



2030;
getting there together



Board Member Candidate Pack

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A message from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in applying to join Acis Group's governing bodies. We have opportunities for individuals to contribute at all levels - whether as a Board member, a Trainee Board Member, or an Independent Committee Member of one of our committees.

There's always a role for qualified practitioners and those with other specialisms in things like investment and treasury management, new homes development or student accommodation, or those who have strategic level experience within social housing, universities, schools and further education and/or care and support environments, but we'd also love to hear from individuals who have the lived experience of receiving the services we deliver in order to help us shape, monitor and improve those services going forward.

We are committed to being a truly diverse and inclusive organisation and are

particularly keen to attract diverse applicants who reflect the makeup of the communities in which we operate. What we're looking for above all else is genuine commitment to our purpose, our values and our goals. We value the contribution that you can make, and we recognise that it takes all sorts of people, with differing experience and skills, to create a strong governance culture.

The last few years have certainly brought about a number of challenges for the social housing sector, ranging from economic challenges due to rising inflation, higher borrowing costs and the cost-of-living crisis. On top of that, there is increased political focus, new regulation and scrutiny across multiple areas such as damp and mould and building safety compliance, and, of course, a focus on delivering net zero carbon by 2050.

But our focus remains on wanting to provide the best support for people in our communities and we strive to bring together difference services to help us do that. In addition to our core housing service, we want to help people to realise their potential by offering spaces which that enable people to think, learn, grow, and thrive. We also support people to build the confidence they need to move towards employment, learn new skills and achieve qualifications. We're ambitious and want to continue to develop our offer to meet the needs of even more people.

[Read our strategy here.](#)





Our strategic objective is to ensure that we are there for our customers, to support them when they need us. Indeed, our new Corporate Strategy launched in December 2023 is

entitled “2030 Getting There Together”, the key themes of which are:-

- **People First?** – Whilst we have always had a customer first approach, this definition sought to bring people together – employees, customers, partners, and other stakeholders – recognising that involvement, engagement, and buy-in from all of those people is essential for us to succeed.
- **Home** – creating space where people can thrive. We wanted to distinguish between Home and the Homes that our core housing activity might provide to tenants. For our students, home might temporarily be in our accommodation; away from their family home and it was important for us to ensure that they feel “at home”. Similarly, for our people attending CLIP and Riverside, they too need to feel comfortable in their environment if they are to thrive, whether educationally or from a wellbeing perspective.
- **Support** – helping people with a wide range of challenges. In social housing, we have historically dealt with all sorts of people from all sorts of backgrounds, but our widening support services means that we can deliver pastoral support for our customers; helping them to overcome social anxiety and other wellbeing needs, seek employment opportunities or further their education to help them thrive. The principle is to have joined up services - with a challenge to identify requirements across our

whole organisation and to ensure that customers with needs are properly signposted to where they can be helped. We also want to start to develop our wider care and support offering and look to establish some social enterprises that can help deliver some of the support that we want to.

- **Quality** – embedding and exceeding service standards. We want to deliver the best services that we can and will strive to ensure that we challenge ourselves to always do better. We want to maintain our regulatory grading, ensure we consider sustainability issues on our path to net zero carbon by 2050 and report regularly on our Environmental, Social and Governance outcomes.

So, this really is an exciting time to think about joining us!

I hope that you will find this information pack useful in preparing your application.

Kath



We're a housing charity, originally formed in 1999, that likes going beyond the bricks and mortar. We're committed to the communities in which we work so we deliver much more than you'd expect from a traditional landlord. We offer low cost and affordable housing to meet multi-generational needs and continue to develop new homes every year to meet local demands and to expand the support on offer. We have around 7,000 social and affordable homes located across parts of Greater Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, North-East Derbyshire and South Yorkshire together with over 1,100 student bedspaces in Nottingham and Sheffield.

We support people to pick up new skills through education and employability activities as well as craft and well-being activities. We want the people we support to retain their independence and to thrive in their communities. We know that people don't always need us to support them, but our goal is to be there if, and when, they should need us.

Our group currently comprises of Acis Group Limited, the parent organisation,



together with a number of subsidiaries including Acis Development Services Limited, Riverside Access and Training Centre Gainsborough CIC ["Riverside"], Community Learning in Partnership CIC ["CLIP"] and a number of dormant companies. We're presently looking at how we make the most of our corporate structure, have agreed some changes in principle and are presently consulting with stakeholder on those changes.

