



## **Board Chair Recruitment Pack**

February 2025



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## **Re: Board Chair Recruitment for BHT Sussex**

Thank you for requesting more details in regards to becoming the Chair of the Board of BHT Sussex. As consultants, The Housing Executive aim to provide you with comprehensive information to enable you to structure your application.

### **Recruitment Timetable & Process:**

**Closing Date:** 9.00 am, Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**Screening Interviews:** wc Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**BHT Sussex Interview:** Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**Final Interview & Presentation:** Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025

- The Housing Executive will conduct screening interviews, via video MS Teams for those candidates longlisted by BHT.
- The second stage will consist of a panel Interview with BHT Sussex, via MS Teams.
- Candidates who are successful following this interview will undertake online verbal/numerical reasoning tests and a personality exercise.
- Prior to final interview, candidates will be invited to an informal conversation with the current Chair of the Board.

### **To Apply:**

Please provide a **CV** (no more than 3 sides A4) together with a **supporting statement** (also no more than 3 sides of A4) and complete the confidential **Monitoring form**. You can download a monitoring form by clicking [here](#).

The **supporting statement** should demonstrate your suitability for the role and address the key elements of the Experience and Personal skills section of the person specification, enclosed in this pack. Please ensure you provide evidence, with recent examples, of your experience.

Send your application (CV/Statement/Monitoring Form) by **9.00 am on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April:**

By **email** to: [rec@thehousingexecutive.com](mailto:rec@thehousingexecutive.com)

**ALL applications will be acknowledged by email or telephone within 24 hours.**

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this post or the process, in confidence, please call Tony Clark or Julie Kellaway, directors at The Housing Executive, on 020 7620 3048.

We look forward to receiving your application - do call if you have any queries. Thanks again for your interest in BHT Sussex.

# Introduction by BHT Sussex Chair of the Board,

**Kelvin MacDonald FAcSS FRTPI CIHCM FRSA**

**Thank you for your interest in becoming our Chair of the Board**

BHT Sussex is a unique organisation, this is apparent in the range of services that we provide and, in the expertise, commitment and passion we bring to the work that we do.

We want to enhance an already strong Board with the skills, expertise and experience that you can bring to this very responsible and rewarding role.

BHT Sussex faces a number of challenges in continuing to provide our unique and inspirational range of services and requires strong but empathetic leadership to guide and support the Board, Chief Executive and management team in meeting these.

In providing that leadership, you will be continuing and building on a fundamental review of what we do and how we operate that has included publishing our Strategic Plan ([BHT-Strategic-plan-edit\\_print.pdf](#)). This has adopted the positive objectives of Sustainability, Quality & Growth.

As you can see from our website ([Home - BHT Sussex](#)) and, in particular, from a brief [review](#) of last year's work and the more detailed guide to our [services](#), we run a multiplicity of linked services. We are a registered housing association and charity with over 700 units of accommodation but, very unusually, we provide a much wider range of services.

These include a day centre for rough sleepers, but we go far wider than that. We run recovery services for drug and alcohol addiction, projects for homeless people with mental wellbeing issues, projects to support clients back into work, , provide young people with accommodation and support and provide advice on a range of housing, immigration and welfare benefits related issues a to seek to prevent homelessness happening.

Thus, a person who may come to us who is street homeless and suffering alcohol addiction may, through using our linked services, finish up in safe and decent accommodation and in employment. A number of our clients become members of our staff and bring their own lived experience to the work that we do.

This journey on which we support our tenants and clients from the streets to a home and job may be unique amongst similar organisations and requires a very special person to lead this work.

You will find this role inspiring, engrossing, stretching, exacting, stimulating and, above all, rewarding. I certainly have.

The work that we do is vital and is increasing in importance and necessity.

Whilst there are many challenges ahead for us, there are also some great opportunities. I hope you will want to join us to add your skills, expertise, experience and commitment to the great team at BHT Sussex.

I am not a member of the Selection Panel but would be pleased to arrange a telephone call with you for an informal discussion about the role. Please contact Julie Kellaway, at The Housing Executive to arrange a call.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Best Wishes,

Kelvin MacDonald





# About Us

BHT Sussex is a highly valued, progressive and trusted charity that provides support for rough sleepers, homes, legal advice and representation, and other specialist services across Sussex.

