



**Evolve
Housing
+ Support**



**Vice Chair Recruitment
Candidate Information Pack
January 2025**

Welcome

Welcome, and thank you for your interest in becoming the Vice Chair of Board of Trustees at Evolve Housing + Support.

I joined Evolve in 2023, impressed by the work of the organisation and the passion of colleagues, board of trustees and supporters within our local communities. We have a proud history of over 160 years providing accommodation and a range of support services to prevent and reduce the effects of homelessness.

We are a place of positive change and growth, providing safe, secure accommodation and personalised support which enables vulnerable people to improve their health and wellbeing, develop life and employability skills and take an active role in their community.

At a time when demand for our services continues to increase, financial pressures make it vital for Evolve to innovate and develop creative solutions to support more people and communities.

We are proud of our history and achievements and will shortly launch a new Business Plan to build on our legacy.

As a registered social housing provider and charity, we have complex governance obligations, new strategic opportunities and future challenges. Our history demonstrates that we are an agile and resilient organisation, one which continues to meet regulative requirements and the multiple and complex needs of our customers. This requires a diverse range skills and experience at board level to provide strategic direction in an ever-changing external environment.

At this critical time of increased scrutiny for registered social housing providers we are seeking a Vice Chair with in-depth understanding of the range of challenges facing the social housing sector with a view to that person potentially becoming Chair in due course. The right person will have strong strategic leadership skills and experience to support the highest standards of governance, board excellence and to ensure that our organisation's performance is managed effectively.

Evolve is a progressive organisation and, whilst its operating environment presents many challenges, it is strongly positioned to take advantage of several exciting opportunities to grow our property and service portfolio.

The ideal candidate will have several years' executive housing and governance experience, sound commercial judgement, and be passionate about ending the causes of homelessness and creating opportunities for vulnerable people to thrive.

We want to build on our strong legacy and achieve our charitable objectives and it is this passion that makes Evolve an inspirational and aspirational place to work.

I invite your application and look forward to finding out more about your interest in Evolve.

Sincerely,

Carmen White, CEO



About Us

Evolve Housing + Support: A place of positive change and growth

Who We Are

Evolve is a leading homelessness charity in London, providing housing and support to over 1,300 people each year.

We believe in building on people's strengths, aspirations and goals to help break the cycle of homelessness and help them move forward with their lives.

Our mission is to help children, young people and adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness reach their potential, and move on to live happy, fulfilled lives.

Our organisation began in 1861 as Croydon YMCA. We became South London YMCA in 2005 when Croydon YMCA merged with the YMCA of Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark. We later merged with Earls Court YMCA in 2013 and Grenfell Housing and Training in 2017.

We now work in the London Boroughs of Bromley, Croydon, Lambeth, Sutton, Merton and Lewisham, and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Our customers and staff include people of all ages, men and women from a diverse range of cultures, faiths and backgrounds.

After consulting with customers, staff and other stakeholders, we rebranded in late 2015, disaffiliating from the national YMCA Federation at that time. We are now Evolve Housing + Support – a brand and name that accurately represents our work and the full diversity of our customers and speaks to their aspirations for the future.



Our Purpose

Our purpose is to make a lasting difference to lives and communities by providing housing, support and community services to enable people to contribute to society and achieve their full potential.

We Believe In:

- Getting involved
- Getting the basics right
- People
- Embracing diversity
- Being ambitious
- Empowering others

We Are:

- Passionate
- Honest
- Creative
- Optimistic
- Determined
- Inclusive



What we do

We offer a programme of support tailored to meet people's individual needs, including housing, employment and skills training, mentoring and counselling. We work with young parents and children at risk of exclusion to build the skills and resilience that can help prevent homelessness. We campaign to end street homelessness. We build affordable homes to help people move on to an independent life.

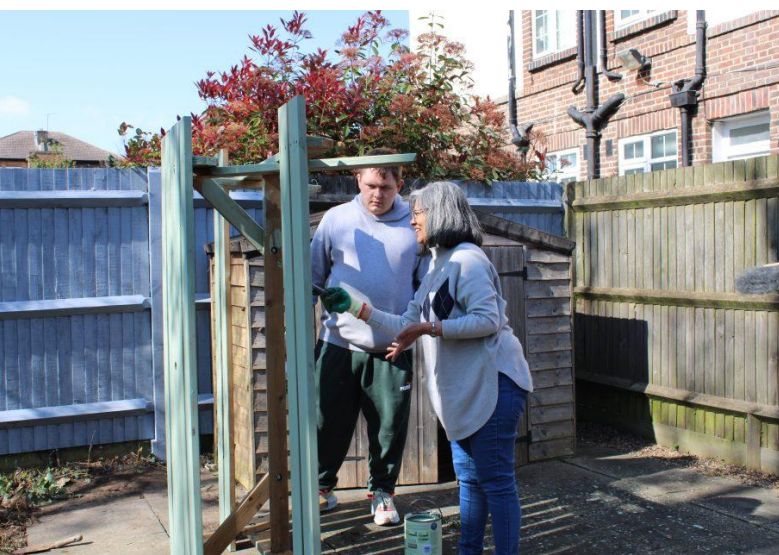
We are a place of positive change and growth for people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds. We empower people who have experienced homelessness to build their independent living skills. Our solution-focussed approach looks at strategies customers can use to overcome problems to achieve lasting impact.

