



# Appointment of a Southern Housing Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee

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# Welcome to Southern Housing

## Thank you for your interest in wanting to join Southern Housing's Audit & Risk Committee.

We are amongst the top ten largest social housing landlords in the country with a long history of commitment to supporting the communities our residents call home and investing in our homes and services so people can thrive.

Southern Housing was formed just over three years ago from the merger of Optivo and Southern Housing Group. Since that time, we have worked hard on the integration of our two associations and have achieved a lot, including the awarding of G1, C2 and V2 governance ratings by the Regulator of Social Housing and significant extra investment in our existing homes.

However, these are challenging times, and we need to do more. We are introducing our new corporate strategy for 2026-30, for which the Board has agreed three key goals:

- To deliver a repairs service that is highly rated by our residents and efficiently delivered by us, by 2027
- To provide smooth, professional and responsive services to our residents, by 2028
- To be an efficient and high performing resilient organisation that builds capacity for investment in building new social homes, by 2029.

We're keen to recruit two new independent members of our Audit & Risk Committee to complement the Committee Chair and other members of the Committee by bringing specialist expertise and insight.



Key qualities for the people we're looking for include:

### EXPERIENCE

- Senior experience in risk and finance oversight within complex organisations
- Background in statutory external audit, internal audit, risk management or enterprise risk
- Experience operating at senior leadership level (e.g. CFO, CRO, Audit Partner)
- Exposure to complex operational environments such as manufacturing, infrastructure, property or similarly asset-heavy sectors.

### SKILLS

- Strong understanding of risk frameworks, modelling and governance structures
- Ability to scrutinise financial statements, controls and assurance processes
- Capability to oversee risk across financial, operational, safety and cultural areas
- Strong analytical capability and strategic perspective.

### ATTRIBUTES

- Strategic thinker able to consider risk across the whole organisation
- Comfortable providing constructive challenge and independent oversight
- Interest in the social purpose and resident focus of the housing sector.

### BOARD EXPERIENCE

- It's not essential. Senior strategic experience and the ability to operate at board level are more important than prior board experience.

This is a key appointment for us. We're looking for Committee members who share our values and purpose and are collegiate in their leadership style.

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

### Damien Régent

Board member and Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee

# Our history and looking to the future

**With roots stretching back to 1901, Southern Housing was formed from the merger of Southern Housing Group and Optivo in December 2022.**

Today, Southern Housing owns and manages over 80,000 homes – almost half of which are in London, with the remainder in the South East, the Isle of Wight and the Midlands.

As we celebrate 125 years, we continue the legacy of our founders. Our charitable purpose remains to provide homes for those in housing need, now and long into the future.

We believe in listening to and engaging with the 167,000 people who live in our homes.

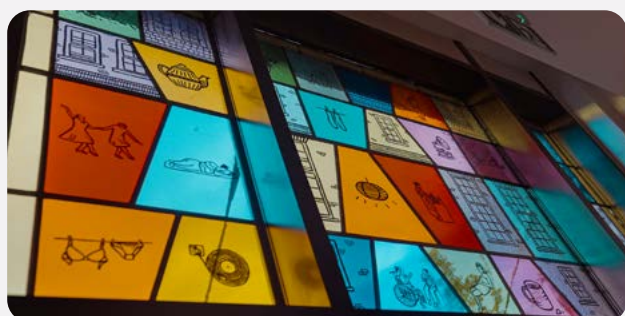
Southern Housing has a well-established resident governance structure covering all regions, overseen by a Resident Experience Committee, and supported by our Resident Scrutiny Panel. We're unique amongst large landlords in having four resident places on our main Board.

## INVESTING IN EXISTING HOMES

At merger, the Board resolved to prioritise investment in existing homes. Since then, we've increased investment in repairs and maintenance by 31%. Whilst this has been necessary, it does mean less capacity for developing new homes. Additional development is restricted until we recover 100% EBITDA-MRI cash interest cover in 2029/30.

By amalgamating our legacy businesses at the point of merger we were able to commence integration immediately.

Integration has now completed. This has enabled our focus to shift to the transformation of processes, systems and services.