Our Mission is combating homelessness, creating opportunities and promoting change. We see it as our role to both challenge the causes of homelessness, poverty and marginalisation and to deal with the consequences. Our commitment to equality is linked to our mission. Opportunities must be open to all, irrespective of age, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, physical or mental ability and we will work to advance inclusion and value diversity in all aspects of our work.

We empower and inspire people to overcome homelessness, poverty, addiction and mental ill health by working in partnership across Sussex with local councils, the NHS and voluntary organisations. We have successfully delivered specialist recovery and mental health services, legal advice on housing, immigration and welfare benefits related issues and the provision of general needs and supported housing to marginalised people with multiple and complex needs across Sussex for over half a century. We provide support to more than 10,000 people each year. We work at the centre of our communities across the county and our values, our spirit of co-operation and our commitment to equality underpins everything we do.





Our most important assets are our staff. BHT Sussex employs over 350 members of staff who bring a rich assortment of skills, expertise and professionalism which is an essential ingredient of turning people's lives around.

Our recent achievement of Investors in People Gold and our ISO9001 accreditation are testament to our commitment to delivering continuous improvement and providing quality services to meet client, tenant and regulatory requirements and developing a culture of staff wellbeing and engagement.

We are leaders in our field, helping people move from street homelessness to employment and secure housing. We believe in treating every person as an individual, with their own needs and aspirations. We use the skills, knowledge and dedication of our staff to ensure we provide a tailored service to support clients and tenants take control of their lives to achieve their full potential.

We have a well developed understanding of how to help people, including the importance of preventing problems happening and BHT Sussex was one of the first adopters of a psychologically and trauma informed approach to support.

Our Strategic Plan and objectives over the next three years have three pillars, Sustainability, Quality and Growth. Our Strategic Plan is organic and although based on a period of three years we are an agile organisation that can respond quickly to a changing external environment and find smarter and more relevant ways of working.



# Board Members



**Kelvin MacDonald**

**Chair of the Board of Trustees** (standing down)

Kelvin is a Senior Fellow at the Department of Land Economy, Cambridge and a bye-Fellow of Christ's College. He is currently the specialist adviser to the House of Lords Built Environment Committee and is part-time Senior Lecturer at the School of Applied Sciences at the University of Brighton.

He was a member of the Board of Trustees of Shelter for six years and was the interim Chair of Shelter Scotland.

From 2003 until 2024, he was the Specialist Adviser on planning and related policy to the House of Commons Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee having been appointed its permanent adviser in 2017.

He has run marathons and half-marathons in support of BHT Sussex.



**Sarah Butler**

Sarah had a career in higher education management. Nine of those years were as a senior manager (director of a division) and part of the senior professional services team, at the University of Sussex.

Although she specialised in academic affairs and quality assurance in the last fifteen years, she also had extensive experience of university governance and strategic planning. From 2006 to 2014, she was seconded half time to the national Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), working as an Assistant Director in the areas of standards, quality and enhancement.



**Mary Davies**

Mary has a BA, previous experience in TV and film, and a PGDip in Health Through Occupation.

Mary worked as an Occupational Therapist in physical and mental health throughout North West London and East and West Sussex. Mary is passionate about giving a voice to the most marginalised in our society; those struggling with addiction, mental health and homelessness. .

As a current client of BHT Sussex's Addiction Services, she brings a wealth of lived experience to this role. She believes in the power of a nurturing environment and engagement in meaningful activity to enable individuals to reach their full potential. Currently working as a recovery coach for Cascade Creative Recovery and volunteering with the Recovery Project.



### **Lee Davies**

Lee is an architect with nearly 30 years of professional and practical experience with a comprehensive understanding of the housing and property field.

Lee is a director at HNW Architects, previously a director at Conran and Partners and has lived in Brighton and Hove for over 20 years. Throughout his career, Lee has specialised in social housing and has an extensive knowledge and experience of leading residential projects for both affordable housing providers and local councils. Lee is passionate about creating homes and environments that make a positive contribution to a neighbourhood and make a difference to the quality of people's lives.



### **Melanie Davis**

**Chair of the Operations and Personnel Committee**

Melanie Davis's background is in TV and media, and as a social justice campaigner.

