



Metropolitan
Thames Valley

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

APPOINTMENT BRIEF
JULY 2019

Saxton Bampfylde

Dear applicant,

Thank you for interest in Metropolitan Thames Valley and the role of Chair.

The profile of social housing and the role of housing associations has rarely been higher and, as a sector, our capacity and ambition to help address the housing crisis and meet a wide range of needs in communities is ever growing.

Following a recent merger, Metropolitan Thames Valley (MTVH) became one of the largest social housing providers in the country, with over 57,000 homes across London, the South East, East Midlands and East of England.

We are proud of our rich history as well as the modern and bold approach we take today; we are dedicated to providing homes at different levels of affordability, including social and affordable rents and shared ownership. We are a major developer of new homes and we offer housing for market sale and market rent; our innovative Fizzy Living brand was set up to disrupt the private rented sector, make a change and set a new rental standard.

We are also known for our distinctive work in building thriving and diverse communities, and in Clapham Park we are delivering one of the largest estate regeneration projects in Europe. Together with our partners, residents and wider stakeholder community, we are excited about the mix of new and refurbished homes, schools and community facilities, green spaces and modern areas for businesses and shops that we are helping create in this vibrant part of London.

With a turnover of around £400m and 1,800 employees spread across a wide geographical area, our organisation is already large and complex. Our teams are applying their significant talents and energy to a wide range of activity, and delivering against stretching commercial, strategic and operational objectives. Underpinning everything we do is our belief that everyone should have a home and the chance to live well.

“We are known for our distinctive work in building thriving and diverse communities ...”

Early in 2020 after 6 years of outstanding service our Chair, Paula Kahn, will be standing down and so we are starting the process of finding her successor. The role of Chair is a critical one for MTVH as we continue the work of post-merger integration, improving services and efficiency, growing our development programme to 2,000 new homes a year, nurturing our people, and creating a truly customer-centric organisation, trusted by residents and equipped to provide the high quality service they should expect.

Our Chair will play a key role at this critical time of shaping the newly merged organisation, building and shaping the new Board, pushing and enabling us to innovate further, and to be prominent in influencing and tackling major housing and social care issues. We do hope you will read on to find out more about this rare opportunity.



Ingrid Reynolds
MTVH Board member
and Chair of Recruitment Panel

“MTVH is one of the largest social housing providers in the country, with 57,000 homes...”

MORE ABOUT US

Metropolitan Thames Valley (MTVH) is an organisation which provides homes in London, the South-East and the East Midlands.

MTVH was created in 2018 through a merger of Metropolitan Housing Trust (founded in 1964) and Thames Valley Housing Association (founded in 1966), we manage and administer approximately 57,000 properties and are one of the largest affordable housing providers in the country. We are a member of the G15 group of London housing associations and are the largest provider of affordable housing in Derby.

We deliver housing to a wide range of people and through a variety of tenure types, including;

- social and affordable rented homes
- shared ownership - delivered through our SO Resi brand <https://soresi.co.uk/>
- market sale
- market rent - delivered through our innovative Fizzy Living brand www.fizzyliving.com/
- key worker housing



We also offer a range of care and support services. Our specialist areas include older people, mental health and transitional services which provide intensive support to marginalised or vulnerable people.

We deliver training programmes, events and activities for our residents, designed to boost employment opportunities and foster stronger communities.

KEY FACTS 2018/19:

- Turnover £411m
- New homes delivered: 1,037
- Investment in existing stock: £118m
- Homes development pipeline: 6,506
- New annual business income in care and support: £1.2m
- Invested in acquiring land and building new homes: £361m
- Governance rating: G1, Financial viability rating: V2
- Number of customers supported into employment and training: more than 1,800
- Stonewall Top 200 Employer Rating: 154 (MHT figure)
- Proportion of Repairs fixed first time: MHT 83.3% and TVH 78.1% (No consolidated MTVH figure)
- Credit rating from Standard and Poors: A

For more information about our organisation, and our commitment to putting people at the heart of our culture, please visit our website; <https://www.mtvh.co.uk/about-us/>

“This was a landmark year in which we completed our partnership transaction in October 2018 to form the new group. Together, we are stronger and more resilient, with the capacity to do much more. Integration plans are on track and the Board remains confident in our ability to fulfil our strategic objectives” - Geeta Nanda, Chief Executive

WHERE WE'VE COME FROM

Passengers stepping off the Empire Windrush in 1948 at Tilbury Docks would have encountered a very different country to the one we live in today. Bombing during the Second World War had inflicted widespread damage to urban areas, construction materials were in short supply and rationing continued.

