



# CANDIDATE PACK FOR HEAD OF OPERATIONS

# WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the new Head of Operations role at the Building Societies Association (BSA), we are delighted to welcome applications for this significant position at the heart of our organisation.

At the BSA, we are proud to be the influential voice for all 42 UK building societies in the UK, including both mutual-owned banks, as well as seven of the largest credit unions that make up the National Credit Union Forum, together serving around 26 million customers in the UK. Our purpose is to champion and support our members – working closely with Government, we push for the best outcomes from new and changing regulation and legislation. Our mission is to ensure that building societies and credit unions thrive as an essential part of a diverse financial services sector.



This is an exciting and significant time to join BSA as the building society sector reaches its 250th year, and against a changing government landscape where support for the sector is on the rise. We have talented and committed team, and a purpose-based culture, that supports and convenes the sector, providing policy expertise, data and insight as well as organising events and training to support best practice and knowledge exchange.

We are now seeking a new Head of Operations to join the BSA's senior leadership team, reporting to the current Chief Executive, and who will take the lead in welcoming a new CEO in early 2026. This is a pivotal appointment, at an important time in our journey, and the postholder will play a key role in the overall strategic direction of the organisation. This role comes with considerable responsibility and autonomy – the successful candidate will have principal responsibility for the BSA's finances, people, property and operational efficiency.

As a senior leader, you will bring a background across financial management, HR, and estates, alongside the big picture thinking necessary to lead and develop key operational functions – importantly, you will be able to balance strategic leadership with hands on delivery. You may also have led teams through change, and will secure personal credibility with stakeholders quickly. With strong negotiation skills, you will work flexibly and at pace; at the same time, you will be skilled in creating and maintaining a high-performance and purpose-driven culture, inspiring and influencing at all levels, and working collaboratively with our hard-working teams.

If you believe you have the skills, qualities and attributes we are seeking, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

**Robin Fieth**  
CEO, Building Societies Association



# ABOUT US

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The Building Societies Association champions, represents and supports mutual lenders and deposit takers across the UK, and has done so since 1869. We are highly respected for our representational advocacy to external bodies such as government departments and financial services regulators. As well as proactively campaigning on behalf of the sector, we frequently respond to consultation papers and provides information and advisory services to its Members and Associates.

In addition to the BSA's 49 Members it has approximately 40 Associates (organisations which have an interest in the sector). We currently have 27 staff in the areas of policy/representational lobbying, economics and research, external affairs, member communications, commercial activities and corporate services.

The BSA is not a regulator itself, nor do we deal with complaints about building societies - these are looked after by the Financial Ombudsman Service if they cannot be resolved by the Society itself. The BSA is an unincorporated not-for-profit organisation.

## OUR PURPOSE

To champion and support all our mutual members

## OUR GOALS

- We want our mutual members to be valued as an essential part of a properly diverse 21st century UK financial services sector
- We want the support provided by the BSA to be valued as helping all our mutual members to thrive

## OUR PARTNERS

Among others, we work in partnership with

- UK Government
- Parliament
- Regulators including the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) and Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)
- Other mutual and co-operative trade bodies in the UK and internationally
- And, above all, with our members

## WHAT ARE BUILDING SOCIETIES AND CREDIT UNIONS AND WHY IS THE BSA IMPORTANT?

Building societies and credit unions are customer-owned mutual organisations. Their culture is focused on their members and communities and this influences their day-to-day decisions. With no external shareholders to pay, mutuals are able to provide higher levels of service and more competitive products.

Building societies serve almost 26 million consumers across the UK and have total assets of nearly £500 billion. Together with their subsidiaries, they have helped over 3.6 million families and individuals to buy a home with mortgages totalling over £366 billion, representing 23% of total mortgage balances outstanding in the UK.

They are also helping over 23 million people build their financial resilience, holding over £342 billion of retail savings, accounting for 18% of all cash savings in the UK. With all of their headquarters outside London, building societies employ more than 51,500 full and part-time staff. In addition to digital services they operate approximately 1,300 branches, holding a rising share of financial services branches in local communities.

Building societies and credit unions are owned by their members. Borrowers and savers automatically become a member when they take out a loan, a mortgage or open a savings account.

While their businesses must be run as rigorously as any plc bank on the high street - societies operate in the same regulatory environment - their purpose is different. A plc must operate to the benefit of its shareholders, a mutual operates to the benefit of its members and takes business decisions in a different way because of this.

## NCUF CREDIT UNIONS

NCUF credit unions serve 288,000 members according to their respective common bonds\* which is 20% of the credit union total in Great Britain.