She has been involved with many committees, as a volunteer member and Chair and as an elected Brighton & Hove City Councillor.

The committees included environment, community centres, schools, Citizens Advice Bureau, and several arts organisations.



### **Paul Featherstone**

Paul joined the Board in April 2020, having previously been on the Board at Sussex Oakleaf.

In his early career, Paul was employed in local government and in 2001 was appointed as the Director of Support Services for Martlet Homes, a housing association in Chichester - later becoming Deputy Chief Executive.

Paul guided Martlet's admission into the Hyde Group and became the Group's Director of Risk and Compliance before returning to Chichester as Managing Director of Hyde Martlet. Paul is qualified as a Chartered Company Secretary and has a Master's degree in Employment Law.

### **Gerry Main**

**Gerry Main is a current BHT tenant and former BHT client, and brings a wealth of valuable experience and insight to the Board.**

Gerry is currently a Project Support Worker for Turning Tides, a community-based homelessness organisation that is active across Sussex. He has first-hand experience of the positive role that work and learning can play in recovery.



### **Andrew Rose**

#### **Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee**

Andrew has recently retired to the Brighton area having worked for much of his career as a Technology Director for a major financial institution.

He is a member of the Association of Project Management Professionals, and has extensive experience of project and programme management, investment management, strategic planning and risk management.

Andrew has been involved in a voluntary capacity in combatting homelessness for many years. He has served as a board member at two other Housing Associations, and was also a District Councillor where he was Chair of the Housing Service Committee.

### **Lawrence Santcross**

Lawrence is currently the Chief Executive of Transform Housing & Support, a Surrey based supported housing association.

Prior to this he held Director level positions at both Notting Hill Genesis and the Home Group, where he has held a number of strategic and operational leadership roles. He is also currently a trustee of Surrey Youth Focus and a co-opted member of the Church of England's Pension's Board Housing Committee.



### **Angeline Walker**

Angeline is a Consultant in Public Health, employed by NHS England.

For several years before undertaking Public Health specialty training in London, Angeline worked at Brighton & Hove Primary Care Trust alongside services for people experiencing problems with drug and alcohol use, mental health and those at risk of suicide.

During training and after qualifying, Angeline worked in managing the response to health emergencies and infectious diseases in the South East. Angeline's current work includes supporting NHS England in commissioning evidence-based treatments for specialist services and tackling inequalities in health.





# Role of the Board

**Members of the Board are non-executive directors and charity trustees of BHT Sussex.**

BHT Sussex is both a housing association and a charity delivering a wide range of services and is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing, the Care Quality Commission and the Charity Commission. Board members have full responsibility for BHT Sussex as a company, its financial performance, legal obligations as well as ensuring its charitable objectives are delivered.

**All Board members share responsibility for:**

- setting strategic objectives for BHT Sussex
- agreeing plans to achieve these objectives
- approving the Strategic Plan, Business Plan, budgets, and financial accounts
- taking key investment and policy decisions
- monitoring performance in relation to the agreed plans, objectives, budgets, etc.
- ensuring that finances and other resources are prudently managed and financially stable
- ensuring that BHT Sussex is well managed
- ensuring that appropriate insurance is in place
- working collaboratively to ensure we have an effective Board
- ensuring the affairs of BHT Sussex are conducted lawfully and in accordance with its Articles of Association, charity and company legislation, funder requirements, and the NHF Code of Governance
- helping to promote the interests of BHT Sussex and acting in its best interests
- ensuring BHT Sussex satisfies the Regulators' standards of governance and viability
- ensuring that BHT Sussex has suitable risk management policies in place and that it effectively identifies, mitigates, and manages risks

## Personal Responsibilities of Board Members

**Board members accept a personal responsibility to:**

1. Support the values and objectives of BHT Sussex
2. Understand the BHT Sussex constitution and share collective responsibility for governance documents
3. Devote sufficient time and energy to BHT Sussex business. This includes:
  - preparation for meetings
  - contributing to the decision making of the Board and any committee of which they are a member, drawing from their skills and experience, and sharing responsibility for all their decisions
  - attending all Board and Committee meetings to which they are invited
  - attending strategy away days
  - keeping up to date with client and housing issues
  - assisting senior staff in areas where Board members have expertise
  - other occasional activities as outlined below