Invited to Britain to fill post-war labour shortages, many of these Caribbean migrants had to live in squalid conditions without basic amenities. Like others on low incomes, they also faced insecure tenancies and homelessness.

It was against this backdrop that our legacy organisations, The Metropolitan Coloured People's Housing Association and Thames Valley Housing, were founded, with a mission to provide safer and more affordable homes in our inner cities.

As time went by, the organisations grew in size and diversity. In the 1980s, with home ownership central to Government housing policy, both housing associations introduced shared ownership schemes, making it easier for people to get a foot on the housing ladder. Metropolitan went on to provide care and support services, while Thames Valley Housing began to provide keyworker accommodation for NHS Trusts and student accommodation.

The new century saw Metropolitan take over the management and regeneration of the Clapham Park and Ashmole estates in Lambeth, while Thames Valley Housing opened its largest private finance initiative scheme in Woking. In 2012, Thames Valley Housing launched its market rent business, Fizzy Living.

The two organisations joined in October 2018 and together, we want to improve the services we provide to customers, do more in our communities and build a better future for generations to come.



WHERE WE'RE HEADING

As a new organisation, we're more resilient and financially stronger with greater capacity and commercial acumen. We're regularly stress testing the business to ensure we're well poised to meet any challenges posed by the external environment. We aim to better serve our customers and communities and respond to the changing (and varied) needs of local housing markets with new and innovative solutions.

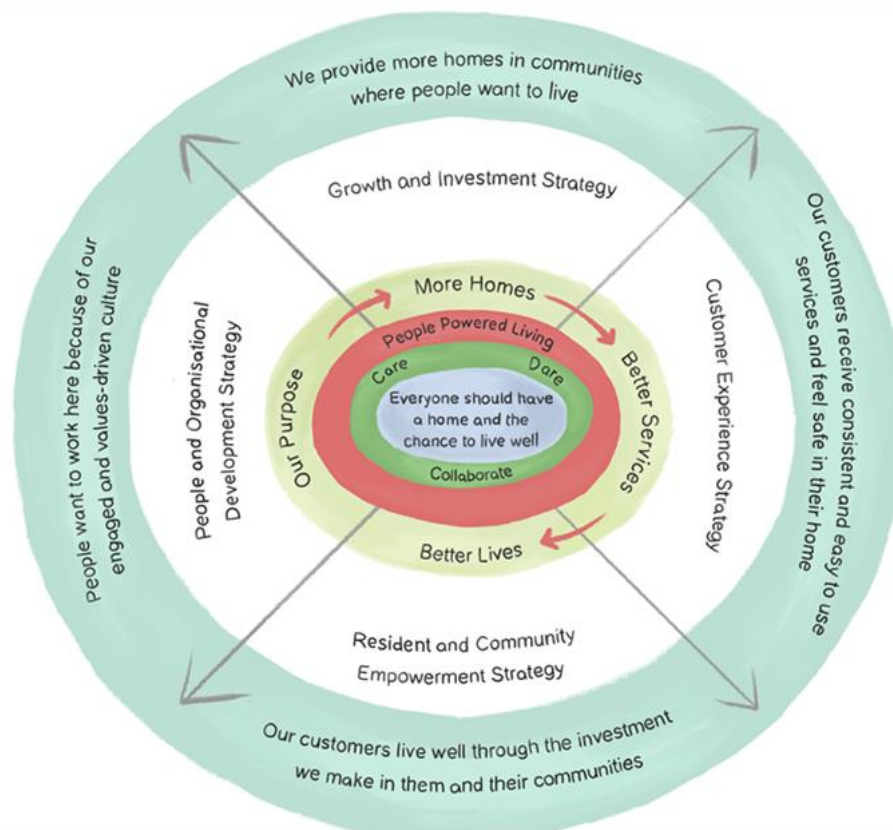
Our vision is that everyone should have access to a home and the opportunity to live well. With an ambitious development strategy to build 2,000 homes a year (of which approximately 80% will be affordable) we will provide more homes in communities where people want to live.

