



NORTH STAR

Creating homes, building futures

Non-Executive Directors

Candidate Brief August 2025



ALLCROFT ASSOCIATES
EXECUTIVE SEARCH



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INTRODUCTION

Nicki Clark, Chair (Designate)

Thank you for requesting an information pack about joining the North Star Board. We've pulled together what we think will give you a real sense of who we are and what we're about.

At North Star, our Board isn't just about oversight — we're about ambition. We care deeply about the organisation, the people we serve, and the difference we make in our communities. We have serious responsibilities but we're also here to push boundaries, challenge ourselves, and make sure North Star is always looking ahead, not just keeping pace.

We're creative, courageous, and connected. We're proud of our G1/V1 status from our IDA. We have held Investors in People Platinum since 2017. We have won UK IIP Employer of the year in 2021 and 2024 but for us, success is never a finish line. The world is moving fast, and in housing "change" has become business as usual. Our role is to see what's coming and make sure North Star and our customers don't just adapt — they thrive.

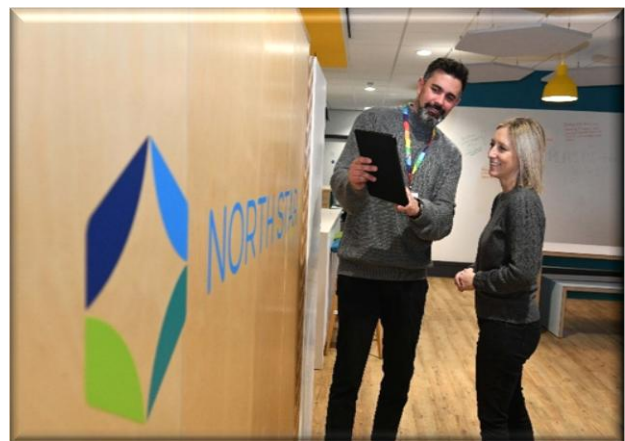
Strong governance underpins everything we do. We invest in development, run regular appraisals, and keep our skills and knowledge fresh. Twice a year, we step out of the day-to-day to work together on strategy and build the trust and connection that make us effective as a Board.

We're rooted in our region, with deep knowledge of and commitment to our local communities. But our culture is what makes us stand out — it's built on people, relationships, and the drive to do better.

If you're motivated by purpose, open to challenge, and ready to bring your skills and ideas to the table, I'd highly recommend joining us. Being part of this Board is stimulating, impactful, and hugely rewarding — I think you'd find it the same.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Nicki Clark



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ABOUT US

North Star Structure and History

North Star was established in 2006 to provide services to, and bring together, Endeavour and Teesdale Housing Associations. Darlington Housing Association joined the Group in 2016.

Endeavour began life buying and refurbishing older terraced housing in the inner areas of Tees Valley and was known as a “traditional” housing association with dispersed housing stock. Over the years, the Association spread itself geographically, and operated in 11 Local Authority areas, and providing a wide range of rented accommodation, including supported housing.

Established in 2006, Teesdale was a stock transfer organisation from the previous Teesdale District Council. Operating across a wide geographic area in the South West of Durham, it operated in market towns and, ex-coalfield areas as well as more isolated rural villages.

Like Endeavour, Darlington began life buying and refurbishing older terraced housing in the inner areas of Darlington and was known as a “traditional” housing association with dispersed housing stock. It operated entirely in Darlington.

In 2020 and after 14 years in a Group structure, we became one organisation providing a much simpler governance structure.

Vision, Values and Social Purpose

Our Vision

Creating homes, building futures.

Our Social Purpose

We care about the people and the communities that we serve. We work, in collaboration with others, to create stable, secure, trusting and supportive environments where people feel they belong.



We have worked hard to remain true to our roots, whilst modernising what we do and how we do it. We are known for flexibility, partnership working, community focus and adaptability.

We are members of the Institute of Customer Service. Tenants have always been and will always be at the centre of the business. Our recently established Tenants’ Voice (TTV) leads our strong scrutiny, oversight and customer accountability and we use a range of in person and online methods of connection to our customers. We make a positive contribution to the areas we operate in and invest significantly in community activities which help to sustain and develop our communities.

