



**Advance
Northumberland**

Non Executive Director Candidate Pack


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EXECUTIVE SEARCH



NON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CANDIDATE PACK

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WELCOME FROM STEVEN HARRISON, CEO



At the heart of our ambition is a commitment to regeneration, sustainable growth, and social value. By focusing our efforts on the delivery of high-quality housing, commercial and industrial development, and strategic regeneration projects, we aim to be a catalyst for economic and social progress. Our growth projections reflect this ambition, with revenue expected to nearly double by 2030, and profits reinvested to further expand our impact.

We believe this is a defining moment for Advance Northumberland. With strong foundations in place and a clear roadmap ahead, we are now seeking committed and experienced Board Members to help guide the organisation through its next phase of development.

If you share our commitment to delivering meaningful change and believe in the potential of place-based regeneration, we look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Board Member of Advance Northumberland.

This is an exciting moment in our journey. As we enter a new chapter guided by our ambitious business plan, we are seeking Board Members who share our vision for the future and who can contribute strategic insight, challenge, and expertise as we deliver on our bold aspirations for the county.

Advance Northumberland is entering a pivotal period of transformation and growth. Our refreshed five-year strategy sets a clear course for the future, with a defined purpose, measurable goals, and an enhanced commercial focus. We are reshaping how we operate, strengthening our governance, refining our objectives, and accelerating delivery so that we can maximise our impact across Northumberland and beyond.



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO



Advance Northumberland is a diverse property investment & development business, delivering opportunities to improve prosperity, tackle inequalities and drive economic growth in support of Northumberland County Council.

At Advance Northumberland, activities are centred around five distinct, but interrelated, business areas.

Homes & Maintenance - The largest private residential landlord in Northumberland, managing a portfolio of 1,100 high-quality, affordable homes for rent across the County.

Investments & Commercial - Focused on the ownership, management, and development of a diverse portfolio, including 300 acres of development land and 1.7 million square feet of high-quality business accommodation.

Ascent Homes - A regional housebuilder, Ascent Homes is dedicated to developing high-quality homes across Northumberland.

Projects - From the initial concept to project completion, the Projects division manages the entire lifecycle of development initiatives.

Sustainability - This newly established business area will focus on managing and maintaining land designated as a "Habitat Bank."

Together, these five business areas create a robust and dynamic foundation for Advance Northumberland, driving forward meaningful contributions to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the County.

AIMS OF OUR BUSINESS



The business aims reflect Advance Northumberland's dedication to excellence, value creation, and social impact. These objectives guide the business and ensure alignment with the broader vision for Northumberland's future.

1. To be the best 'arms-length' Council-owned business
2. To be recognised as adding genuine value to Northumberland
3. To enhance our social value output
4. To be recognised as a force for good in Northumberland
5. To be a leading player in each business sector
6. To align with Northumberland County Council on delivery



GROWTH PLANS



Over the next five years, there will be growth across the individual business areas, with new housing schemes in Ascent Homes, acquisitions and renewed investment in commercial projects and continuous growth within the residential homes' portfolio.

As a result, the business will become larger and more profitable. Revenue is forecasted to increase by 76% and it is anticipated that headcount will grow from 155 to 232 employees.



Ascent Homes



HOW WE DELIVER THESE GOALS

We are supported by a central business support and finance function which oversees a range of finance, people, marketing, information systems and programme management functions to ensure effective governance, planning and oversight of performance.

Our Board of Directors are appointed by Northumberland County Council and comprises of

One NCC Shareholder, one Shareholder representative, one Shareholder appointed board member, four non-executive independent directors, two executive directors of Advance Northumberland and a Chair.

The Board has an established Audit Committee and a Remuneration Committee to undertake detailed scrutiny of key aspects of operations.