### The mutual difference

Building Societies Association

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#### Building society Key trading figures

April 2024 – September 2024

- 29%**  
gross lending market share
- 72%**  
of all net lending in the UK
- 34%**  
share of increase in savings balances

### Working for their members and their communities

Few complaints and fines

Lower mortgage arrears  
0.32% of balances compared to 0.74% at banks

From 14% to 30% of all high street branches since 2013

Helping people build financial resilience

Helping more first-time buyers

#### Better customer service

YouGov – November 2024. Percentage of customers agreeing with statements (excludes those who said don't know)

Statement	Building societies	Banks
Good customer service	~92%	~88%
Offers competitive rates	~85%	~73%
Recommend to friends & family	~84%	~73%
Trust to act in my best interests	~80%	~76%

#### Better interest rates

Building societies offered higher savings rates than the major banks.  
In 2023 savers received **£2.1 billion more** in interest than they would have got at major UK banks.

Year	Interest Difference (£m)
2016	~500
2017	~700
2018	~900
2019	~900
2020	~500
2021	~500
2022	~1100
2023	~2000

#### Growing mortgage & savings balance

Mortgage Balances (blue line), Savings balances (red line)

# JOB DESCRIPTION

**Title:** Head of Operations

**Team:** Operations

**Reports to:** Chief Executive

**Supervisory Responsibility:** HR Manager and Finance Manager

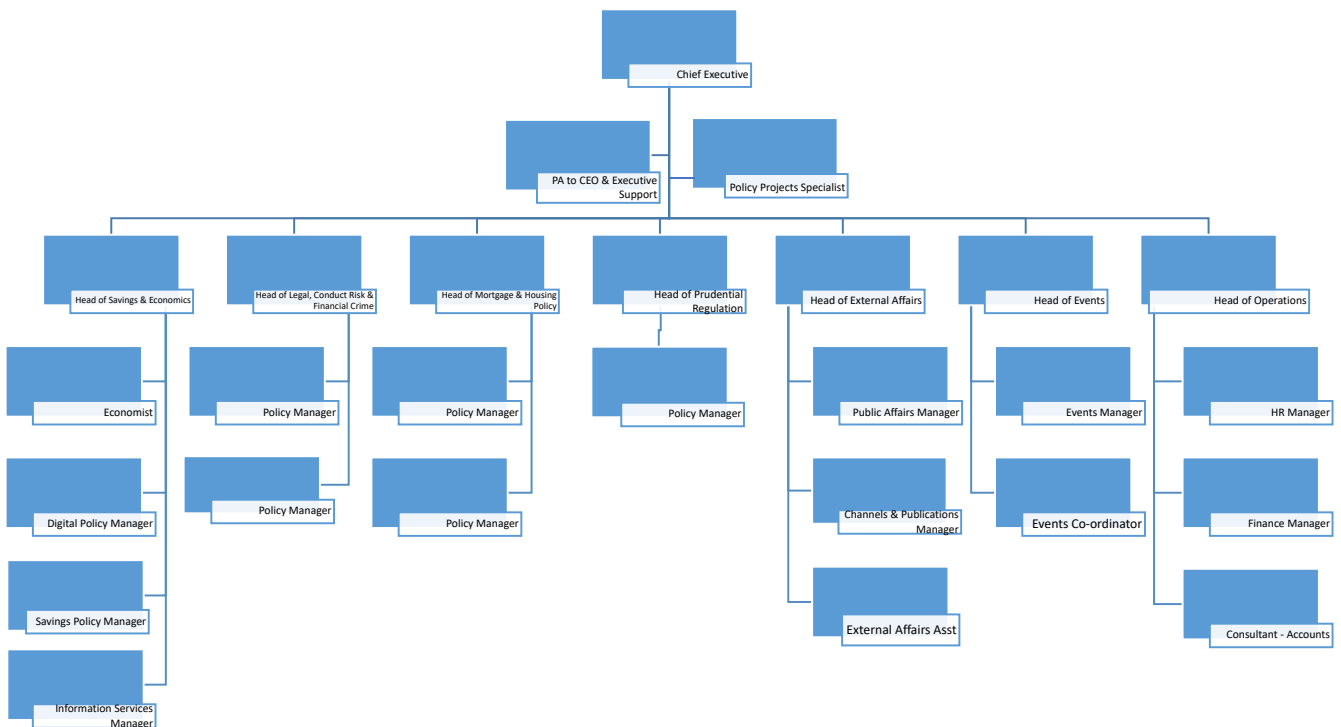
## GENERAL PURPOSE

To support the Chief Executive as necessary and lead and manage the work of the BSA’s internal operations including people (including talent development and working practices), property, pension schemes, finances and office processes and procedures (including health & safety). Secretary to the BSA Audit Committee and Remuneration & Nominations Committee, Financial Adviser to BS Trust Ltd and Director of BSA Property Limited. To oversee the provision of aggregate information to members on HR related issues and to represent the views of members to outside organisations.

The BSA currently has 27 staff in the areas of policy/representational lobbying, economics and research, external affairs, member communications, commercial activities and corporate services.

## OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE

We are looking to recruit a Head of Operations to join the BSA’s senior leadership team, in response to the existing jobholder’s forthcoming retirement (in Summer 2025). Reporting to the Chief Executive, this is a challenging position with considerable responsibility and autonomy. The successful candidate will have principal responsibility for the BSA’s finances, people (including talent development and working practices), property and operational efficiency, while also playing a key role in the overall strategic direction of the organisation.



## PRINCIPAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Support the Chief Executive in delivery of the BSA's strategy and take responsibility for leading on particular aspects as agreed with the Chief Executive from time to time
- Manage the work of the team (HR, finance, and office services, including health & safety) and oversee the BSA's recruitment, remuneration, performance management, succession planning and employee development
- Recruit and select senior BSA positions in conjunction with the CEO and Remuneration & Nominations Committee on short lists and final selection
- Establish BSA budgets, in conjunction with the Chief Executive, with budgetary responsibility for HR and other office services. Review BSA income and expenditure, against budgets, on a quarterly basis and revise forecasts, and cash-flow, as necessary
- Prepare year-end financial statements for the BSA, BSA Property Limited, BSA Pension Scheme, BSA Pension Trustees Ltd and BS Trust Ltd. Manage internal and external audits and Independent Examiners ensuring accounts meet regulatory requirements. Present papers to the relative Boards
- Act as Secretary to the BSA Pension Scheme (currently in the final stages of buy-out and wind-up). Deal with member communications and oversee monthly pension payroll, liaise with the Scheme Actuary and Board on annual pension reviews and work with professional advisers to ensure projects (including buy-out) are on track for completion
- Lead on the development and implementation of HR policies and procedures ensuring that they comply with legislation and best practice
- Provide advice to members (including through webinars), ensuring that guidance and information is current and reflects best practice. Oversee the provision of HR surveys on labour turnover and sickness absence, executive remuneration, pensions and terms and conditions of employment
- Act as Financial Adviser to the BS Trust Limited and ensure grants are paid in accordance with the Directors' agreement and that funds are available
- Oversee all aspects of the office's maintenance, processes, policies and procedures including the property's lease, insurances, health & safety and service charges. Liaise with the landlord's agents and with professional advisers, and BSA Council, as necessary
- Act as Secretary to the Audit Committee, Remuneration and Nominations Committee and panels. Attend BSA Council to present on issues of policy, pensions, property and the BSA's finances

## ADDITIONAL DUTIES

- Contribute to the overall management of the BSA as a member of the BSA's senior management team

**Other reasonable duties as may be required.**



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

We are looking for someone who will work in a measured and consensual manner and who has experience of working effectively with colleagues as well as external advisers. You will have a commitment to high integrity, be commercially astute and a strategic thinker with a delivery and outcomes-led approach. Collaborative in your nature, you have excellent oral and written communication skills and are a good listener. You are methodical, tenacious and patient, and an effective champion of positive change, committed to our values-led and purpose-driven culture. Importantly, you embrace the challenge of operating in pursuit of long-term goals.

## KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED

- Senior management experience with proven leadership, motivational and teamwork skills
- Articulate and confident in dealing with members and external stakeholders
- Ability to deal with sensitive and confidential matters appropriately
- Good verbal and written communication skills to effectively liaise with employees and stakeholders
- Ability to take primary responsibility for particular major areas of policy work
- Strong negotiation skills
- Ability to work to strict deadlines with a self-motivated, flexible and proactive approach
- Good proven knowledge of accounting principles and practices, HR related issues and legislation and office processes

## PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

At least 10 years' experience at management level



# TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

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## SALARY

Very competitive.

## BENEFITS

- Pension - matched employee contribution up to 7% employee/12% employer
- Life Assurance – 4 x annual salary
- PHI cover
- Bupa medical cover for individual and spouse
- 26 days annual leave per year – raising to 27 after 2 years, 28 after 5 years, 29 after 7 years and 30 after 10 years.
- 3 extra days at Xmas (not guaranteed but given to staff the last 10 years)
- Location: 23 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6UJ (hybrid working policy)

The BSA is committed to supporting a positive work-life balance for its employees and operates a hybrid working policy, enabling its staff to work from home for up to 50% of the time.

As an equal opportunities employer, the BSA is committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and does not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, socio-economic group or marriage and civil partnership.

We aspire to create and support a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join our organisation.

Staff communication and training are priorities for the organisation, and the BSA is proud to be a signatory to the Living Wage Foundation, the Women in Finance Charter and the Good Business Charter.



## HOW TO APPLY

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We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/bsa-hea-oper/> 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 skills 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:** Friday 21st March 2025

**Preliminary interviews:** w/c Monday 31st March and early w/c Monday 7th April 2025 (tbc)

**Final interviews:** Stage one: Tuesday 15th April 2025

**Final approval:** Stage two: Friday 25th April 2025

