NORTH STAR

Creating homes, building futures

Non-Executive Directors

Candidate brief November 2026

At least two Board appointments
Two appointments will also include
Risk & Audit Committee membership

Appointments planned for early 2027



ALLCROFT ASSOCIATES
EXECUTIVE SEARCH

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Welcome to North Star

A message from Nicki Clark, Chair

Thank you for your interest in joining our Board. North Star is an organisation with a strong sense of purpose, close relationships with its customers and a willingness to think differently about what a housing association can achieve.

Our new five-year strategy, Leading and Growing to 2031, sets an ambitious direction. We want to become the most trusted landlord in our region, providing safe, welcoming homes and services that make a lasting difference to people's lives. Customers, colleagues and Board members have shaped that direction together.

We are looking for at least two new Board Members to help us deliver it. We welcome people with different backgrounds and experiences who share our purpose and can bring sound judgement, fresh perspectives and a willingness to learn. You may already serve on a Board or be considering your first appointment, and your experience may come from housing or another sector. We would like to hear how you could contribute.

You will find a Board that takes its responsibilities seriously and invests time in working well together. We expect members to prepare thoroughly, ask thoughtful questions and be willing to challenge. Just as importantly, we value people who listen, build trust and are open to changing their minds.

Our culture matters to us. Relationships, clear accountability and high expectations shape how we work together. We encourage people to contribute ideas, take responsibility and learn from one another. We invest in development and listen to different perspectives across the organisation and our communities. For Board members, that means being curious, approachable and willing to learn, bringing independent judgement and following through on decisions that matter to customers.

If you share our commitment to social housing and communities, and would enjoy helping a values-based organisation look ahead, we would be pleased to hear from you.

Nicki Clark
Chair



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About North Star

North Star provides affordable and supported housing across the North East, with its main areas of operation in County Durham, Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, Darlington and Hartlepool. Our communities include urban neighbourhoods, market towns and rural villages, each with different needs and opportunities.

We own 4,093 social homes, as reported in the Regulator of Social Housing's September 2026 judgement. Our purpose extends beyond providing a home: we work with customers and partners to help people feel secure, connected and able to build their futures.

Our roots

North Star was formed in 2006, bringing together Endeavour (established in 1974) and Teesdale Housing Associations. Darlington Housing Association joined in 2016. In 2020, we became one organisation with a simpler governance structure. We retain the local knowledge, relationships and community focus that shaped those organisations.

Our vision and social purpose

Creating homes, building futures.

We care about the people and communities we serve. Working with others, we help create stable, secure and supportive environments where people feel they belong.

Our values

Creative — making space for ideas and finding better ways to help people, places and communities thrive.

Connected — understanding the world around us and building relationships based on integrity and trust.

Courageous — challenging ourselves and others, trying new approaches and being willing to do things differently.

North Star has held Investors in People Platinum since 2017 and was the first in the housing sector to receive this rating. We achieved ServiceMark accreditation from the Institute of Customer Service in March 2026.

Customers influence our decisions

The Tenants' Voice connects customers directly with the Board, supported by the wider Your Voice involvement network. Customer insight, scrutiny and feedback shape services and priorities. Board members consider this experience alongside financial, risk and performance information.

Our current regulatory position

In September 2026, North Star received C1 for consumer standards and retained G1 for governance, with a financial viability grade of V2. Our decision to maintain and increase investment in existing homes and new developments means that while we continue to meet the viability requirement, we need to carefully manage our risks.

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Leading and Growing to 2031

Our new strategy brings customers, homes, people and the foundations of the organisation into one five-year plan. Developed with customers, colleagues and the Board, it aims to make North Star the region's most trusted landlord through the quality of its homes, services and community relationships.

Customers

Deliver reliable services that respond to individual needs, get things right first time and resolve complaints fairly and quickly. Ensure customer voices influence relevant decisions, build stronger community connections, take action on child poverty and challenge racism.

