A Stable.

In August 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing concluded its inspection of Southern Housing and assigned us the top rating for governance (G1) and second highest ratings for Consumer Standards compliance (C2) and financial viability (V2). While we meet regulatory expectations, there are areas for improvement and financial challenges that reflect the tough economic situation and pressures faced by all associations.



Financial Statements

(southernhousing.org.uk)



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR BOARD AND EXECUTIVE TEAM



Our Board

(southernhousing.org.uk)



Executive Team here Our Executive Team (southernhousing.org.uk)



Our assets and developments

The merger of Optivo and Southern Housing Group has given us a larger strategic presence across more local authorities. With this expanded footprint, we're now better positioned to increase our social impact.

We've over 79,000 homes across London, the South East, the Isle of Wight and the Midlands. This includes over 30,000 homes in London. Our asset base is worth over £7 billion. In the year 2023/24, we completed 776 new homes with 348 new homes started.

Nearly half our homes are in London and the majority of homes across all regions are low cost rented (general needs). Just under 20% of our residents are homeowners.

Most of our homes are flats, with almost 70% of our homes being one or two bedroom properties. Rooms and studios are mainly found in our Housing, Student and Supported Housing accommodation. Approximately 15% of our homes were built pre- 1949. These properties present the biggest challenge for investment and technical solutions to meet our zero carbon and sustainability aspirations.

Stock condition data and agreed standards are guiding the scale and scope of our investment programme. Our priorities include scaling up our energy efficiency

retrofit programmes and increasing our investment spend on existing properties by 49% in 2023/24 compared to the previous year. The investment will focus on passive measures to improve homes up to EPC B and C across London, Kent, Sussex, and the Isle of Wight.

We've been at the forefront of sustainability reporting and continue to support the sector's

Sustainable Reporting Standard. Through a newly created ESG Programme Board we continue to embed ESG in our activities for residents and colleagues.

Through co-creation, we're working with our residents and service providers to review and improve services where necessary. We're being proactive in relation to damp and mould issues. Over the last four years, 85% of our homes have been surveyed and we've installed over 200 damp meters in homes to support residents.

About the role

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

- The Board is collectively responsible for ensuring the success of the organisation and ensuring its compliance with all legal and regulatory obligations by setting and monitoring the strategic direction, as well as ensuring the Board fulfils its responsibilities
- Board Members, as part of the Board team, determine and uphold the organisation's vision, mission, values and strategies
- Board members provide effective governance of the organisation, ensuring that decisions taken by the Board are in the best interests of the organisation and its customers, and promote the highest quality standards and effective service delivery

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- ✓ Provide focused strategic leadership and direction to the work of the organisation, setting the vision, mission, values and standards for the organisation
- ✓ Promote good governance and ensures that the organisation's affairs are conducted in accordance with generally accepted performance and propriety and that its obligations to its stakeholders and others, including its regulators, are fully understood and delivered
- ✓ Provide leadership on equality and diversity matters ensuring this is reflected in all that the organisation does

CONDUCT OF BOARD BUSINESS

- ✓ Ensure that decisions taken by the Board are in the best interests of the organisation and its customers and promote the highest quality standards and effective service integration
- ✓ Work in accordance with the organisation's chosen Code Of Conduct and Code Of Governance
- ✓ Participate in reviews of Board performance, both individual and collective, attending training when required; participating in opportunities for learning and development and keeping up to date with sector matters
- ✓ Diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings, making an active contribution to discussions and decision making
- ✓ In the event of unavoidable absence from a meeting, provide comments and questions in advance on the relevant papers to the meeting Chair



RISK AND PERFORMANCE

- ✓ Ensure that legal and social responsibilities are met, and that the organisation's affairs are conducted to accepted standards of performance and propriety
- ✓ Ensure that social housing assets are not put at risk
- ✓ Determine the organisation's approach to risk, establishing its risk appetite and tolerances
- ✓ Approve an appropriate, robust and prudent business planning, risk and control framework and reviews its effectiveness at least once a year
- ✓ Establish ambitious but financially prudent strategic policies and plans to achieve organisational objectives and approves each year's budget and accounts prior to publication
- ✓ Monitor the organisation's performance in relation to plans, budgets, controls and decisions, and ensures that the organisation is well run and viable
- ✓ Lead on value for money, understands the costs of the business and sets targets relating to securing value for money
- ✓ Agree policies and make decisions on all matters that might create significant financial or other risk to the organisation.

