



Appointment of Chair

June 2024

Saxton Bampfylde

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Your
place to
thrive

Welcome

Orbit is changing.

Socially driven and commercially minded, we are one of the country's largest housing providers, with highly engaged and hardworking colleagues, and a strong reputation in all areas of governance, compliance, and safety.

However, despite having made significant improvements to our homes and services, as a purpose driven organisation we are not satisfied with aspects of our performance, including our Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) scores and our Housing Ombudsman determinations – we know we can and must do better.

Our vision is to provide amongst the best customer experience of any housing association in the country. With this core goal as our touchstone, we are launching a bold new strategy for the period 2025-30.

Our 2030 strategy will see us strengthening and modernising our governance, performance and operations, and transforming our culture to ensure we are able to serve our customers better, and deliver the number and quality of homes needed within the communities we serve.

It will push us to think differently about all aspects of what we do and how we do it, and hold us accountable for improving the quality of our existing homes and our services, whilst continuing to build new homes to improve our portfolio and help ease the UK's housing crisis.

We are now looking for a Chair to succeed David Weaver after nearly 9 years of outstanding service on the board. Our new Chair will play a vital role in driving our ambitious change agenda at the highest levels. Along with board and executive colleagues the Chair will help position Orbit confidently in the fast-evolving external landscape and personally amplify our determined focus on our customers.

We hope you will read on to find out more about Orbit, and about this important position.

Please also feel free to reach out to either Hannah or Vidhu at Saxton Bampfylde for an initial exploratory conversation; they can be reached at hannah.scarisbrick@saxbam.com or vidhu.sood-nicholls@saxbam.com.

"Our 2030 strategy will ... ensure we are able to serve our customers better."

Helen Gillett, Chair of Selection Committee, and **Phil Andrew**, CEO



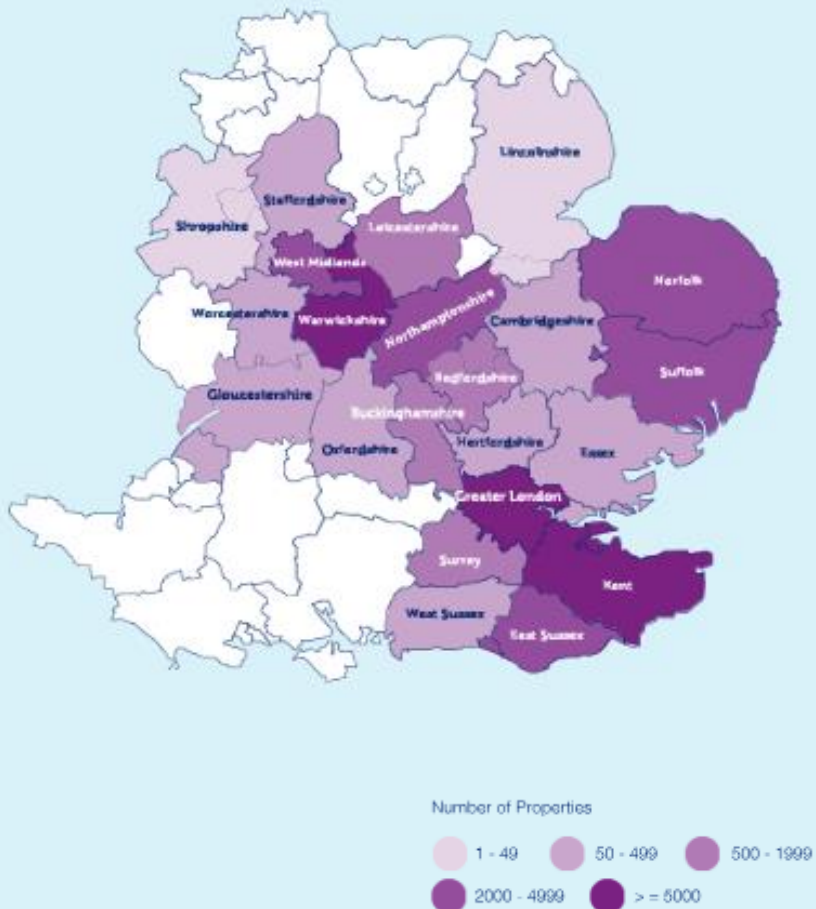
Orbit today



Our vision

Socially driven and commercially minded, we strive to provide amongst the best customer experience of any housing association in the country by building and maintaining safe, quality homes that our customers love, both sustainably and at scale, supported by excellent customer service. All delivered by happy colleagues who jump out of bed each day to make a social difference.

Orbit Properties by County



A major landlord and developer

Our aim is to ensure the homes we provide and the places we create are good quality, affordable and safe.

Orbit was established in 1967 by two people on a park bench contemplating how to tackle homelessness. The passion they felt about the inequality in the access, scale and quality of available housing was channelled into positive action, and Orbit was created. Socially driven and commercially minded, our purpose today is every bit as important as it was when Orbit was founded.

We now manage around 47,000 affordable homes in the Midlands, East and South East. We are also a major developer, building around 1,000 new and affordable homes every year.



47,000
homes



100,000
customers



Supporting customers day to day

Our commitment to social purpose goes beyond that of landlord and developer. We are committed to improving the long-term prospects of society and bringing our customers security and stability by investing in a range of projects to support the wellbeing of communities, families and individuals.