For us, customer service is paramount and we are collaborating with our customers to improve services to them by understanding what matters most and how we can deliver these improvements.

Against the backdrop of the Housing Green Paper, we have raised the profile and impact of our customer engagement, and will make further bold changes during 2019. As early adopters of the *Together with Tenants* approach, we will bring the voice of our customers closer to the Board.

As a people-powered organisation we value the work of our colleagues who go the extra mile to help our customers. We are creating a place where people want to work and continue to attract the best talent by offering a wide range of opportunities and engagement in our values.

We have revised our structure and financial plan following partnership, reshaping the structure of our debt to increase our borrowing capacity and we're now in a strong position to grow as an organisation. We've become stronger and more resilient and we are ready to do more. Our future ambitions are articulated through our 4 strategic themes.



THE ROLE

Our new Chair will join us at an exciting time as we continue the important work of integrating two organisations strategically, operationally and culturally, and realizing our ambitions as a strong, streamlined and unified organisation.

Our Chair will play a critical role in creating a cohesive board, comprising talented and committed people from the two legacy organisations and steering us forward with confidence. This will be particularly important as a number of board members are due to rotate off the board over the coming years, so the opportunity exists to help review the skills and perspectives we need for the future, and shape a high caliber and committed board, equipped to meet the range of challenges and opportunities ahead.

Our new Chair will ensure we are delivering against regulatory requirements and against our diverse objectives – as an innovative developer, a responsible and customer-centric landlord, as a provider of high-quality care and support services.

In the face of significant uncertainty in the political environment, they will ensure we are making connections externally which benefit not only our own organisation, but the mission of the social housing sector as a whole.

The responsibilities of the Board's Chair include the following:

1. To ensure the efficient conduct of Board and general meetings and to ensure that the views of all Board Members are sought before any important decision is taken;
2. To establish a constructive working relationship with, and provide both support and challenge for, the Chief Executive of the organization;
3. When necessary (for example, following resignation) and in conjunction with other Board Members, to ensure that the CE is replaced in a timely and orderly fashion;
4. To ensure that the Board delegates authority to committees, the Chair, and CE or others to enable the business of the organization to be carried on effectively between meetings; and also to ensure that the Board monitors the use of any delegated powers;
5. To take decisions delegated in this way to the Chair in consultation with other Board members, and with any necessary advice from the Chief Executive;
6. To ensure that the Board receives professional advice when it is needed;
7. To lead the appraisal and review processes for the Board (team and individuals), and ensure that action is taken on its results;
8. To review the composition and performance of the Board and its Board Members and to initiate action to remedy any deficiencies;
9. In conjunction with other Board Members, to appraise the performance of the Chief Executive, and set the appropriate level of remuneration;
10. To ensure that the organization complies with its chosen codes of governance and conduct, and other good practice;
11. To ensure that all committees of the Board operate within a similar and consistent framework for good governance, sound controls and management of risk; and
12. To represent and act as an ambassador for the organization on appropriate occasions, internally and externally.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Experience

1. High profile track record of strategic leadership roles and achievement within organisations of a **significant scale and complexity**, whether in the commercial, public or third sectors.
2. Strong **commercial acumen** gained in any sector, with a background of general and financial management, including management of large and complex budgets in an environment of risk, and a good awareness of funding and treasury matters.
3. Successful work in regulated environments and in organisations which engage with government, where the effective handling of high profile and sensitive issues was achieved, and key decisions influenced positively.
4. Strong experience of **chairing** boards and/or key committees, dealing with governance issues, ensuring high performance and good decision-making.
5. Experience of **different sectors** and of working effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, preferably to include national and local politicians, investors and funders, commercial partners, government bodies and agencies, and local communities and customers.

