

CAMPBELL
TICKELL



Chair of the Board

Recruitment pack

April 2024

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Your application

Thank you very much for your interest in the post of Chair of the Board at Soha.

On the following pages, you will find details of the role and the selection process to assist you in completing and tailoring your application.

You will no doubt do your own due diligence but do read this pack carefully as it will provide you with a good overview of the organisation and the role. After you have done that, please feel free to get in touch with one of us, so that we can talk through your offer and get a sense of how it aligns with what Soha is seeking.

To apply, we will need the following from you:

- A CV. Make sure this confirms your current/most recent roles, including any NED posts (you can sum up earlier roles, say before the last 15 years); tell us about your achievements so we get a picture of your skills and experience; try to keep it to two pages or three at most;
- A personal statement. We want to hear about your motivation, why this role and this organisation, and you will also want to evidence how relevant your offer is to the role specification; again ideally in two to three pages; and
- The declaration form, which is accessible via the role page on our website and includes space to indicate if you cannot attend any of the interview dates.

Please submit your completed application documents using the online form, which is accessible via our jobs page: www.campbelltickell.com/jobs. You will receive an email acknowledgement and see an onscreen confirmation message after submitting your application, but if you have any issues, you can call 020 3434 0990.

The role closes at **9am, Tuesday 7th May 2024**. Please ensure we receive your application in good time.

We are happy to have further discussion, so drop one of us an email at the address below and we can arrange a time to speak.

Kind regards

Bill

Bill Barkworth | Senior Recruitment Associate
bill.barkworth@campbelltickell.com | 07939 555696

Gera

Gera Patel | Partner
gera@campbelltickell.com | 07813 149629

Welcome

I am so pleased that you are considering the opportunity to become the new Chair at Soha; and I hope you have already started to get a feel for the unique space that we occupy across the social housing landscape. Our vision is for strong, vibrant, and sustainable communities where everyone can find a home.

We are a mutual organisation, so, our tenants and homeowners have a meaningful leadership role to play in how we run Soha. This means that tenant and community engagement is very much anchored in all that we do, and we would expect that our new Chair will value that unique perspective. You don't have to come from the social housing sector to understand the importance of tenant voice. But you will be able to appreciate the importance of engagement and empathy with those who we are here to support.

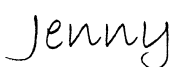
You'll find that we are a well-run and confident organisation, with a culture that is focused on taking the right approaches to ensure the best outcomes. With a strong foundation, we are also comfortable in taking the time to learn and to innovate. Our spectrum of activity encompasses managing our existing portfolio of homes well; careful management of assets and finances to ensure that we can continue to build much needed new homes; and investing in our communities. Effective relationships across our region support those place-making endeavours and we have a very good reputation for being a trusted, purposeful, and collaborative partner, who gets things done.

We would hope that matches the leadership style of our next Chair. We expect that you will have gravitas and empathy. Be able to keep a careful eye on financial value but recognise that your focus on social value will need to be equally robust. Adopt a situational leadership approach, so you can be direct when that may be required, but tactful and diplomatic too. As a leader, you will understand that this role is about balance and nuance.

You'll likely live in or have a connection to our region and be able to appreciate that while Oxfordshire has many lovely places to live, that can often mask the challenges that we have on our doorstep. Rising property values in our area means that delivering affordable housing is getting harder, but demand is increasing. Furthering the health, economic and social wellbeing of those communities that perhaps haven't had the easiest of starts or the best of opportunities requires long term thinking. We take seriously our responsibility to ensure those communities can thrive, contribute, and prosper. If this is where you want to make a contribution, then do read through the rest of this pack, take a look at our website, and ask around about us.

I have had the privilege of caretaking this post over this last year, so I can tell you from that first-hand experience just how rewarding this role is. You get to work with astute, brilliant, and committed people who really care about what they do. I find that hugely motivating, alongside the pride I feel when I hear about and see the impact that Soha continues to make across its neighbourhoods and communities. I hope you'll consider joining us.