This approach is built into all our housing services as well as our community-based services, including our Work + Learning and Health + Wellbeing programmes, and our Horizons Mentoring scheme.

Our Impact

Our customers

Customers are at the heart of everything we do. We support people to achieve their potential: whether its helping people move on to independent living (80% of our customers gain independent tenancies after they leave us), improve their health and wellbeing (100% of our customers with mental health issues manage them better after our support) or to get into work or training. We've had real success helping people set up their own businesses, move on to university and in some cases, come to work for us.



Sharon's story

'Before I came to Alexandra House, I was very low, I lost a lot of weight and I knew that I could not carry on with the life that I was leading. Now I'm healthy and very happy – I love my studio flat.'

Since moving in, Sharon has taken every opportunity to get involved. She has participated in breakfast clubs, a women's group, cooking and baking workshops, gym classes and karaoke nights.

'I like to keep occupied. When I move out, I will definitely come back to help with the breakfast club as I love to be busy and I get on so well with the staff here.'

With our support, Sharon has grown in confidence and self-esteem and is now ready to live independently. Sharon is now in our step-down programme and is looking forward to moving into independent accommodation.

'The team here have been very kind and supportive. I feel prepared and ready to move on.'

95% of our customers are satisfied with the support they receive, one of the highest results in the sector.



Our Board Members

Paul Infield - Chair

Paul joined the Board in January 2019, becoming Vice Chair in 2020 and Chair in September 2024. He is a barrister specialising in family finance law based at chambers in London, a mediator and family arbitrator. He has been involved in voluntary work all his adult life including as a Samaritan volunteer, as chairman of his synagogue, as a member and then chairman of the Board of Visitors of HM Prison Wandsworth and, most recently, as a trustee and then chairman of Suzy Lamplugh Trust.

Diana Coman - Board member

Diana joined the Board in 2017. She has a background in community engagement, volunteer development, project management and politics, which dates back over 30 years.

She was also the Chair, Trustee and Director of Grenfell Housing and Training until March 2017, and is the Chair and Company Secretary for Christchurch Place Limited. Other roles include being a Trustee and Director of Greenshaw Learning Trust, Chair of Sutton Together and Councillor for Sutton council.

Simon McGrath - Board member

Simon joined the Board in 2017. Simon has a background in human resources dating back over 20 years and has delivered international grand-scale projects. He was also a former school Governor and the Treasurer and a Board member of Grenfell Housing and Training until March 2017. Other roles include Global Head of Compensation and Benefits for Newedge and Willis and a Compensation Manager for KPMG.

Abby Raymond

Abby is a specialist in housing development and regeneration and has held roles in local and national government for over 40 years. At “One Public Estate” Abby worked across London Boroughs and with the GLA, to unlock public sector land for homes and transform public services including health and social care.

She has worked on investment and regeneration projects at the Department for International Trade and at the Home’s and Community’s Agency.

Ana Gonzalez-Iglesias

Ana joined the board in 2023 with a background in finance, real estate and capital markets. She is currently a Managing Director in the Blackstone Real Estate Debt Strategies (“BREDS”) group. She handles BREDS capital markets activity in Europe and Australia.

Before joining Blackstone, she was an Executive Director at Morgan Stanley focusing primarily on commercial real estate loan originations. Prior to that, she focused on Debt Capital Markets transactions across sectors.

Vipan Maini

Vipan is a qualified accountant and has over 25 years of experience in management consulting. He has undertaken numerous programmes related to risk management, revenue generation and operational improvement.

He also has substantial experience working in other charities including the British Heart Foundation and Parkinson's Trust, undertaking projects ranging from business strategy to mentoring senior management.

Colin Maclean

Colin joined the Board in July 2023. For eight years, he was the Chief Executive of Community Links Bromley, a borough-based CVS and Volunteer Centre. He brings experience in achieving executive-level strategy: led/facilitated new social enterprise for Bromley VCSE/secured new contracts; completed new strategy for CLB; and led on numerous successful funding bids.

Rebecca Monk

Rebecca is the Chief People Officer at Softcat plc. She has previously worked in HR and Recruitment roles across the telecoms, IT and film industries. She is passionate about creating highly engaging work environments that enable employees to thrive.

Role Description

Key Information

Job Title: Vice Chair

Remuneration: Unremunerated, all reasonable expenses covered in relation to the completion of duties of the role.