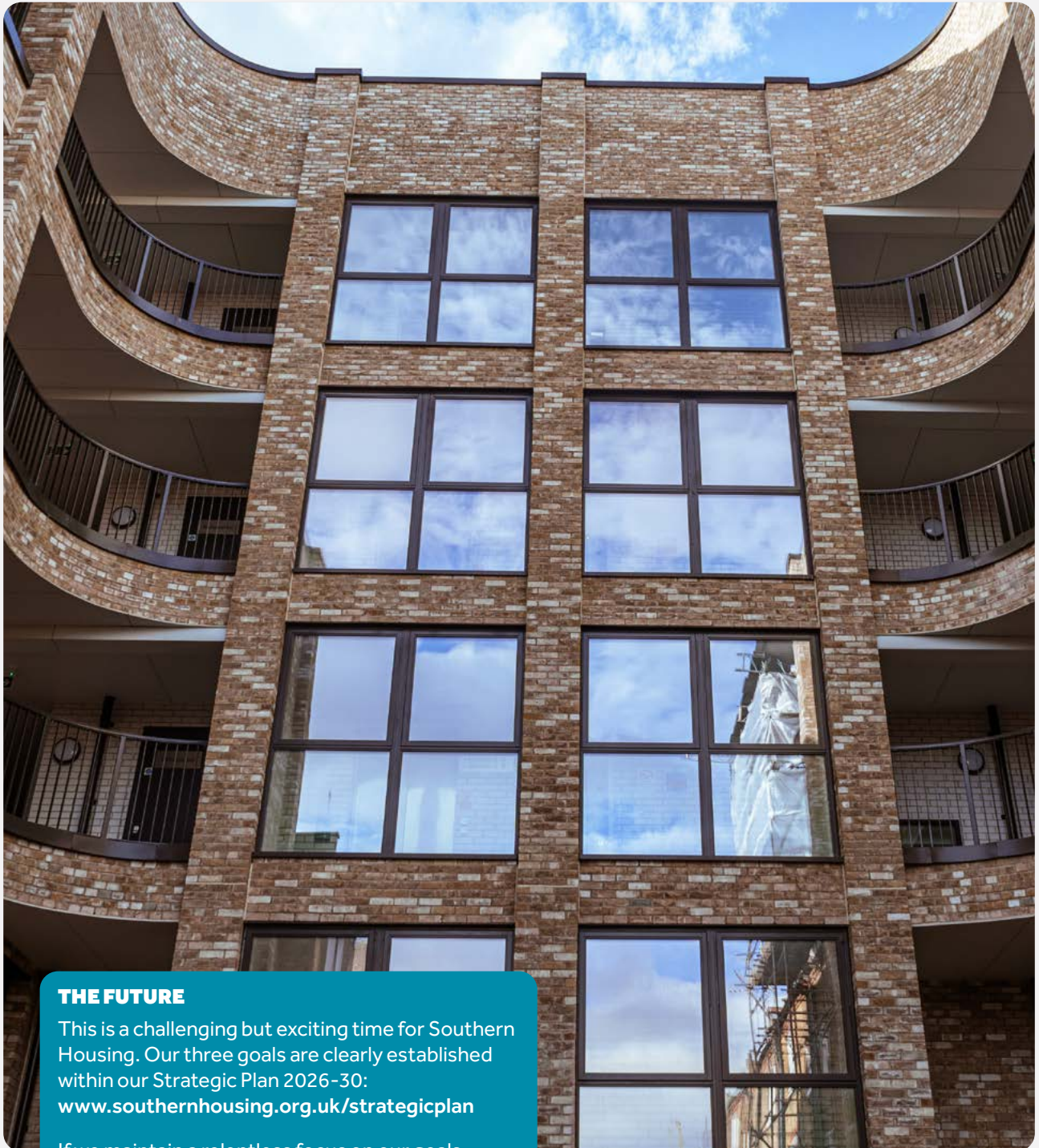
## OUR PROGRESS AND GOALS

Eighteen months from merger we had our first regulatory inspection as a new organisation. We were delighted to recover the highest G1 grading for governance and maintained our V2 rating for financial viability. Southern Housing was one of the first registered providers to be given a consumer grading.

Our C2 grading was a fair reflection of progress in summer 2024. However, we're ambitious to achieve the highest C1 grading by our next regulatory inspection in 2028.