Warm wishes



Jenny Ekelund | Chair

About Soha

Soha provides great quality, affordable homes for people who cannot afford to rent or buy in the private sector; and as such we build communities across Oxfordshire and beyond.

We are also fully mutualised. Shareholding membership is open to tenants, shared owners, leaseholders, and staff. Members make the most important decisions at Soha, including changes to rules, Board appointments, and how we invest in resident and community involvement. Members also hold the Board to account and monitor our performance.

Mutuality gives us a unique perspective. It means that we are rooted in our communities and that informs all that we do. How we do things is anchored in [our values](#). They continually shape our thinking and approaches. Our values are to be:

- [Committed](#) - We put residents' wellbeing first and go the extra mile.
- [Invested in local communities](#) - We are passionate about building stronger communities, in partnership with others.
- [Open and honest](#) - We are clear about what we can and can't do and share information so we can be held to account.
- [Mutual](#) - We belong to our residents and communities and make decisions together.
- [We are here for the long term](#)

Our organisation

Soha has a brilliant staff team of around 150 colleagues, who show us every day how much they care about our work and its impact on our tenants, neighbourhoods, and communities. We are proud to have retained our G1:V1 assessment from the Regulator of Social Housing.

You can read more about our leadership team, the [Board](#) and [Executive](#), all highly skilled and dedicated people who are ambassadors for Soha's ethos. Kate Wareing is Chief Executive at Soha Housing. Prior to joining Soha in 2018 Kate spent 10 years working in International Development Organisations, and 10 years working in the UK housing sector. Kate's voluntary commitments include being on the board of PlaceShapers, a UK network of place-based housing associations.

Our [corporate plan \(2021-25\)](#) tells you about how we aim to achieve 'a home for everyone'. You will find amongst our latest [publications](#) the 2023 financial statements and annual report, as well as additional reporting on meeting our ESG commitments, our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and editions of Hometalk, our residents' magazine.

Our background and homes

Our story began in 1997 when local council housing tenants in South Oxfordshire voted to transfer their homes to a new organisation. Over 5,000 homes were moved over and after the transfer, we invested in improving the conditions of the properties we'd taken over.

We now have over 7,000 homes. We have been building new homes, recognising how crucial it is that we continue to support the supply of affordable housing in our region, given unprecedented levels of demand. We have also been involved in important regeneration schemes too that have vastly improved previously blighted areas and we have been able to deliver more affordable homes and improve neighbourhoods.

We built our 2,000th home in 2015 and now have a portfolio of social housing, shared ownership, key worker housing and independent living accommodation, as well as four extra care housing schemes. We have homes in all adjacent districts to South Oxfordshire, and as far east as Chesham and as far west as Royal Wootton Bassett. Our guiding principle is not to develop any further than an hour's drive from our Didcot base.

Resident engagement

As a mutual organisation, residents are at the core of what we do, and that commitment manifests itself in many ways.

The **Board** has places for members who are also residents, to ensure that their views and voices are heard at the highest level in our organisation.

The **Members' Forum** is a key vehicle for ensuring further representation of the views of tenants and shared owners, across all levels at Soha. Made up of elected colleagues drawn from across our tenant and shared owner base, members are elected for three-year terms. Forum members can also be Portfolio Holders which enables them to take a deeper dive with a senior staff colleague, around the service issues that they are particularly interested in.

The **Scrutiny Group** is part of Soha Housing's co-regulatory framework. The Group's role is to act as a critical friend to scrutinise how the Board and Executive team are meeting Soha's aims and objectives and ensuring compliance with regulatory standards. Their work helps ensure a particular focus on driving continuous service improvement.