WORKING WITH THE EXECUTIVE

Board members are accountable to the Chair of the Board. They are expected to maintain good relationships with other members of the Board, the Executive and other key members of colleagues and with external stakeholders, particularly residents, regulators, and any other related statutory agencies.



PROMOTING THE ORGANISATION

- ✓ Be an ambassador for the organisation; help build its brand and public image, ensuring an effective regional and national profile in consultation with the Chief Executive
- ✓ Represent the organisation with key stakeholders, such as regulators and decision-makers
- ✓ Attend ad-hoc meetings as required (for example, residents' meetings) and travelling as required to promote the values and purpose of the organisation.

About the individual

EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

- ✓ Lived experience of social housing
- ✓ Empathy with the purpose of social housing. Applicants must be able to bring a dedication to fulfilling our clear social purpose
- ✓ A demonstrable commitment to Environmental, Social and Governance objectives
- ✓ Understanding of residential landlord health and safety compliance so that residents are kept safe in their homes.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- ✓ Ability and vision to lead and represent the organisation, giving a clear sense of strategic direction
- ✓ Presents views with knowledge and understanding of the wider strategic context
- ✓ Skilled in listening to others contributions, challenging in a constructive way and building consensus through persuasive discussion
- ✓ Able to make balanced and informed decisions, analysing performance, financial and other information
- ✓ Ability to ensure the commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion runs through all that the Board do
- ✓ Assesses risk and promotes risk awareness without being risk averse
- ✓ Excellent communication skills. Able to read, understand and analyse both written and numerical reports presented to the Board for decision and information and to draw out points for discussion
- ✓ IT literate and able to review and analyse large and complex data
- ✓ Able to be an organisational ambassador, operate effectively at all levels and committed to developing positive external relationships that generate confidence and respect.



PERSONAL QUALITIES

- ✓ Shared vision and values of the organisation
- ✓ A strong leader with a high degree of probity and integrity
- ✓ A commitment to the interests of current and future residents and the enthusiasm to implement change and improve services
- ✓ A decisive and effective decision maker who leads by example with an open, engaging and enthusing style
- ✓ A personal credibility that will command confidence at all levels
- ✓ Works well in a team, with a collaborative style that engages people at all levels and promotes positive relationships throughout the organisation and its partners
- ✓ Committed to accountability, openness, transparency and equality of opportunity
- ✓ Has the necessary time commitment for the role.

Terms



TIME COMMITMENT

Approximately 2 days per month.
Maximum tenure is nine years subject to satisfactory annual appraisal and reappointment. The first year is a probationary year.
There is also an expectation to serve on the Board of Fresh Visions - a subsidiary charity of Southern Housing



LOCATION

Meetings are held in person at our London Farringdon office.
There is an offsite Annual Strategy Day which moves across different regions each year.



RENUMERATION

£14,305 per annum.

2025 BOARD DATES

There are six Board meetings a year, held on Wednesdays 1-5 pm
The upcoming meeting dates are:

- 26 March 2025
- 14 May 2025
- 30 July 2025
- 24 September 2025
- 10 December 2025



How to apply

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply, please submit a CV along with a covering letter outlining your interest in the role and highlighting the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria.

The preferred method of application is online, as follows:

[www.southernhousing.org.uk/
boardmemberapplication](http://www.southernhousing.org.uk/boardmemberapplication)



If you're unable to apply online, please email:
residentscrutiny@southernhousing.org.uk

All applications will receive an automated response.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Diversity Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process. This will assist Southern Housing in monitoring selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Any information collated from the Diversity Monitoring Forms will not be used as part of the selection process and will be treated as strictly confidential.

KEY DATES

Applications open
Monday 6 January 2025

Applications close
Sunday 26 January 2025

Interviews
Thursday 20 February 2025

PERSONAL DATA

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward.



For further information please visit
www.southernhousing.org.uk



For a conversation in confidence, please contact:



Samantha Fagg
residentscrutiny@southernhousing.org.uk

We're committed to ensuring everyone can access our website and application processes. This includes people with sight loss, hearing, mobility and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to these documents in alternative formats, please contact residentscrutiny@southernhousing.org.uk