Abilities, skills and knowledge

1. **Non-executive leadership** – ability and vision to lead and represent the organisation, giving a clear sense of strategic direction, an appreciation of the respective roles of the Chair and Chief Executive.
2. **Communications** – ability to present arguments with knowledge and understanding of the wider strategic context; ability to speak in public, represent and promote the organisation and to communicate effectively to ensure its aims and objectives are achieved.
3. **Politics and government** – ability to generate confidence and achieve the delivery of results and outcomes in national level complex political environments.

4. **Working with stakeholders and partners** – an ability to operate effectively at all levels, and to develop positive relationships that generate confidence. Given the organisation’s major borrowings, this will include ability to represent its work with lenders and investors.
5. **Customers** – an awareness of the needs and aspirations of our customers, and of the local communities where they live. And experience of and ability to be customer centric in matters – putting the customer at the heart of what we do and satisfying the needs of a diverse customer base.

Personal style and behaviour

1. **Vision and values** - shares the vision and commitment of the organisation to social justice, fighting discrimination, and offering excellent services, all within a framework of financial discipline and controls.
2. **As a leader** – a strong leader with credibility and enthusiasm; a decisive and effective decision maker who leads by example.
3. **As an ambassador** – has an open, engaging and enthusing style
4. **Working with others** – a personal and professional credibility that will command confidence at all levels. Ability to assess and interpret a wide range of stakeholder interests and requirements and balance them effectively.
5. **Working with and in teams** – able to work as a member of a team acting and thinking corporately with a collaborative style that engages at all levels and promotes positive relationships throughout the organisation and its partners.
6. **Probity and integrity** – committed to the values of accountability, openness, transparency and equality of opportunity including awareness of the impact of diversity and disability issues.
7. **Commitment** - Has the time and energy needed to discharge the responsibilities of the post in an appropriate way.

Diversity and Inclusion

At Metropolitan Thames Valley, we like to see things differently. A diverse workforce broadens our thinking, increases our understanding and helps us provide better services. We treat all of our colleagues fairly and with respect, regardless of their role, background or ability. We’re building a range of active colleague groups, events and initiatives to help us do just this, including:

- Spectrum: Our BME staff network group
- Metro: Our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ+) employee network group
- Women’s forum: We want to make our organisation a great place for women to work. We work to influence policies, assist women to fulfil their true potential through mentoring and support.
- Straight Allies: People perform better at work when they can be themselves. Our Straight Allies group helps create a culture where LGBTQ+ colleagues feel supported and welcomed.
- Wellbeing: We try to make sure our offices and facilities are accessible to people of all abilities and will provide any support they need to do their jobs. This is a group for anyone who wants to improve their wellbeing at work.

We are proudly committed to equality and diversity as a core part of what we do – both as an employer and in the services we provide to our customers.

We want to attract the best employees and know that a diverse workforce will help us to deliver the best services to our customers. We are proud of our thriving colleague diversity networks, and we have been consistently recognised as one of the top 200 employers of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the Stonewall index.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

- The term of office is 6 years (2 x 3 year terms) with the potentially to have this extended to 9 years.
- There are 6 board meetings a year, and two strategy days, and the Chair is expected to serve on at least one committee.
- The total expected time commitment for the Chair is 4-5 days a month.
- The remuneration for the Chair is £30,000 per annum.
- MTVH would like the new Chair to take up the role in January 2020 if possible but there is flexibility if the right candidate cannot start until February or March 2020.
- Most meetings take place at MTVH's new Head office, which is in Hatton Garden - EC1.
- Please note that most meetings take place during working hours.

HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to **Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing** on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at **www.saxbam.com/appointments**, using code **UAGADA**.

Click on the '**apply**' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter. Your cover letter should be no longer than 2 pages, outlining why you are interested in joining Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing and the key relevant experience that you bring.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Wednesday 11 September 2019**.

Initial interviews with Saxton Bampfylde will take place between the week commencing 16 and 23 September 2019.

Candidates should be available on **Tuesday 5 November 2019** for a panel interview with the Selection Committee.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please **do not** include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.



Metropolitan
Thames Valley



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