Role profile

Accountable to:	Soha Board	Line manages:	Soha CE
Purpose of the Chair role, to:			

- Provide strategic leadership to the Board and Soha, ensuring delivery of agreed vision and values.
- Shape the Board’s effectiveness, including supporting an effective relationship between the Board and CE; the Board and wider Executive; and the Board and the Members’ Forum.
- Ensure that the Board delivers its key strategic role in securing the organisation’s long-term viability and sustainability, and in compliance with all necessary regulation.
- Contribute to the external promotion and positioning of Soha.

Key responsibilities:

Strategic leadership:

1. Ensure the Board fully understands and executes its role in taking strategic oversight, so that agreed obligations to Members, tenants/shared owners, our wider community, and other stakeholders, are met.
2. Promote good governance taking care that Soha’s affairs are conducted in accordance with all legal and regulatory requirements and to a high standard of probity.
3. Lead the Board in upholding the commitment to mutualism and to equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring these matters are reflected upon across the Board’s work.

Conduct of Board business:

4. Chair meetings effectively, ensuring Board members are given the opportunity to express their thoughts and that their views are sought before important decisions are taken.
5. Deal with paperwork associated with the function of chairing Board meetings, including development of the agenda with the CE, sign-off of minutes etc.
6. Ensure that the Board delegates sufficient authority to its Committees, Chair, CE, and others to enable the business of the organisation to be conducted efficiently between meetings of the Board and that the Board monitors the use of these delegated powers and any urgency arrangements including ‘Chair’s action’.
7. Ensure that the Board receives professional advice when it is needed either from its senior staff or from external sources.
8. Be available for ad hoc discussions in addition to formal Board and Committee meetings.

Developing an effective Board:

9. Consider the skills and experience of Board members and take an active role in Board recruitment, appraisals, and succession planning, ensuring shareholding Member approval of new Board appointees.
10. Ensure that Board members work in accordance with the Code of Conduct, Code of Governance, Rules, Standing Orders, and Financial Regulations.

Working with the CE:

11. Establish a constructive working relationship with the CE, meeting with them regularly to provide support, advice, challenge, share ideas and views, and to review progress.
12. Ensure that the Board makes proper arrangements to set objectives and appraise the performance of the CE and determine the remuneration of the CE, with support from the Personnel & Remuneration Committee.
13. When necessary, ensure that, in conjunction with other Board members, the CE is replaced in a timely and orderly manner in line with Soha's employment policies.

Promoting the organisation:

14. Be an ambassador for Soha to help further build its brand, reputation, and regional/national profile, in consultation with the CE.
15. Represent the organisation at the highest level as needed, engaging with key stakeholders, regulators, opinion formers and decision-makers, promoting the values and ethos of Soha.



Person specification

Experience and knowledge:

- a. Good governance insight, gained through a prior Board role(s).
- b. Strategic leadership experience, ideally in a customer-facing and regulated setting.
- c. A track record of motivating senior individuals or teams to deliver a strategic vision.
- d. Experience of chairing meetings, with an approach that is inclusive, focused, and purposeful.
- e. Strong commercial and business acumen.
- f. Appreciates the purpose and impact of social housing provision.
- g. Connection to the Oxfordshire area and/or lived experience in social housing would be especially valued.