Given our constrained financial capacity and our focus on what matters most to residents, the Board have set three ambitious goals for the next three years:

- Firstly, we aim to deliver a repairs service that is highly rated by our residents and efficiently delivered by Southern Housing and our contractors by 2027. Our regulatory inspection confirmed what we already knew – that we need to improve our repairs service. Repairs and maintenance are the biggest drivers of resident satisfaction, the biggest source of complaints, the biggest area of failure demand and our biggest budget. We're therefore focusing our transformation resources on improving repairs and maintenance.
- Secondly, we're ambitious to achieve a C1 consumer grading by our next regulatory inspection. We know improving repairs and maintenance is one of the main drivers of the C rating. It will also improve complaint handling – which is the other major service area that needs to be improved. We're regarded as a leader for resident governance and engagement and we're confident by listening to and co-creating with residents, we will improve our Tenant Satisfaction Measures and be worthy of a C1 grading by 2028.
- Our third goal is to improve our financial strength. We'll drive £30 million of efficiencies out of our cost base by 2029. We'll do this by streamlining our business, focusing on the things that matter most to residents, and transforming our systems and processes to remove waste and improve resident satisfaction. Our goal is to achieve 100% EBITDA-MRI cash interest cover by 2029/30.



**THE FUTURE**

This is a challenging but exciting time for Southern Housing. Our three goals are clearly established within our Strategic Plan 2026-30: [www.southernhousing.org.uk/strategicplan](http://www.southernhousing.org.uk/strategicplan)

If we maintain a relentless focus on our goals, continue to co-create with residents and colleagues, and ensure our transformation work is laser focused on the things that matter most, we will build the foundations for a new era of growth and opportunity from 2029 onwards.

# Our HEART values



## 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.

# About us

## 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

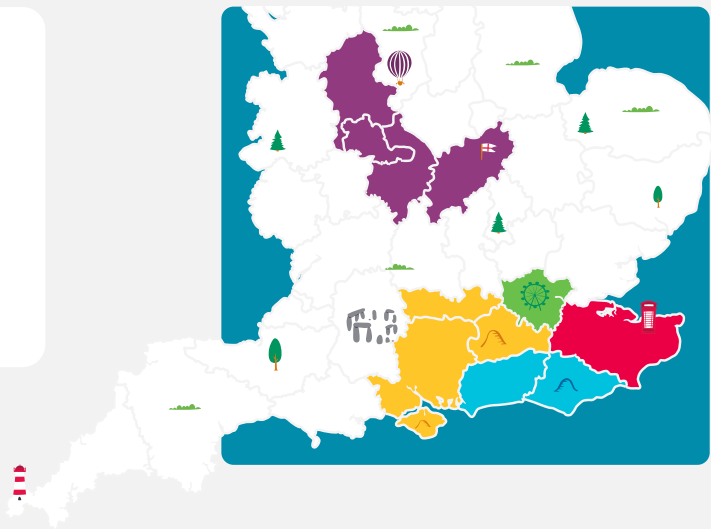
Residents are at the heart of our services, and we use our size to influence positive change in the areas where we operate.

## WHERE WE OPERATE

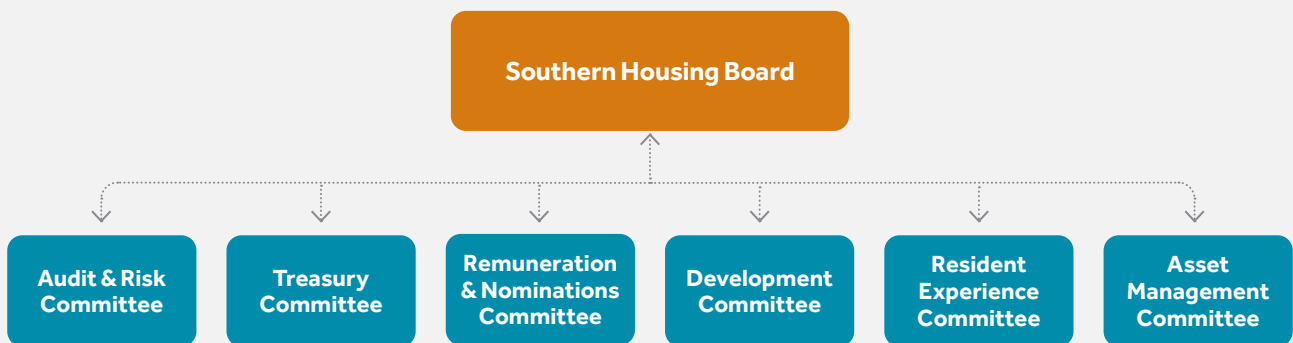
With homes across the country, most of our residents and communities live in:

- London
- Kent
- Surrey
- Sussex
- Hampshire
- West Midlands
- Isle of Wight.