Building new homes and delivering local services are continuing priorities.

Our Values

Creative

We create environments to enable people, places and communities to thrive. We believe many things are possible and that our energy brings about exciting change.

Connected

We are connected to the world we live in. Therefore, we are relevant, informed and knowledgeable. We develop strong relationships that are based on integrity and trust.

Courageous

We challenge ourselves and others. We experiment, pioneer and we dare to be different.

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OUR STRATEGY

Strategic Objectives to 2026

The Corporate Strategy 2023-2026 is a three-year plan, that details the organisation's strategic vision and objectives. It is an ambitious but achievable plan that has been approved by the North Star Board. The three-year plan is distilled into annual objectives which are detailed in the annual Corporate Plan. Progress is reviewed and reported to the Board every six months. This ensures that the plan remains dynamic and is subject to scrutiny and challenge.

In July this year we took staff, customers and the board off site to begin the process of co-creating anew five year strategy which we will continue to work on this during 2025 and beyond.

The current corporate objectives, which are set out in broad terms as follows, are:

1. Customers & Communities

We intend to deliver high levels of satisfaction through quality services, strong relationships, clear and focussed communication, and transparency. Our understanding of customers from insight, connections and contact will shape the requirements of digital and face to face services – we will know what is required. Board will be confident they know tenant views that lead to even better decision making. Communities will be well connected, and we will further develop links to training and employment opportunities.

2. Growth, Assets and the Green Agenda

We will gain strength through ambitious growth in the development of new homes including supported housing. Standards will be reviewed using new ethnographical techniques, to ensure we are building what is required. A green strategy will be developed, and data will be used more effectively to better understand stock and its performance using a new tool that informs investment. Relationships with property contractors will strengthen through collaborative reviews and improved standards will constantly evolve using robust tenant feedback.

3. Technology

We will use technology to improve customer services, deliver efficiencies, and add value for money. A comprehensive digital provision will be available for customers who want to interact in this way; it will fully complement face to face contact. The new housing management IT system and enhanced digital processes will free up staff time, and data will be used effectively with one version of the truth.

4. People and Culture

We will continue to develop and maintain the relational culture, with a focus on the growth of people and the provision of opportunity. Where possible North Star recruits from within the organisation whilst developing its offer to apprentices and graduates. There will be continuing investment to develop prospective leaders as role models, collaborators, coaches, and pioneers. North Star will be equitable, diverse and inclusive. North Star encourages staff to become professionally qualified and access academic qualifications.

5. Value for Money

The operating margin at the minimum of 20% will underpin financial strength and assist in retaining a strong credit rating – this will enable us to deliver more. The budget process is embedded and owned with everyone responsible for driving effectiveness and efficiencies. The surplus for purpose statement will ensure there is ownership and understanding.

6. Governance

The Boards generative journey has continued to evolve, the Board is more diverse and understanding of tenants needs strengthened. There will have been a successful transition to a new Chair, with clear succession plans in place for all Board members to provide continuity and reduce disruption. Regulatory Standards are being delivered to a very high calibre. The dynamic governance improvement plan will be delivered.

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ROLE SPECIFICATION

We are looking for people with the following skills and experience

We are looking for individuals who bring strategic insight from senior leadership roles with the following specific experience.

- **Finance**
- **Governance**
- **Social Housing**
- **People, Data & Technology and Customer Experience**

Statement of Board Member Responsibilities

Board members are responsible for:

Ensuring the management control, accountability and good conduct of the organisation.

Role of Board members:

- To establish and ensure compliance with the organisation's business strategy and policies, covering all legal, regulatory, and good practice requirements.
- To set and ensure compliance with the annual and longer-term strategy and objectives of the organisation and to determine its values and philosophy.
- To enable and oversee the achievement of those objectives through the establishment of a framework of delegation and internal control, ensuring appropriate delegated authorities, operational procedures, and the employment of staff with appropriate skills.
- To oversee a risk management framework in order to safeguard the assets and reputation of the organisation.
- To measure and review the performance of the organisation.
- To review the activities of the organisation from time to time and decide on changes if appropriate or advisable in the interest of the organisation.
- To exercise sound financial management and maintain financial viability whilst meeting the organisation's objectives. ○
To avoid financial risk and protect the public funds invested in the organisation.
- To ensure that the interest and needs of the organisation's tenants are considered in all matters.
- To ensure that the organisation's properties are developed to a high standard and are kept in good repair.
- To be an excellent employer.
- To promote the accountability of the organisation through openness and contact with communities, representative bodies, and strategic authorities.
- To attend regularly and contribute to Board meetings and to regularly review the performance of the Board to ensure, as an organisation, it has the capacity and commitment to understand and control the activities of the organisation.
- To ensure that Board meetings are suitably documented, held at reasonable intervals and are effective. ○
From time to time to attend functions and other meetings in the interest of the organisation.
- To attend appropriate training events.
- To be responsible for the recruitment and appointment of the Chief Executive.
- Board members must satisfy themselves that the organisation's affairs are conducted lawfully and in accordance with accepted terms of performance and propriety.

Principal Responsibilities

Being a Board Member at North Star

As a non-executive director, you'll use your expertise to help set strategy, shape direction, and oversee performance in the best interests of tenants, customers, and the wider community.

The Board holds ultimate responsibility for governance, risk, and delivery of North Star's vision—delegating day-to-day operations to the CEO and team while retaining accountability. We aim to be agile, creative, and responsive, with members committing time, focus, and active participation in meetings, two annual residentials, and ongoing training.

Board members act collectively, follow a clear Code of Conduct, and put the organisation's interests first. Robust appraisal supports our "shared leadership" culture, and full insurance cover is provided for professional liabilities.

Purpose of Board

Membership of the North Star Board ensures legal compliance with the requirements to ensure that each entity is responsible for directing its affairs within the overall strategy and policies set by the organisation.

The purpose of the Board has been defined by its members in terms of: Keeping North Star Strong by:

- Being stewards of North Star's culture and values.
- Leading the co-creation of strategic vision and delivery and overseeing implementation.
- Satisfying itself that North Star's regulatory obligations are being met.

The main responsibilities of the Board are:

- Setting its own objectives within organisation policies including setting operational frameworks for its activities (including housing management, property services and managing stock condition new build and acquisitions).
- Ensuring delivery of its business within the organisation Business Plan.
- Ensuring that it operates within its budgets agreed pursuant to this Agreement.
- Monitoring key performance indicators and reporting to Parent.
- Compliance with all legislative, regulatory, constitutional and financial requirements.
- Ownership and (where relevant) management of stock.
- Where relevant, provision of services to Third Parties.

Matters Reserved for Board Decision:

- Any decision to cease a material part of the organisation's operations.
- Changes to corporate structure, including the setting up of Subsidiaries.
- Approval of resolutions put forward by the Board at a general meeting.
- Changes to the schedule of matters reserved for Board decisions.

What is the Commitment?

The Board and Committee calendars are agreed in June each year for the following 18 months to give sufficient notice to both Board Members and the staff.

In terms of the Board:

- There are four Quarterly Board meetings plus normally three Strategic Board meetings each year.
- There are up to two Board residentials for all Board Members who are joined by the Executive each year to cover generative and personal/organisational development. These normally include an overnight stay and a full day of activity.
- Occasionally there may be a single topic Board meetings as and when required, often these are normally kept to an hour and will be virtual.

In addition, Board members are expected to:

- Attend various stakeholder events and activities.
- Participate in collective and individual Board appraisals.
- Participate in collective and personal training and development. Most of the collective sessions are for one hour and are held virtually at lunchtime. These are on an identified needs basis but there may be three during the year.
- Complete an induction programme within six months of appointment.

Board members are occasionally asked to volunteer for project-specific, time-limited task and finish groups.

For Board members this (excluding the front-loaded induction) is expected to require the equivalent of approximately 24 days per annum, including preparation for meetings and attendance at Board residential strategy days. However, other than formal meetings and events, much of this time is flexible and most Board members fulfil their commitment in 'bite-size' chunks within their other work, domestic and personal commitments.

Risk & Audit Committee and the Remuneration and Employee Conditions Committee both meet four times a year. These are currently a mixture of in person and virtual meetings.

When and where are meetings held?