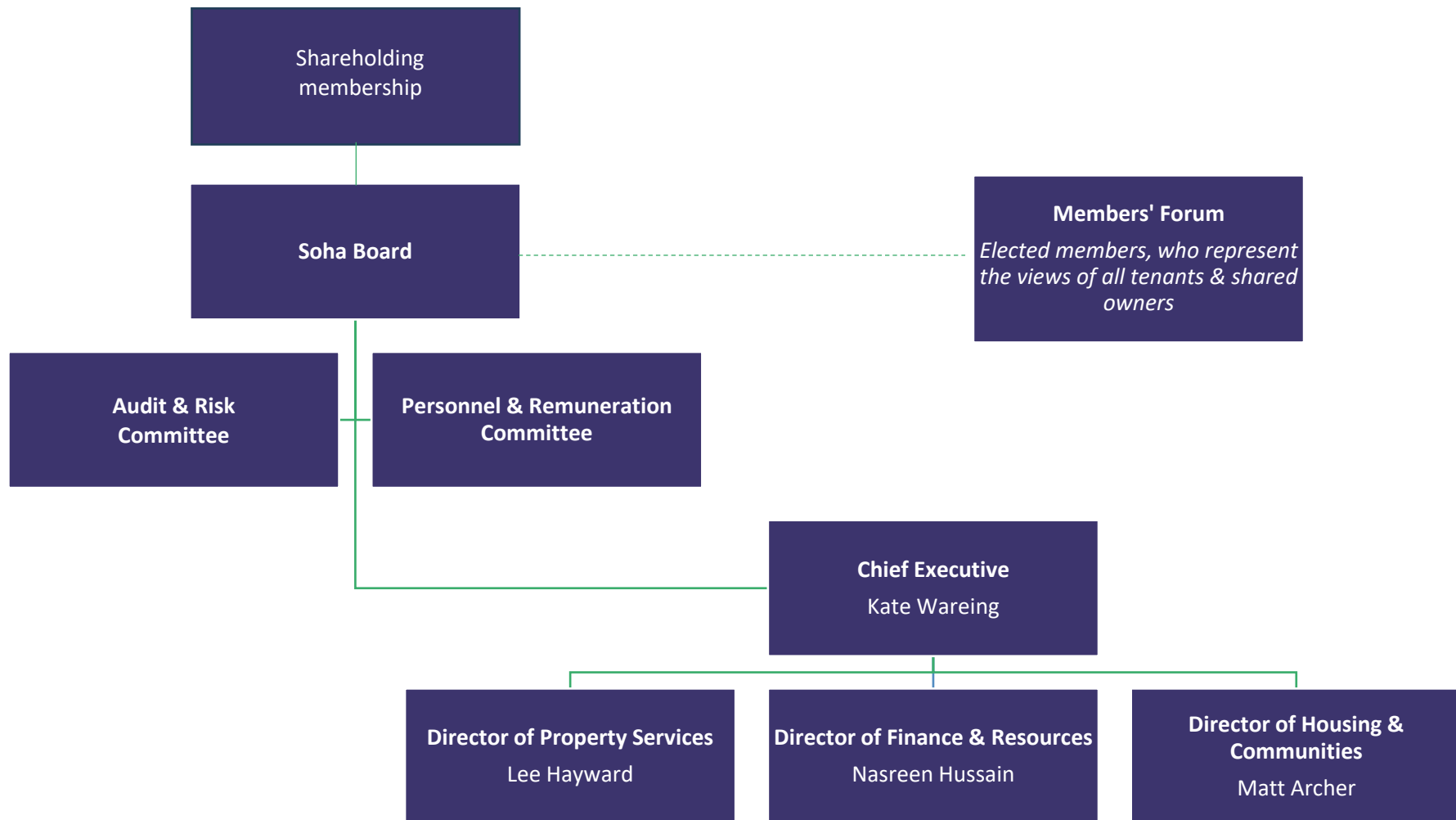
Skills and abilities:

- h. Ability and vision to give a clear sense of strategic direction.
- i. A strong understanding of the respective roles of the Chair and CE, and the Board and Executive.
- j. Excellent communication and inter-personal skills, with a warm and engaging style that builds confidence.
- k. Ability to listen to others' contributions, challenge in a constructive way and build consensus through persuasive discussion.
- l. Ability to ensure the commitment to mutualism and equality, diversity and inclusion runs through all that the Board do.
- m. Ability to be an organisational ambassador, able to develop positive external relationships.