We own and manage **80,427** homes with over **167,000** residents



## OUR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE





**HOMES IN MANAGEMENT AND/OR OWNED**



- 🏠 General Needs 65%
- 🏠 Shared Ownership 12%
- 🏠 Supported, Care & HOPs 9%
- 🏠 Leasehold 8%
- 🏠 Other 6%

**GENERATION BREAKDOWN OF OUR RESIDENTS**

Generation	Renting	Homeowning
Gen Z (up to 24 years)	2%	1%
Millennials (25-44 years)	27%	47%
Gen X (45-64 years)	43%	38%
Baby Boomers (65-74 years)	16%	8%
Silent Generation (75 years+)	12%	6%

**USEFUL WEB LINKS**

[Our Board](#)

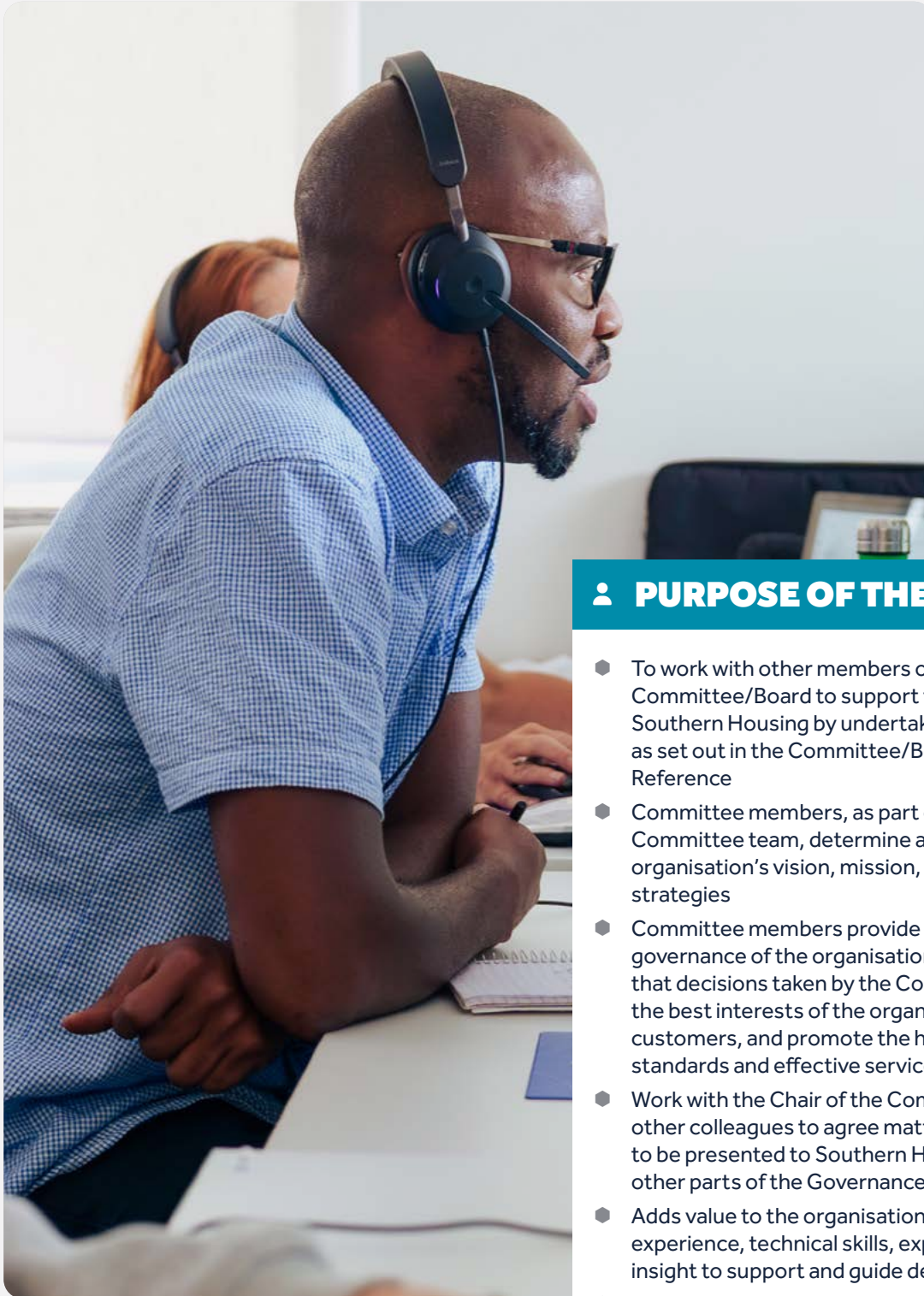
[Our Executive Team](#)

