



Candidate Pack for Chair

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining us as our new Chair of Homeless Link.

With homelessness increasing rapidly and becoming more challenging to resolve – all while charity funding is becoming ever more stretched, and the political context in which we operate is under continual flux, this is an important and pivotal time to join us as our new Chair. We believe that an end to homelessness is achievable, and this tangible ambition, backed up by evidence and weight from across our membership, gives us the strength to truly change the face of homelessness in the UK.

Homeless Link is the membership body for frontline homelessness services in England. We work to improve policy and practice within the homelessness sector, produce original research and campaign to secure policy change to both reduce and prevent homelessness. Together our members are a movement of over 800 organisations from all across the country, united in a belief that everyone deserves a safe place to live and the support they need to keep it. We fund this through our membership fees, grants raised from trusts and foundations and success of our social enterprises services - particularly In-Form, the UK's leading case management system for homelessness services, which represents half our annual turnover.

As our Chair you will play a key role in our strategic direction and impact. We have a strong Chief Executive, a refreshed strategy and a clear set of values which place inclusion and empowerment at the heart of our work. You will therefore be a strategic and visionary leader, passionate, collaborative and values driven, with experience of influencing change across a diverse range of partners in a complex environment. You will have a solid understanding of governance alongside the ability to skilfully balance diverse perspectives and foster collaboration around shared goals and your demonstrable commitment to the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion will be central to the way in which you work. You do not need to have come directly from the homelessness sector, although you will bring an appreciation of the factors which influence homelessness. Fundamentally you will bring a deep commitment to our belief that by working together we can and will end homelessness.

Being our Chair at Homeless Link, whilst being an unremunerated position, is very much about a commitment to delivering the excellent governance and strategic leadership that Homeless Link requires and supporting and positively challenging the Executive Team to ensure that the organisation thrives and delivers its strategy and manifesto to end homelessness for good. We can offer you the opportunity to work with a diverse range of talented and dedicated people to truly influence the lives of millions of people both now and in the future.

If this excites you, we'd love to hear from you.

Best wishes,

Adele Duncan
Vice-Chair



About Homeless Link

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for frontline homelessness services.

Our vision is a country free of homelessness. We believe that everyone should have a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

As the membership body for the homelessness sector in England, our mission is to develop, inspire, support and sustain a movement of organisations working together to achieve positive futures for people who are homeless or vulnerably housed.

Homeless Link's 800+ members are our greatest strength and at the heart of everything we do. It is with and through them and their beneficiaries that we will achieve our vision of an end to homelessness.

We work to improve the homelessness sector and services through guidance, support, learning and data and case management systems. We lobby, campaign and influence for the change we need to systems and policies, nationally and locally, that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

Our Values

We are a values led organisations, they guide the way the choices we make and the way that we work.

- **Ambition:** we aim high for ourselves and our members to drive innovation and improvement in services and systems
- **Boldness:** we speak up with integrity, confidence and unwavering commitment to equity and justice
- **Curiosity:** we listen and learn to develop knowledge and expertise and to create new solutions grounded in evidence
- **Diversity:** on our journey towards equity, we advocate and strive for diversity and proactive inclusion to improve collaboration and connections within our organisation, our work and our sector
- **Empowerment:** we support each other with compassion and empathy to harness strengths and unlock potential

Our Strategic Ambitions 2024 – 2027

We have just launched our new three-year strategy, in which we have set ourselves three bold ambitions.

1. **Supporting our sector and improving services**
The sector will be stronger, and our members will develop and deliver excellent services to prevent and end homelessness.
2. **Influencing change to systems**
Together we will influence government, agencies and partners at all levels to act in a holistic, collaborative and consistent way to prevent and end homelessness for good.
3. **Developing to meet the challenge**
Homeless Link will be an effective, innovative, agile and sustainable national membership body, able to meet our members' needs and modelling best practice as an organisation.

What we do

Sector development

Member Services - Our member services team works directly with our 850 members across England, through membership support, events, conferences, training, coaching and consultancy, to improve homelessness and supported housing services.