Location: The Board meets either at our Head Office in South Wimbledon, or in central Croydon

Time commitment: Our Board meets 5 times a year, at the end of January, March and June, mid-September and early December. Meetings are usually on a Thursday and run from 5pm to approximately 7pm.
Our Audit Committee meets 4 times a year, usually two weeks prior to the March, June, September and December Board meetings. Meetings are usually on a Thursday from 4pm to approximately 6pm, in either South Wimbledon or central Croydon*. In addition to the meetings above, we usually hold an away day once a year.

Role Expectations

The Vice Chair is crucial to the successful running of the organisation. The Vice Chair, in partnership with the Chair, the Board and the Chief Executive, ensures that the organisation operates effectively, setting its strategic vision and delivering its Business Plan. The Vice Chair assists the Chair in upholding and demonstrating excellence in governance and ensuring that the organisation works within the parameters laid down by its Articles of Association and all regulatory requirements.

Responsibilities

Leadership and governance

- To assist the Chair in ensuring that the Board and the organisation operate effectively in accordance with the Articles of Association, demonstrating the highest standards of governance.
- To assist the Chair in ensuring that all the affairs of Evolve Housing + Support are carried out effectively and in compliance with the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act, Charities Act, the Companies Act and all regulatory bodies.
- To assist the Chair in ensuring effective internal controls are in place and to ensure compliance with internal financial regulations, standing orders and delegated authorities.
- To assist the Chair in ensuring that a strategic Business Plan is produced along with appropriate and robust Annual Plans.
- To assist the Chair in ensuring that the Board comprises suitably skilled and qualified members who understand their roles and responsibilities.
- To assist the Chair in annually appraising all Board Members and ensure their ongoing development.

Internal relationship management

- To assist the Chair in line managing, supporting and giving direction to the Chief Executive by meeting on a regular basis and reviewing regularly the objectives and targets of the post holder.
- To assist the Chair in annually appraising the performance of the Chief Executive.
- In conjunction with the Chair and the Board, to determine the Chief Executive's remuneration and deal appropriately with succession planning and recruitment.
- To hear appeals as required under HR, complaints and other internal procedures.

External relationship management

- To represent and promote Evolve Housing + Support in the wider community, acting as an ambassador for the organisation.
- To network and promote the work, achievements and future plans of the organisation.
- To be an excellent role model exhibiting good governance practices and behaviours.

Key Requirements

Core competencies

- Able to lead and inspire the Board, building confidence in the organisation.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, able to liaise effectively with a wide range of stakeholders and audiences.
- Strategic thinking, able to analyse complex information, demonstrate clear analytical intellect and guide rational decision making.
- Able to lead the organisation through periods of change, including growth in a highly competitive environment.
- Proactively support the values of Evolve Housing + Support, ensuring the Board does so too.

Knowledge and experience

- Governance experience, member or Chair of a Board or similar, with knowledge of good governance practice.
- Experience at Executive level within a registered housing provider.
- Current working knowledge of regulatory requirements for social housing providers and key issues facing the sector.
- Highly respected public profile with a strong track record in a relevant sector, with empathy for our core customer group.
- Business acumen: offering a commercial focus will be an advantage.

Skills and abilities

- Skilled at bringing people together to generate a strong team spirit, able to work collaboratively, building consensus in decision making.
- Able to assess risk and promote risk awareness without being risk averse.

Personal behaviour and style

- Actively role models the professional conduct expected of a Vice Chair and Chair.
- Strong commitment to equality and diversity; social justice and inclusion.
- Passionate about service improvements; strongly champions the right of customers to have influence and access to excellent services.
- Enabling and supportive management style that motivates the Chief Executive, other staff and the Board to deliver the best.

- Has the time and commitment to effectively discharge the responsibilities of the Vice Chair post: based in London or the South East; can offer flexibility and a time commitment of around 1-2 days per month
- Postholder will be required to provide relevant ID, documentation, and background checks or referencing to ensure registration with relevant regulative and banking requirements



How to apply

[Eastside People](#) is supporting [Evolve Housing](#) in the recruitment for this role. Please [click here](#) to apply.

Please use the cover letter (max 2 pages) as an opportunity to add to the information you have shared in your CV and ensure that you cover the following:

- Why you are interested in a Vice Chair role, and why specifically with Evolve?
- How can you contribute to Evolve as our Vice Chair? Please highlight relevant experience and demonstrate how your experience relate to the requirements of the role.

If you would like a call to discuss the role in more detail, please email John at johns@eastsidepeople.org to arrange a convenient time. Having a call of this kind will not influence the success or otherwise of your application.

We want you to have every opportunity to demonstrate your skills, ability and potential. Please contact us if you require any assistance or adjustment so that we can make the application process work for you.

The closing date for applications is **Monday 17th February**. Online competency-based interviews will take place with Eastside People throughout the live recruitment period and until **Friday 21st February**. The two-stage interview process will take place in the following weeks.

Eastside People are fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity and work with our clients to ensure that we recruit inclusively, seeking to address the underrepresentation of some groups of people in leadership teams.



Eastside People

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Eastside People is the trading name for Eastside Consulting Ltd. Company number: 4958922.