Personal qualities:

- n. Aligns to values of the organisation.
- o. Champions the rights of tenants to access high quality homes and services.
- p. Demonstrates a personal commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- q. A strong leader with a high degree of probity and integrity, and personal and professional credibility.
- r. Leads by example, builds trust with an open style, can be diplomatic and direct, as needed.
- s. Can be measured, thoughtful and considered, especially in the face of adversity.
- t. Committed to accountability, openness, transparency, and equality of opportunity.
- u. Has the necessary time commitment and flexibility for the role.

Leadership structure



Key terms and conditions

Remuneration:

The role is remunerated at £14,662 pa. Reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

The appointment:

The term of office would usually be two three-year terms.

Time commitment:

Typically each year there are eight Board meetings. It is expected that the Chair will also attend Committee meetings from time to time. There are also two strategy days in the year, one of which is overnight, and there are likely to be ad hoc events, training and working groups, as well as regular engagement with the CE and Vice-Chair, checking-in with the Members' Forum and attendance at the Staff Conference. The Chair carries out Board member appraisals annually in March.

Overall, we estimate that the time commitment for the role is around three to four days per month. This is likely to feel busier at the beginning with induction.

Meetings are generally held on weekday evenings, with, on average, two weekend away day commitments per year.

Location:

Our main office is at Royal Scot House, 99 Station Road, Didcot, OX11 7NN, located opposite Didcot Parkway railway station.

Most Board meetings take place in-person at Royal Scot House. Committee and other ad hoc meetings may take place on-line.

Visibility in the role across Soha and its communities is important, given the need to engage with a range of stakeholders including our Members.

Key dates and the selection process

Closing date: Tuesday 7th May 2024 | 9am

We will be in touch to let you know the outcome of your application by the middle of the following week.

First interviews: Wednesday 22nd May 2024 | via Teams

Longlisted candidates will be interviewed by a Campbell Tickell panel, with Gera Patel and Bill Barkworth.

On the same day there will be an opportunity for informal conversation with the CE, Kate Wareing.

We will be in touch to let you know the outcome of the interview by the end of the following week.

Final stage stakeholder sessions: Thursday 13th June 2024 | in person at Soha office

Opportunities to have discussion with Board members; Executive team; a selection of tenants; as well as a 1:1 discussion with the outgoing Chair, Jenny Ekelund.

Final interviews: Thursday 20th June 2024 | in-person | at Soha office

There will be a final panel interview, led by Jenny Ekelund, Chair of the Board; with Peter Nkum, Board member; and Kay Sentance, Members' Forum. Kate Wareing and Gera Patel will also be in attendance.

If you are unable to participate on any of the identified dates for interviews or other sessions, please do speak to Campbell Tickell before making an application.



CAMPBELL
TICKELL



Chair of the Board

£14,662pa | Oxfordshire

At Soha we are proud to be a mutual organisation. Our tenants and shared owners have a meaningful leadership role to play in how we run Soha, and their engagement is anchored in all that we do in our role as a place-making housing provider.

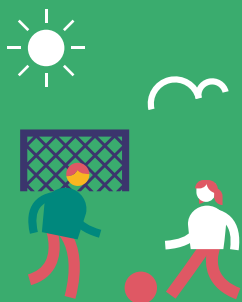
We hope that our new Chair will value our unique position across the social housing landscape. We seek a leader who is astute at balancing financial and social value; someone who has gravitas and empathy; with an ability to be direct and diplomatic, as required. Your sector background or profession is not as important as your good governance insight. But we are interested in the skills that will enable you to add value to a high performing Board and Executive team.

When you get to know us, you will appreciate why alignment to our values and inclusion is essential. We will value your strategic visioning, thoughtfulness, and collaborative approach. It's a brilliant opportunity in a unique setting, so if you seek a truly rewarding leadership role, you should find out more.

You can download a job pack from www.campbelltickell.com/jobs. Please contact **Bill Barkworth**, who will be happy to book in a time for further conversation:

bill.barkworth@campbelltickell.com
| 07939 555696

Closes | Tuesday 7th May 2024 | 9am



CAMPBELL TICKELL

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