National Practice Development - Our national practice development team works with organisations across homelessness and related sectors to develop new approaches and improve current practice to supporting people out of homelessness.

National Partnerships - Our partnerships team works directly with our members across England, through Communities of Practice, membership, local networks, events and consultancy, to improve services and end rough sleeping and homelessness.

Social change

Policy & Research - Our policy and research team works to influence change by making a compelling case to policy makers at all levels, drawing together the strongest evidence, and identifying solutions that prevent homelessness.

Communications & Advocacy - Our communications and advocacy team seeks to raise awareness, effect social change and lead campaigns for action to end homelessness. The team manages national homelessness information services including Homeless England.

Business and enterprise

In-Form - In-Form is our online case management system developed for the homelessness sector and used by over 280 of our members to manage all their work with the people they help. Income from this social enterprise represents around half of Homeless Link's turnover and staff.

Grants and Investment - Our grants and investment team manages our grants programmes, supports our members who have been funded by our Social Investment Fund and helps members develop enterprising trading models.

CHAIN - CHAIN is a multi-agency database recording information about people sleeping rough and the wider street population in London. The system, which is commissioned and funded by the Mayor of London and managed by Homeless Link, represents the UK's most detailed and comprehensive source of information about rough sleeping.

Finance & Resources

Central Services - Our central services, finance and HR team keep the wheels of Homeless Link turning by keeping our office running smoothly and making sure our staff have everything they need.

Making Every Adult Matter coalition (MEAM)

MEAM - We are the host partner for the MEAM coalition project of national membership charities working in the areas of homelessness, mental health, criminal justice and substance misuse. MEAM was formed to improve policy and services for people with multiple complex needs.

Structure, governance and leadership

Homeless Link is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Articles of Association. Homeless Link Social Investment Limited is a wholly owned trading subsidiary of Homeless Link. The Board are the directors of the company and trustees of the charity. Our articles of association require the Board to appoint a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer.

The Board of Trustees of Homeless Link comprises a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 17 trustees, who are also directors of Homeless Link. This is comprised of:

- up to 10 trustees elected from amongst our membership (currently 6)
- up to 7 independent trustees including up to 2 trustees with lived experience of homelessness (currently 6)

Trustees are elected or appointed for an initial term of 3 years and may be elected or appointed for further periods of 3 years. No trustee may serve for more than 9 years continuously.

The Board has recently reviewed its sub-committee structure and established three sub-committees, to undertake detailed oversight in those areas and to make recommendations to the board. It establishes task and finish groups or sub-groups as and when required. The sub-committees are:

- Audit & Risk,
- Resources & Enterprise, and
- Remuneration & Nominations

The efficacy of the new committee structure is due to be reviewed after a year of operation.

The Homeless Link Board nominates directors to Homeless Link Social Investment Ltd (HLSIL). At present two Homeless Link board members have been appointed as Directors of HLSIL.



Main duties and responsibilities of the Chair

Purpose

In addition to their responsibilities and duties as a trustee and director of the company the Chair provides strategic leadership to the Board, working with and guiding the Chief Executive, leading on the development of an agile and aspirational organisation and collectively ensuring the delivery of the organisation's vision, mission and charitable objects.

Strategic Leadership

- Set the vision and strategic direction for a high profile national membership organisation.
- Offer leadership to the organisation and Board that ensures clear strategic direction and impact through effective investment and deployment of resource.
- Work with the Executive to create a positive culture: role model, champion and hold others to account for demonstrating the behaviours that underpin our ethos, be a role model of the social ethos and values of the organisation building effective relationships between the board and key stakeholders such as the staff team and Homeless Link members.
- Act as an internal and external ambassador for Homeless Link building strong relationships across the organisation. Where appropriate be available to speak at Homeless Link internal and external conferences and events, with members and externally with policy makers and wider stakeholders.
- Work with the Chief Executive and Executive Team in their leadership and management of the organisation and build a relationship of mutual respect and trust with the Chief Executive, ensuring open and regular communication.
- Co-ordinate the recruitment and induction of the Chief Executive, should the need arise.
- Effectively manage the overall performance of the Chief Executive, conducting the Chief Executive's annual appraisal. Ensure that appropriate development is provided and any issues of underperformance are addressed.