From a governance perspective, overall governance of the group sits with the Acis Group Board. The role of the Board is to set our overall strategic direction and our appetite to risk, to ensure it understands the financial and operating parameters we must work within, and importantly to understand our risk environment and what could change to adversely impact upon us.

The Board have established a number of standing committees that report into it as follows:

The Audit and Risk Committee

Our audit and risk committee oversees the internal and external audit arrangements for the group, to review the effectiveness of risk management arrangements and the systems of internal controls assurance, and to review annual financial statements ahead of them being approved by the Board. The committee also looks at anti-fraud arrangements and oversees confidential reporting matters.

The Operations Committee

This committee reviews the operational performance of our primary housing activities with a particular focus on repairs performance, housing health and safety compliance, neighbourhood management and customer feedback. The committee also looks at our staffing performance looking at trends in staff turnover and absence management.



The Finance and Development Committee

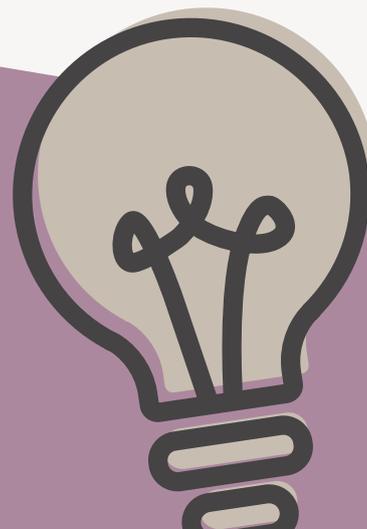
With over £200m of debt funding, our finance and development committee regularly reviews our treasury management position to ensure we maintain operational liquidity and have sufficient funds at our disposal for the significant investments that we make annually. The committee also looks at our new homes' development activities including progress to achieving targeted sales of new shared ownership and outright sale homes and our overall income management activities.

The Enterprise Committee

This is our newest committee, set up in response to the changes that we have seen in recent years. The committee primarily focuses on the operational performance of our education and skills activities including occupancy and building compliance across our student portfolio and ensuring that educational quality and funder compliance is maintained at both CLIP and Riverside.

The Remuneration and Review Committee

Our remuneration and Review Committee has a relatively narrow remit to set and monitor the objectives of the chief executive, to review the performance and remuneration of the executive leadership team, and to make recommendations to Board as to Board members' remuneration.



Role Profile and Person Specification

Board Member

Reports to Chair of the Acis Group Board

Role Purpose

- As part of our Board, your role will be to contribute to setting our long-term strategic direction; setting the risk appetite and monitor risk; ensuring an effective business plan and budget is in place and remains viable; monitoring and managing performance through internal controls and delegation to committees and ensuring the Board fulfils its duties and responsibilities for proper governance.
- In this role you will be expected to bring forward your own specialist skills, knowledge and experience to help us navigate the highly regulated environments in which we operate.

Key Responsibilities and Accountabilities

The overall purpose of the board is:

- Setting and ensuring compliance with our values, our principles and our strategic objectives, ensuring our long-term success;
- Setting a positive culture, with a strong customer focus and a strong commitment to good governance;
- Ensuring that we demonstrably deliver value for money;
- Providing oversight, direction and constructive challenge to our chief executive and executive leadership team;
- The appointment and, if necessary, the dismissal of the chief executive;
- Satisfying itself as to the integrity of financial information, approving each

year's budget, business plan and annual accounts prior to publication;

- Establishing, overseeing and reviewing a framework of delegation and systems of internal control;
- Establishing and overseeing a risk management framework in order to safeguard our assets and reputation;
- Ensuring that we meet our legal and regulatory obligations and that our affairs are conducted in accordance with generally accepted standards of performance, probity, financial prudence and good practice;

Each board member also has a personal responsibility to:

- Prepare for and attend board and committee meetings, strategy events, training and development events and other external events as required;
- Always act in a fair and professional manner and in our best interests;
- Uphold our values and our principles through high standards of ethical conduct and behaviour and by complying with our Articles, standing orders, code of conduct and financial regulations;
- Contribute to, and share responsibility for, the board's decisions, including its duty to exercise reasonable care, skill and independent judgement;
- Challenge and question in a constructive manner;
- Participate in reviews of Board performance and measures designed

to develop the Board's capacity and effectiveness;

- Assist in establishing and maintaining a strong positive working relationship between the Board, the Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team, other key staff and customer groups.
- Positively promote us amongst our stakeholders and peers always acting as our advocate even when outside of the boardroom.