4. Participate in the management and control of BHT Sussex activity including:
  - generating strategic options
  - financial and business monitoring
  - establishing plans, policies, and objectives
  - ensuring plans are implemented and evaluating performance
  - reviewing activity and deciding on appropriate actions
5. Form and maintain constructive working relationships with other Board members and to play a full part in the work of the Board as a group
6. Work with BHT Sussex staff to review and develop activity (e.g. as a member of sub-committees/working parties)
7. Represent BHT Sussex positively to all external and internal audiences
8. Abide by the BHT Sussex Code of Conduct for Board Members and Equality and Diversity Policy
9. Register all interests that might have a bearing on BHT Sussex's work and declare any potential or actual conflict of interest as and when they arise
10. Only act in the interests of BHT Sussex and not on behalf of, or representing, any constituency, interest group, or personal interest
11. Support and participate in fundraising activities
12. Undertake training to enhance knowledge and expertise
13. Raise concerns about BHT Sussex affairs, as appropriate



## Board Chair – Role Description

The Chair is responsible for providing effective strategic leadership and management to the Board enabling them to fulfil their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of BHT. In particular, they will -

1. Ensure the efficient and proper conduct of the business of the Board.
2. Establish constructive working relationships with other Board members, ensuring all members are given the opportunity to express their views before important decisions are taken.
3. Ensure that new initiatives, changes of policy, serious problems and matters which involve significant risk or controversy are brought promptly to the attention of the Board.
4. Keep under review the composition and effectiveness of the Board, its committees and the committee structure and delegation of authority and, if necessary, bring to the Board proposals for change.
5. Undertake an appraisal of Board members at least every two years and to participate in the annual appraisal of the Chief Executive.
6. Establish a constructive working relationship with, and to provide support and guidance to, the Chief Executive.
7. Lead on Board succession planning and to support EMT succession planning.
8. Act as the representative of the Board, between Board meetings, in relation to the affairs of BHT.
9. Take appropriate steps to ensure that the work of BHT is carried out in accordance with the principles, policies and strategies approved by the Board.
10. Represent BHT publicly, when appropriate
11. Assist with publicity and fundraising activities and securing new business.
12. Chair the Governance Committee, and to be a member of the Remuneration Committee that makes recommendations to the Board on the remuneration of the Chief Executive.
13. Deal with other matters specifically delegated to them by the Board.
14. Ensure that the Board is involved appropriately in key appointments.
15. Ensure the Board receives appropriate legal advice.
16. Ensure that the Board shows a commitment to Tenant and Client Involvement across the organisation and at Board level.
17. Ensure the Board meets its responsibilities relating to strategic risk management and the mitigation of such risks.
18. Ensure the Board meets its responsibilities relating to health and safety.
19. Ensure the Board meets its responsibilities relating to safeguarding.



# Board Chair – Person Specification

## Essential Characteristics

- Experience of working in the charitable sector
- Board experience with an organisation of similar complexity and size
- Personal skills to work effectively with board members and staff to maintain effective working relationships
- Strong chairing skills that encourage consensus, resolve conflict, motivate members and use time productively
- Effective, broadly based communication skills
- Commitment to BHT’s values including equality of opportunity
- Willing and able to get to know BHT and its work and put in sufficient time for the role
- Commitment to sharing BHT’s values including service user involvement
- Strategic leadership skills and authority, be familiar with working in a dynamic and changing environment and be capable of creating and implementing long term vision
- Financial awareness and ability to understand and evaluate budgets, business plans and annual accounts
- To be familiar with governance and funding issues faced by charities and be able to promote BHT at a senior level
- Demonstrate an understanding of safeguarding in a high risk environment
- Demonstrate passion and commitment to the mission of BHT

## Desirable Characteristics

- Experience of chairing in a similar organisation
- Knowledge of social housing
- Experience of social housing, mental health, addiction and homelessness’ (or something similar)
- Understanding of public and voluntary sector accountability issues
- Strong business skills and commercial aptitude, together with an appreciation of social issues.
- A knowledge of Brighton, Hove and surrounding areas, through work or lived experience

# Board Recruitment and Retention Policy and Procedure

## Policy

It is BHT Sussex policy to recruit and retain a Board of Trustees (the Board) with the necessary skills, experience, and makeup to provide the organisation with vision and strategy, and to direct, control, and scrutinise the organisation's affairs.