Effective Governance

- Ensure high standards of governance by periodically reviewing Board effectiveness and compliance with the Charity Governance Code and ensuring any areas of weakness or non-compliance are addressed
- Set the risk appetite of the Board and ensure that major risks and opportunities are regularly reviewed and addressed.
- Develop the culture knowledge and capability of the Board. Ensure strong Board member performance through appraisal, attendance, appropriate participation and debate. Ensure that the development needs of individual members are addressed.
- Ensure that the Board has appropriate advice from internal or external specialists to take informed decisions.

Managing Board Business

- Chair meetings effectively and efficiently, ensuring a high-quality debate and well-informed decision-making, in the best interests of Homeless Link
- Ensure that meetings are inclusive and respectful spaces in which all trustees contribute, are engaged, and take collective ownership of decisions made, regardless of individual position.
- Work closely with Committee Chairs to ensure their delegated remits are met.
- Work closely with the Chief Executive to ensure that Board agendas, meetings and away days are well-planned, reflecting the responsibilities of trustees and the Board and that appropriate actions and decisions are implemented.

Person Specification

Knowledge and Experience

- Credible personal track record of providing inspiring and engaging strategic leadership; it is likely that you will have held a non-executive leadership role previously, as Chair, Vice or Committee Chair or as Senior Independent Director.
- Clear understanding of the role of Chair in delivering effective strategic leadership to an organisation, and of leading and developing a strong and diverse Board.
- Direct experience of working with and influencing with and through leaders of organisations across sectors or systems.
- Good appreciation of homelessness either professionally or through lived experience.
- Strong understanding of the principles of good governance and financial oversight, and of the respective roles of the Board and Executive in working together.
- Clear appreciation of the role of a sector membership organisation and our role in achieving impact for our members.

Skills, abilities and personal attributes

- Clear strategic vision with the ability to see the bigger picture.
- Personal and professional credibility that will command confidence across a wide range of stakeholder interests.
- Excellent chairing skills with the ability to lead and facilitate discussion and debate at meetings.
- An inclusive style with the willingness to welcome diverse opinions and challenge constructively.
- Emotionally intelligent with highly developed influencing skills and effective communication and interpersonal skills.
- Entrepreneurial approach – balancing commercial and social business aims and encouraging innovation and creativity in others.
- Ability to represent and promote the organisation – opening doors and raising awareness of the issues of importance to our members.
- Demonstrable commitment to ensuring equity, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of your work.
- Demonstrable commitment to our mission and a positive desire to end homelessness.
- Personally flexible and with the required availability to undertake the role.



Terms of Appointment

Remuneration

This is an unremunerated role.

Homeless Link will pay for any reasonable expenses incurred, such as travel to and from all meetings and attendance at conferences and away days. Refreshments and a sandwich lunch is provided at all meetings.