Board Members
Vacancy
Chair of Audit - Adam McGhin
Chair of Remuneration - Hilary Florek
Iain Slater
David Warburton
Shareholder appointed board member

Steven Harrison CEO and Executive Director

William Thompson Executive Director of Governance and Sustainability

ROLE PROFILE

Non-Executive Board Director (NED)

Remuneration: £12,000 gross per annum basis.

Responsible to: Chair of the Board

About the Company

Advance Northumberland is a unique economic regeneration company, established as a wholly-owned company of Northumberland County Council. As the Council's primary regeneration development vehicle, the company has a clear remit to improve prosperity, quality of life and increase business activity throughout the communities of Northumberland. Advance Northumberland currently employ a wide range of investment, development and regeneration capabilities to shape places and promote economic growth and high-quality outcomes for the community of Northumberland.

Our functions and structure - Advance Northumberland delivers value through the following key divisions:

- Developments and project management
- Housing and property investment
- Estate management
- Inward investment and key account management
- Business growth and enterprise services

In addition to the above delivery divisions, Advance Northumberland is supported by a central business support and finance function which oversees a range of finance, people, marketing, information systems and programme management functions to ensure effective governance, planning and oversight of performance.

Advance Northumberland is seeking to increase the number of Non-Executive Directors on its board which is currently made up of Members and Officers of the Council in order to:

- Ensure that the Company has a clear strategic direction and vision and to work closely with the Council and the Company's senior management to set Advance Northumberland's overall direction, policy and plans.
- Ensure that the Board performs effectively and efficiently as a collective entity, to direct and control the work of the Company and each subsidiary in order to ensure that it maximises output against its strategic objectives, quality of service and value for money.
- Ensure the Board of Directors has skills, capabilities, qualifications or attributes that are directly relevant to the purpose or activity of the Company and that a complementary mix of competencies is achieved across the Board to actively enhance the capabilities of the Company.
- Uphold the values of Advance Northumberland, providing strategic direction and motivational leadership in the delivery of its business plans.
- Provide clear demarcation of governance between the Council Shareholder and the Company

The successful NED will also be appointed Non-Executive Director to the boards of all subsidiaries of the Company.

The Company is keen to interview individuals with experience within one or more of the following areas:

- Construction, Housebuilding, Commercial Property or Placemaking / Regeneration
- Finance/Accountancy/Commercial experience.

Advance Northumberland is also committed to increasing the diversity of our existing Board, to improve the balance of Non-Executive Director representation. To achieve this, we are seeking high quality applications from women, BAME, LGBT+ and disabled candidates whose background, experience and identity will broaden and enhance a balance of perspectives in developing the strategy and

ROLE PROFILE

operational effectiveness of the Company. All applications will be considered on merit against our selection criteria.

The Board of Directors of Advance Northumberland Limited (the Company) as a whole has ultimate legal responsibility for the control and conduct of the affairs of the Company and its subsidiaries (the Group). The Board also has responsibility to ensure that the Group is financially viable, properly managed and performs functions efficiently, effectively, economically and in line with the requirements of the law, the regulatory bodies, internal governance arrangements and best practice.

To fulfil its general duties, the Board must:

- Only act in the interest of the Group and not of any constituency or interest groups
- Promote the success of the Group
- Exercise independent judgment
- Exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence and act objectively at all times
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Not accept benefits from third parties
- Declare interests in proposed or existing transactions or arrangements with a Group company

The NED is expected to adhere to the Nolan principles and specific Company values below, to help the Board reach balanced judgements:

- Dedication – we are passionate about delivering for Northumberland
- Honesty – we work to the highest standards of integrity and accountability
- Collaboration – we deliver in partnership with Northumberland County Council and organisations across the public and private sectors

Behaviour -All Directors are expected to:

- Uphold the values and aims of Advance Northumberland Ltd and Northumberland CC.

- Contribute to and share responsibility for Board decisions.
- Prepare for and attend meetings, training sessions and other Company events.
- Declare any relevant interests or potential conflicts of interest as and when they arise.
- Respect the confidentiality of any information received.