Homes

Increase the number of homes by at least 300, with an ambition for 400, through development and acquisition, including supported housing. Invest in existing homes, safety, energy efficiency and repairs, using better property data and customer insight to guide decisions. The strategy seeks EPC C or above across existing homes and higher standards for new homes.

People

Develop leaders and colleagues, create opportunities for progression and sustain an inclusive workplace. Support wellbeing and adapt ways of working while protecting the relationships, trust and shared responsibility that underpin North Star's culture.

Foundations

Maintain financial resilience and effective governance. Strengthen data quality, cyber resilience and business continuity, use digital technology and AI responsibly, and secure wider community benefits through procurement and partnerships.

What this means for the Board

Delivering the strategy involves choices about pace, investment and risk. Board members will need to consider the balance between improving existing homes and adding new supply, challenge whether services meet customers' needs, and test the quality of the information supporting decisions.

The Risk & Audit Committee will be particularly important in helping the Board understand whether controls and assurance remain effective as the organisation delivers its plans. Members must be able to explore difficult questions while keeping a clear view of the purpose behind the investment.

The strategy's ambitions describe what North Star intends to achieve. Progress and outcomes will need sustained scrutiny throughout the five-year period.

Read our full strategy: Leading and Growing to 2031.

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The people we are looking for

We would like to hear from people who share North Star's social purpose and want to help shape its future. We welcome a wide range of professional backgrounds, life experiences and perspectives, and are interested in the contribution you could make to the Board as a whole.

You may be an experienced non-executive director or considering your first Board role. Experience outside housing is welcome. What matters is your judgement, your willingness to learn and your ability to work with others to improve outcomes for customers and communities.

What we look for in every Board member

- The ability to think strategically, weigh up different perspectives and contribute beyond your own area of expertise.
- A commitment to social housing, North Star's values, and equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Confidence in questioning financial, performance and risk information and reaching balanced decisions. An accountancy qualification is not essential.
- Independent thinking and constructive challenge, alongside the ability to listen, build trust and respect others' views.
- An appreciation of collective accountability and the distinction between Board oversight and day-to-day management.
- The time and commitment to prepare, participate fully and continuously develop your knowledge, including through customer engagement.

Experience that would strengthen our Board

Property development and contracting

Experience of property, development, construction, asset investment or contracting, bringing insight into investment decisions, contractor performance, value for money and commercial risk.

Risk and audit

Experience of overseeing organisational risk, scrutinising assurance and internal controls, or strengthening audit arrangements, with the confidence to test evidence and follow through on action.

Governance

Experience of effective governance, accountability and decision-making, helping a Board provide sound oversight and hold an organisation to its purpose and obligations.

We are recruiting at least two Board Members, with two appointees also joining the Risk & Audit Committee. Property, development and contracting, risk and audit, and governance are particular priorities across these appointments. No individual is expected to cover every area.

HR, people, digital technology and AI

We also welcome interest from people with experience in HR, people and organisational development, or digital technology, data and artificial intelligence (AI). These perspectives could help the Board support North Star's people and culture, assess opportunities for innovation and understand the associated risks.

These are additional areas of interest, rather than skills applicants must bring alongside the main priorities. If you believe your experience could strengthen our Board, we encourage you to apply or speak to Jim about the opportunity.

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Your contribution as a Board Member

The Board is collectively responsible for North Star's direction, governance and long-term sustainability. It delegates day-to-day management to the Chief Executive and executive team while retaining oversight and accountability.

Strategy and social purpose

- Set and review strategic direction, approve the business plan and ensure resources support North Star's objectives.
- Consider customer views and experiences in decisions, including the needs of people whose voices may be less readily heard.
- Protect North Star's culture and values while encouraging improvement, learning and appropriate innovation.