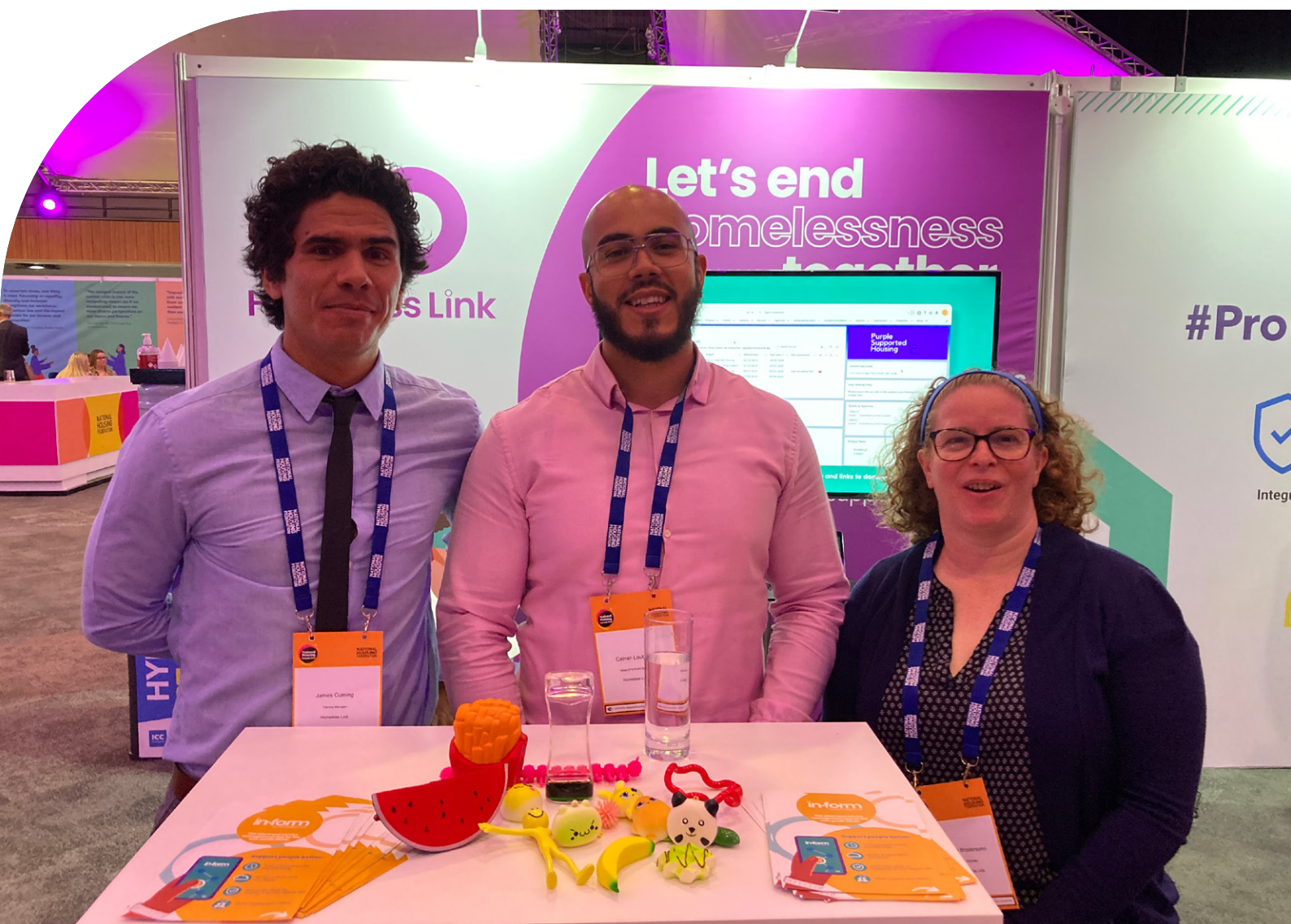
Time Commitment

It is estimated that the role requires approximately 2-3 days per month which comprises:

- Chairing four Board Meetings per year
- Chairing the Board away day and Annual Membership Meeting
- Membership of Remuneration & Nominations Committee (meetings as required approx. two per year)
- Some sub-committee attendance as Board Chair
- Line Management of the CEO
- Internal and external events and networking as required

Location

Due to the national nature of the organisation, location of the Chair is flexible. Most Board meetings and events are held in London.



How to Apply

We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact Juliet Brown at juliet.brown@starfishsearch.com and we will be happy to arrange a call. To make an application, please go to <http://starfishsearch.com/jobs/chair-hl> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- your CV (no more than three sides)
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Closing date:	2nd September 2024
First stage discussions:	w/c 9th and 16th September 2024
Agreement of the shortlist:	mid September 2024
Final interviews:	w/c 30th September 2024

Forward dates

A number of events and meetings have already been scheduled which candidates may wish to note.

Board away day:	8th & 9th October, Oxford
Annual leadership conference and membership meeting:	4th & 5th December, Stratford upon Avon
Annual staff conference:	9th December, London
December Board meeting:	18th December, London