Board and Committee meetings are held at our Stockton-on-Tees offices. Currently Board and Risk & Audit Committee meetings are at 4:00pm (to about 6:30pm) on Monday evenings.

The Board meeting dates can be downloaded from our candidate microsite

There are also up to two Board residentials a year and planned well in advance. These are held at venues in the North East.

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HOW TO APPLY

- A curriculum vitae (CV)
- A cover letter (concisely let us know why you want this role and why you think you are the right person)
- A completed Diversity form (available from the microsite)

Further information is available at our candidate microsite here:

<https://allcrofta.com/projects/north-star-neds>

If you would like to discuss this opportunity further, please contact Jim Allcroft at jim@allcrofta.com or call 07783 701 922.

The closing date for applications is Wednesday 3rd Sep at 1200.

Final selection – 25 and 29th September.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion - Different Together

At North Star, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion are part of our DNA. Together, we continue to build a culture that encourages, supports, and celebrates difference. It fuels our innovation and connects us even closer to customers and communities.

We are keen to reflect the communities we serve and welcome applicants from a broad range of backgrounds and experience. We are committed to tackling issues of under representation in our Organisation. As such we will guarantee an interview to any candidate who, has a disability, or considers themselves to be from an ethnic minority background and meets the essential criteria of the role.

We can provide all recruitment material in any format, this includes accepting written applications, as well as online. We will also make any reasonable adjustments necessary to help candidates participate in our recruitment process.



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MEDIA ADVERT

Non-Executive Directors, North Star, Stockton-on-Tees, £5,212

About North Star

North Star is an innovative, values-driven housing association with a national reputation for excellence. We hold Investors in People Platinum status, with 100% of our team saying North Star is a great place to work. Known for punching above our weight, we combine outstanding performance with a strong social purpose.

Our culture is our greatest strength – built on trust, relationships, collaboration, influence, and inclusion. These values are embedded at every level, shaping how we work with colleagues, customers, and communities.

We are proud to be more than just a great landlord. We create the conditions for people, places, and communities to thrive.

The Opportunity

We are seeking four experienced and committed Non-Executive Directors to join our Board and help shape North Star's strategic direction.

As a Board member, you will bring insight, challenge, and support to ensure we deliver on our mission and remain financially sustainable, innovative, and responsive to the communities we serve. You will help steer our long-term plans, oversee performance, and uphold the highest standards of governance and regulatory compliance.

Your contribution will be central to ensuring North Star continues to deliver exceptional outcomes for tenants, develops new homes, and invests in people and places – all while maintaining our distinctive culture and values.

You

We are looking for individuals who bring strategic insight from senior leadership roles with the following specific experience:

- Finance
- Governance
- Social Housing
- People, Data & Technology and Customer Experience

Have the governance acumen to hold the organisation to account while supporting the executive team to succeed. Share our values and commitment to social purpose, equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Are able to provide constructive challenge while working collaboratively within a team.

While we welcome applications from all backgrounds, we are particularly keen to hear from those from underrepresented groups.

Why Join Us

This is a rare opportunity to play a key part in the strategic leadership of a housing association that is widely recognised for innovation, strong values, and delivering real impact.

You will join a supportive and forward-thinking Board, working alongside a talented executive team, making decisions that directly shape the future of housing in our region.

Your influence will help ensure North Star continues to be a high-performing, sustainable organisation that changes lives and strengthens communities.

How to Apply

Further information is available at our candidate microsite:

<https://allcrofta.com/projects/north-star-neds>

If you would like to discuss the role, please contact Jim Allcroft at jim@allcrofta.com or 07783 701 922.

To apply, please provide:

- A completed Diversity Details Form (available from the microsite)
- Your curriculum vitae (CV)
- A cover letter outlining why you are interested in joining our Board and the skills and experience you will bring

Closing date: Wednesday 3rd September 1200

Final selection: 25th and 29th September

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion – Different Together

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are part of our DNA. We actively encourage, support, and celebrate difference – it fuels our innovation and brings us closer to the communities we serve.

We are committed to reflecting the diversity of those communities in our Board membership. We guarantee an interview to candidates who have a disability or are from an ethnic minority background and meet the essential criteria



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