Act in accordance with the following guidelines:

- **Corporate decision making process:** All Directors take part in Board business on an equal footing. Although Directors may have different backgrounds and different reasons for their involvement, they must all act in the best interests of each company, not advocating or lobbying for any other group or organization. If a Director is unhappy with a decision, provided it has been considered by the Board as a whole, all Directors should stand by that decision and not undermine it in any way.
- **Critical questioning:** Whilst not implying distrust or doubt, the Board has a vital role in asking critical questions about proposals before approving them and has a right to seek external advice whenever it feels this is needed to add value to the collective knowledge and experience of the Directors. All Directors should build a supportive, constructive and professional relationship with any and all individuals with responsibility for the day-to-day operation of each company.

Key Responsibilities & Obligations. All Directors will:

- Ensure that the Board fulfils its duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the Group including legal and statutory compliance
- Bring an external, independent perspective and advise the Board accordingly
- Scrutinise the performance of senior management against the objectives and values of the Company

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- Work in partnership with the Company Directors, officers and senior managers and to constructively challenge as appropriate
- Approve each year's accounts prior to publication, and approve each year's budget and business plan
- Maintain financial viability by approving and monitoring medium and long-term financial planning
- Undertake rigorous financial stress testing prior to undertaking new activities
- Monitor performance at a strategic level in relation to plans, budgets, controls and decisions
- Ensure there are appropriate mechanisms, both internal and external, to verify that the Board receives a balanced and accurate picture of how the Group is performing
- Assist in setting the strategy for the future by approving the Company's Business Plan, Action Plans and KPIs, and other plans and approve major new business/projects.
- Develop and implement appropriate risk frameworks ensuring major risks are regularly reviewed and understood, and that appropriate controls are put in place to stop them from emerging
- Monitor key standards of performance that are critical to the success and long-term viability of the Group.
- Be confident that the Group's affairs are conducted lawfully and in accordance with regulatory requirements and the generally accepted standards of performance and probity
- Comply fully with the Group's governing instruments including the Articles of Association, policies, procedures, standing orders and any Shareholder agreements
- Act with integrity and avoid any personal conflicts of interest or misuse of the Group's funds or assets
- Prepare properly by reading the agenda and papers before attending a meeting
- Attend board meetings, contribute fully and proactively in discussions, respecting all others present, avoid any inappropriate behaviour, language or tone

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- Abide by decisions of the Board and its committees and uphold the principle of collective responsibility
- Make decisions that are in the best interests of the Group
- Participate in regular reviews of Board performance and in Board Member appraisals
- Participate in Board development and training, and in other learning activities as required
- Participate in General Meetings, strategy meetings with senior Company / Shareholder or other staff, including any agreed gatherings or "away-days"
- Help to determine appropriate levels of remuneration of executive directors and senior management and to advise on reward mechanisms
- Advise on governance arrangements and assist with succession planning, including chairing Board committees if requested
- Ensure that the Group promotes and delivers equality of opportunity and diversity across all aspects of its business
- At all times act with impartiality, integrity and closely observe confidentiality requirements
- Participate in business development, (working closely with Board and senior management team), including client visits and presentations at client events or conferences
- Provide access to useful contacts and networks to help develop new business in line with strategy
- Identify opportunities for the Company for example new services, clients, projects or funding
- Attend at least 80% of Board meetings.

Previous Experience -The successful NED will have experience of one or more of the following areas:

- Construction, Housebuilding, Commercial Property or Regeneration / Placemaking
- Finance/Accountancy/Commercial experience.