Person Specification

We know that we're not all superhuman and we recognise that it takes all sorts of people, with differing experience and skills, to create a strong governance culture. We value the contribution that you can make so when it comes to what we're looking for from individuals, we are looking for a good mix of the following competencies:

- Honesty and Integrity – essential in maintaining ethical standards;
- Personal commitment – we want you to help us succeed but we need your commitment to ensure you prepare for meetings, read the papers and make an effective contribution;
- Team working – the board is a collective after all;
- Good Interpersonal Skills – we want excellent communication and listening skills

- Respecting other – we value constructive challenge but expect you to respect others point of view, particularly when decisions may not reflect your preferred approach;
- Able to see the 'big picture' – we know you won't have a crystal ball but ask you to think big;
- Handle conflict and difficult situations – we don't expect them to arise very often;
- Be Positive – we want you to have a positive influence on the Board;
- Analysis and Interpretation – we want you to see the wood for the trees;
- Decision making – an ability to process facts, consider options and reach decisions;
- Chairing – ideal for the Chair and anyone leading a Committee;
- Inspire others, to motivate them and secure commitment;
- Inclusive – we aim to adopt and maintain an inclusive approach that values others for the contributions they can make.
- Qualified practitioners – there's always a role for qualified accountants, solicitors, building professionals, procurement specialists, IT specialists and others, as well as those with experience of operating at a senior level within social housing, schools and further education and/or care and support roles.
- Customer experience – we're always looking for customers that have the lived experience of receiving the services we deliver to help us shape, monitor and improve those services going forward.



We recognise that the prospect of jumping into the role of Board Member may be daunting for some and we have a number of possible options depending on your experience level and time commitment.

The various roles we offer are set out below to help you determine what might be best suited: -

Board Member

Board members are directors of the organisation and are charitable trustees. With this comes some specific responsibilities around maintaining ethical standards; the so called “seven principles of public life”. Additionally, to be a Board Member you have to meet the “fit and proper persons” test set out in legislation and, if you apply to join us, we will ask you to declare that you meet these criteria.

The Group Board generally meets every other month through a mixture of in-person and virtual meetings. They also meet up twice yearly to discuss governance and future strategic direction.

As a Board member you would be expected to participate in up to two separate committees in addition to your role at Board. With the exception of the review and remuneration committee which meets twice per year, committee meetings take place quarterly and are mostly virtual.

Board member remuneration is set at £5,000 per annum which increases should you be elected to a committee chair or more senior role in future.

Board Trainee

For those individuals who do not feel they meet the immediate skills and experiences required of full Board members, we offer a Board Trainee programme in conjunction with Housing Diversity Network [“HDN”].

The two-year training and development programme offers specific training, support and mentoring provided by HDN. As part of the programme, Board Trainees would be invited to attend board/committee meetings to widen their depth of understanding, to assist in their personal development and to learn how to frame questions and engage at Board level.

The remuneration level for our Board Trainees is set at £1,500 per annum with Acis funding the external costs of the HDN programme.

Independent Committee Member

For those individuals who may not be able to offer the time commitment that being a full Board member demands or whose experience is narrower, we have the role of Independent Committee Member. We are always on the look out for interested tenants to join our Operations Committee, where their lived experience of being a tenant and receiving services from us directly, can help us shape, monitor and improve services.

As an Independent Committee Member, you would be required to attend the relevant committee meetings and come along to our Board strategy events. The remuneration level for our Independent Committee Members is set at £3,000 per annum.

Recruitment Timetable

1. Advertisement Closes –
Friday 17th May
2. Interviews –
w/c 10th June
3. Board meeting to approve appointments – *29th July*
4. Co-option to Board (assume approval)
29th July
5. Appointment to full Board Member status (if appropriate)
30th September

How to Apply

To apply please:

- Provide an up-to-date CV which shows your full career history with any breaks explained, please include details of all roles that are currently held – we recommend that this is no longer than three pages;
- Write a supporting statement detailing how you are a good candidate for this post and how you fulfil the person specification – we recommend that this should be no more than two pages;
- Please indicate which type of role(s) you are applying for.
- Please indicate if you are unable to attend the interview dates.
- Applications should be received by 18:00hrs on Friday 17th May 2024
- Please send your application to catherine.kelly@acisgroup.co.uk

*For a confidential discussion about any of the roles, please contact Catherine Kelly, our Head of Legal and Governance on **07817 861221**, or [**catherine.kelly@acisgroup.co.uk**](mailto:catherine.kelly@acisgroup.co.uk)*





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