All Trustees of the Board must act only in the interests of the organisation and not on behalf of or representing any constituency or interest group. The Board must ensure the interests of BHT Sussex are placed before any personal interests, whether commercial or otherwise. With this in mind, applicants will be asked to complete and sign an Expression of Interest Form to affirm that they are eligible to be a Trustee and a Director.

Payments and other financial benefits to the Board and connected persons are strictly limited in accordance with the Articles of Association.

BHT Sussex has adopted the National Housing Federation (NHF) Code of Governance and aims to abide by its provisions. However, BHT Sussex has not adopted the 6-year limit on non-executive membership.

## Terms of Office

Trustees of the Board will retire at the conclusion of the third Annual Retirement meeting following their appointment and will seek to stand for re-appointment. They may serve for a maximum period of three terms of three years.

A member who has left the Board after serving the maximum tenure may not be reappointed for at least one full year following their departure, subject to considering the wider needs of the Board at that time.

## Reappointment

The reappointment of Board members, after their first or second term will be considered by the Board taking into account the Board member's performance and skills, and the wider needs of the Board at that time.

## Appraisals

An appraisal process for all Board and Committee members, including Chairs, will be carried out at least every two years and will be led by the Chair of the Board.

Appraisals will include an opportunity for Board members to identify any additional ways in which they feel that they can contribute to the work of the Board and to identify any training or development needs to enable them to do so.

As stated above an annual self-assessment will be undertaken by all members of the Board to establish their perception of their own strengths and that of the Board as a whole.

## Induction and Training

New members of the Board will receive an induction led by the Chair of the Board, the Chief Executive and the Company Secretary. A mentor will be offered to new Board members.

Ongoing learning and development opportunities will be considered and agreed annually by the Governance Committee, based on the Board and Committee annual self-assessment, the Board Skills Audit, individual appraisals, and emerging issues.

## Retention

BHT Sussex is committed to attracting, developing, and retaining inspiring and passion driven Board members who are committed to our Values of: Inspiring Change; Delivering Excellence; Empowering People; Collaboration; and Accountability. This will ensure that BHT Sussex delivers quality services which are accountable, effective, efficient, and professional.

Board members are required to become members of one of the two BHT Sussex Committees and are encouraged to attend meetings of both Committees.

Board members will be encouraged to become members of BHT Sussex Working Groups and to contribute their knowledge and expertise in dealing with ad hoc issues and with task and finish and advisory groups.

BHT Sussex will help Board members to engage with, and feel part of, the organisation's services by arranging regular visits to services where they will meet with employees, clients, and tenants, and by arranging opportunities for Board members to network with, and understand, one another.





## Board and Committee Meeting Dates 2025

Meeting	Day	Date	Time
Operations and Personnel Committee	Monday	27 January	3pm - 5pm
Remuneration Committee	Monday	03 March	10am - 11am
Finance, Audit and Risk Committee	Wednesday	05 March	3pm - 5pm
Board	Monday	17 March	3pm - 6pm
Governance Committee	Monday	07 April	2pm - 4pm
Operations and Personnel Committee	Monday	28 April	3pm - 5pm
Finance, Audit and Risk Committee	Wednesday	28 May	3pm - 5pm
Board	Monday	23 June	3pm - 6pm
Board Away Day	Wednesday	16 July	TBC
Operations and Personnel Committee	Monday	28 July	3pm - 5pm
Finance, Audit and Risk Committee	Wednesday	27 August	3pm - 5pm
Board	Monday	22 September	3pm - 6pm
Governance Committee	Monday	06 October	2pm - 4pm
Operations and Personnel Committee	Monday	27 October	3pm - 5pm
Finance, Audit and Risk Committee	Wednesday	26 November	3pm - 5pm
Board	Monday	15 December	3pm - 6pm

Board and Committee meetings will be held in the Lecture Room at Friends Meeting House, with the exception of the Governance Committee, which will be held in the First Floor Meeting Room at London Road, and the Remuneration Committee, which will be held on Teams.

The venue for the Board Away Day will be confirmed at a later date.