[Our current Strategic Plan 2026-30](#)

[Our Annual Report](#)

[Our Resident Involvement Strategy](#)

# Role Specification



## 📌 PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

- To work with other members of the Committee/Board to support the Board of Southern Housing by undertaking the duties as set out in the Committee/Board's Terms of Reference
- Committee members, as part of the Committee team, determine and uphold the organisation's vision, mission, values and strategies
- Committee members provide effective governance of the organisation, ensuring that decisions taken by the Committee are in the best interests of the organisation and its customers, and promote the highest quality standards and effective service delivery
- Work with the Chair of the Committee and other colleagues to agree matters that need to be presented to Southern Housing Board or other parts of the Governance structure
- Adds value to the organisation by contributing experience, technical skills, expertise and insight to support and guide decision-making
- Scrutinises the performance of the organisation (relevant to the Committee) in meeting agreed goals and objectives and monitor the reporting of performance.

## 🔑 KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Acts in the best interests of the organisation always
- Upholds and complies with Southern Housing's adopted Code of Governance and any other codes of conduct, standards, probity or similar
- Be responsible to the Chair of the Committee
- Builds and maintains effective and constructive working relationships with other members of the Committee, Executive Team and other relevant colleagues
- Attends induction, training and performance review sessions and other such sessions or events as are reasonably required by Southern Housing
- Prepares actively for meetings by reading papers and, where necessary, seeks clarification in advance
- Represents the organisation when requested
- Be aware of, and keep up to date with, organisation and sector issues.



# Person Specification



## EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

- Governance, organisational leadership and management experience
- Experience at a senior level, with a relevant professional or business skill in one or more of: financial management and reporting, business assurance and risk management and internal audit
- Experience of operating effectively at high levels within an organisation, and a proven ability in influencing decision making
- Empathy with the purpose of the social housing and/or direct experience of working in the sector with knowledge of the regulatory environment in which the organisation operates and the expectations of the Regulator.



## SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Presents views with knowledge and understanding of the wider strategic context
- Skilled in listening to other contributions, challenging in a constructive way and building consensus through persuasive discussion
- Able to make balanced and informed decisions, analysing performance, financial or other information
- Ability to ensure the commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion runs through all that the Committee does
- 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 Committee 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 and professional 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

The equivalent of approximately 1-2 days per month.

The tenure is for six years (including past service where relevant) and subject to satisfactory annual evaluation. The first year is a probationary year.



## LOCATION

Meetings are a combination of in-person meetings at our London Farringdon office, and online meetings.



## REMUNERATION

£5,515 per annum.



## AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE DATES

The Audit & Risk Committee usually meets five times per year. Dates for the remainder of 2026 are:

- 11 June
- 16 July
- 21 October.



# How to apply

## TO APPLY, PLEASE:

- Provide an **up-to-date CV** of no more than three pages which shows your full career history with any breaks explained. Please also include details of all roles that are currently held.
- Submit a **Supporting Statement** of no more than two pages detailing how you meet the key criteria for this post, highlighting your most relevant knowledge, skills and experiences.
- Please provide your **up-to-date contact details** and let us know of any dates when you are not available or may have difficulty with the indicative schedule.
- You should also provide the names, positions, organisations, and contact details for **two referees**, one of whom should be your current or most recent position. We would not approach these referees before the shortlist stage, and only with your permission. If you do not wish us to approach your referees at any stage, please state this clearly.



## SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION AND INDICATIVE SCHEDULE



### CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS

4 May 2026



### PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS WITH NEEMARSEARCH

w/c 18 May 2026



### INTERVIEWS

w/c 8 June 2026

Applications should be submitted by email to Hannah Smith (see contact details below) by 4 May 2026.

Should you require a confidential discussion about this opportunity, please contact **Hannah Smith**, our advising consultant at NeemarSearch, by email at [hannahsmith@neemarsearch.com](mailto:hannahsmith@neemarsearch.com) or by telephone on **07399 101 755**.



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