Performance, investment and assurance

- Scrutinise service performance, safety and the quality of homes, ensuring concerns lead to clear action and follow-up.
- Oversee financial viability, budgets, investment and value for money, taking a considered approach to risk and safeguarding assets and public investment.
- Satisfy yourself that legal, regulatory and constitutional obligations are met and that delegated authorities and controls are effective.

Leadership and accountability

- Support and hold the executive team to account, including the Board's responsibility for appointing the Chief Executive.
- Act in North Star's interests, observe its Code of Conduct, declare conflicts and respect confidentiality.
- Prepare for meetings, contribute to collective decisions, take part in appraisal and continuously develop your skills and knowledge.

Your role on the Risk and Audit Committee

The two new Committee members will scrutinise risk management, internal control and assurance, supporting the Board's confidence in the organisation's decisions and delivery.

This means being able to question how risks are identified and managed, assess the evidence presented, understand audit findings and test whether agreed actions have addressed the underlying issues. You will need to engage with information outside your own professional specialism and recognise when further explanation or assurance is needed.

Committee work sits alongside your full Board responsibilities. Visit North Star's website for published governance information. Please contact Jim for the detailed governance documents and Committee terms of reference.

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Commitment and practical arrangements

These roles require active participation throughout the year. Preparation, development and time spent understanding customers and the organisation are as important as attendance at formal meetings.

Meetings and preparation

- Four quarterly Board meetings and normally three strategic Board meetings each year.
- Four Risk & Audit Committee meetings each year, with time to read papers and follow up relevant matters.
- Up to two Board residentials annually, normally including an overnight stay and a full day of strategic and development activity.
- Occasional additional meetings or time-limited task groups, alongside stakeholder and customer activities.

Board and Risk & Audit Committee papers are issued 10 days before each meeting.

Time commitment

Allow approximately 24 days a year for Board duties, including preparation and residentials. Risk & Audit Committee membership requires additional time, as does induction at the start of your appointment.

You can plan your reading and preparation around other commitments. You must also be able to attend scheduled meetings and respond to occasional additional demands.

Location and meeting arrangements

Meetings are based at North Star's Stockton-on-Tees offices, with residentials held in the North East. Risk & Audit Committee meetings take place on Mondays.

Induction and development

Members complete an induction programme within six months of appointment and participate in individual and collective appraisal. Board development, training and residentials provide opportunities to strengthen knowledge, relationships and collective effectiveness.

Remuneration and appointment terms

Annual remuneration: £5,473 per annum (effective from 1 April 2026).

Appointment term: three years.

Expenses: normal expenses are covered.

We aim to complete appointments ahead of the February 2027 Risk & Audit Committee meeting. The meeting date will be confirmed during the selection process.

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How to apply

For an informal discussion about the opportunity, please contact Jim Allcroft at jim@allcrofta.com or on 07783 701 922.

Your application

Please provide:

- Your current CV.
- A concise covering letter explaining your interest in North Star, the contribution you could make to the Board and how you meet the criteria in section 4. Please include any relevant specialist experience and indicate your suitability for Risk & Audit Committee membership.
- A completed diversity monitoring form, available from the candidate microsite.

Application information and documents are available at:https://allcrofta.com/projects/north-star-neds

Closing date and time: Friday 4 December 2026 at 12 noon.

Selection process

Applications will be reviewed against the criteria, followed by initial interviews to inform the shortlist. We plan to agree the shortlist before Christmas and hold final interviews in January 2027.

Final interview dates and selection arrangements will be confirmed to shortlisted candidates before Christmas. This will include details of any customer involvement in the process.

We aim to complete appointments ahead of the February 2027 Risk & Audit Committee meeting.

Different together

North Star welcomes people with different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. We want our Board to reflect the communities we serve and particularly encourage interest from people currently underrepresented at board level.

We value the contribution that lived experience can make alongside professional expertise. Candidates will be assessed against the requirements of the role, with a focus on their ability and potential to contribute.

We will make reasonable adjustments to support participation in the recruitment process. Please speak to Jim if you need information in another format or would like to discuss an adjustment.



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