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And will furthermore have had:

- Strategic management role - preferably in organisations that operate for the benefit of the business community, working with public, private or other community groups
- Directorship of similar-sized company which has undergone sustained growth (Executive or Non-Executive)
- Strategic development, governance, business development, change management and operational experience
- Seat on business committees or Boards
- Understanding of markets in which the Company operates or wishes to develop, including private, public and not-for-profit sectors

Skills and Qualities The successful NED will have / be:

- A good knowledge and understanding of the local area in which the Group operates
- Understanding of Company values, social and environmental ethos, and track record of living these
- Gravitas to be respected internally and externally
- High level of integrity and honesty
- Ability to engage constructively with senior management and to challenge on difficult issues in a non-confrontational way
- Ability to maintain, strong, constructive working relationships with other Board members, senior management, staff and partner organisations including the Shareholder and Shareholder Representative
- Successful motivator of senior management
- Clear and enthusiastic communicator; verbal and written
- Strategic thinker and business development orientation
- Understanding of systems and risk management
- The ability to maintain an objective approach to decision making
- Good understanding of management accounts and related management information

- Well-organised, manages time well and able to assimilate and comment on complex information and reports
- Knowledge of reward and motivation mechanisms
- An awareness of and commitment to upholding equality and diversity issues
- Ability to commit time and effort to attend formal Board meetings and other ad hoc meetings

Time commitment

- The current Board meets approximately 12 times a year, and there would be an anticipated need for at least three sub-committee meetings, as well as additional strategy meetings, including with senior staff/shareholders.
- The NED is expected to be available for ad-hoc advice to the Board, including meetings, on an as-needs basis.
- The total time commitment per annum is estimated as 16 days.

Period of appointment

- The term of the appointment will initially be for four years
- There will be an option for the Company to renew at the end of this period up to a further 4 years.

Conflicts of interest and commercial confidentiality

- The NED appointment is made on the basis of trust, a key component of which is to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest between this appointment and posts held elsewhere.
- All material provided to the NED by the Company should be treated as commercially sensitive, and not disclosed to third parties without the written permission of the Board, and should remain confidential for a period of at least 3 years following termination of the contract. (This clause applies to connected persons of the NED).

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Fees and expenses

- Remuneration will be £12,000 gross per annum for an Independent NED and reviewed annually by the Shareholder.
- Payment will be made monthly through payroll with appropriate deductions.
- There shall be no additional remuneration beyond their NCC salary for a Council Officer NED.
- Travel and subsistence expenses, for example attending Board meetings, will be reimbursable in line with the Company's policy at cost, on submission of evidence in the form of receipts.

Eligibility - The following eligibility criteria must be satisfied by all Board Members. Applicants must indicate their eligibility to be a Board Member and in particular that:

- They are not disqualified from acting as a Non-Executive Director;
- They do not have unspent convictions relating to any offence involving deception or dishonesty;
- They are not an undischarged bankrupt nor have made a composition or arrangement with, or granted trust deed for, their creditors (ignore if discharged from such arrangement);
- They are not subject to a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or to any order made under section 429(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986;
- They have not been removed as a trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commissioners or the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement nor are subject to an order under section 7 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990, preventing them from being concerned in the management or control of any relevant organization or body.

- They are not a member of the Northumberland County Council Administration's Executive, ie Cabinet.

Location

- The Company has office locations in Northumberland. The NED could be based anywhere in the UK but must be able to travel to the office location for Board meetings, and occasionally to other locations for special events.
- Ad-hoc or meetings with short notice may be held remotely.

HOW TO APPLY

The role is being managed by our recruitment partner,
Allcroft Associates

For a confidential conversation, please contact

Jim Allcroft, Managing Director, E: jim@allcrofta.com
T: 07783 701 922



Applications should be made via email to jim@allcrofta.com and must include on separate documents:

A letter of application setting out your interest in the role

A comprehensive curriculum vitae (CV)

A completed Diversity form (available for download from our microsite)

Closing date for application: Friday 13th February 2026 @ 1200

Final stage interviews will be held in person in Ashington in March

Advance Northumberland is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. We celebrate difference and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds. We aim to create a workplace where everyone can thrive and contribute to our mission of regenerating Northumberland.