We're focussed on offering customers the right help at the right time to support their tenancies and personal wellbeing and delivering support via our BetterDays programme and Tenancy Sustainment Team, we've made a demonstrable positive difference to the lives of thousands of customers this year.

Before the cost of living crisis hit, our BetterDays programme - which offers free universal services to every customer designed to support financial inclusion, mental health, employment, skills and digital - was already helping over 5,000 customers each year. That figure has risen to 7,683 customers in 2024-25. As demand for support has grown, we've mobilised a raft of new measures to sit alongside the existing programme of support.

Furthermore, we've created a network of community hubs for our customers, with the onsite team removing barriers to services and leveraging social value through partnerships with local authorities, voluntary sector organisations and others. We've also piloted a mobile hub to ensure we reach residents in our more rural communities, and this has attracted positive customer feedback.

We're proud of bringing support into communities and providing access to services for customers who otherwise may not have sought help or engaged with Orbit.



Financially Strong

Our latest Annual Report shows that, against the backdrop of a challenging political, regulatory and economic environment, we delivered an increase in turnover of £44m and an increase in operating surplus.

Please click [here](#) to view our latest annual report.

FIVE-YEAR SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

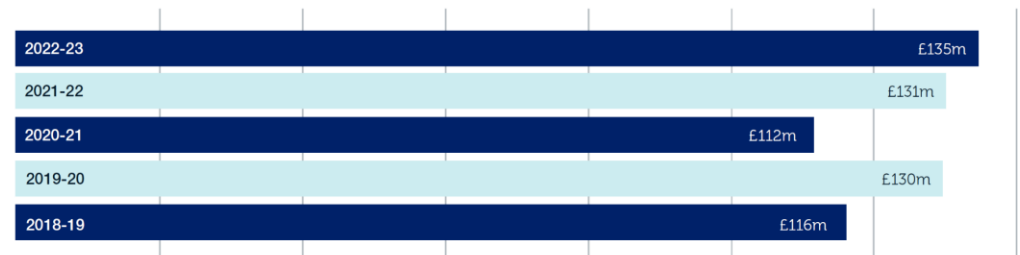
Statement of comprehensive income	2022-23 £m	2021-22 £m	2020-21 £m	2019-20 £m	2018-19 £m
Turnover	418	374	355	323	316
Operating costs and cost of sale	(313)	(280)	(265)	(232)	(230)
Surplus on sale of housing	30	37	22	45	30
Pension exit costs	-	-	-	(6)	-
Operating surplus	135	131	112	130	116
Operating margin %	32.3%	35.1%	31.6%	40.0%	36.8%

Statement of financial position	2022-23 £m	2021-22 £m	2020-21 £m	2019-20 £m	2018-19 £m
Fixed assets	3,044	2,931	2,788	2,688	2,524
Creditors due after >1 year	2,301	2,344	2,453	2,280	2,175
Revenue reserves	911	826	740	689	601

Key indicators	2022-23 £m	2021-22 £m	2020-21 £m	2019-20 £m	2018-19 £m
Properties	47,429	46,529	45,702	44,753	43,470
New homes built	1,257	1,013	848	1,520	1,266
Debt per unit (£k)	42.6	43.3	45.8	39.7	38.9
Months cash/secured loans available*	36	36	36	36	36
Interest cover	2.52	2.15	2.11	2.38	2.39

*at least 36 months cash/secured loans available

Operating surplus (£m)



The needs we are meeting

As a housing association, we see first-hand the impact of cost-of-living pressures on our customers, and their acute need for support.

We support a broad and diverse range of customers, from those seeking their first home and families, to those looking for ways to live independently in their later lives. Whilst no two customers are the same, the one thing that ties them all together is their desire for a warm, safe and affordable place to call home.

- 61% of Orbit households are in relative poverty compared to the UK average of 17% of all individuals
- 5,500 of our households cannot meet their current outgoings
- A third of our customers are skipping meals to reduce costs
- 72% of customers turned the heating off completely during the winter months
- Twice as many Orbit households (29%) use prepayment meters compared to the UK average (14%) and of these, 32% of customers said that they had been unable to afford to top up their meters at least once over the last 12 months

Our impact – some key highlights 2022/23

12,054
customer
support
interventions

109% year-on-
year increase in
engagement
with our
Better Days
programme

c. £3m of extra
household
income
generated
through our
interventions

£1.5m
customer debt
managed
through our
debt
advice service

Four new
community
hubs opened
with further
spaces
in development

191 customers
moved into
employment

£9.73 Social
Return on
Investment (for
every £1 spent
we generate
£9.73 return in
social value)

Reduced anti-
social behaviour
in our identified
'Hotspot' areas
by 77%

What House?
Housing
Association of
the Year 2022

1,257 new
homes
delivered

£88.8m
investment in
existing homes

£135.2m
operating
surplus

2030 Strategy



The challenge for Orbit

We are at a pivotal point in our history.

As a purpose-driven organisation we are not satisfied with aspects of our performance, including our Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) scores and our Housing Ombudsman determinations. We are prioritising improving our service for customers.

At the same time, we want to ensure we have the most appropriate and effective governance arrangements to support the delivery of our 2030 strategy, and we recently commissioned a governance review to help guide our thinking on what changes may be helpful.

For our customers, their home is the most important consideration, and it is our responsibility to provide this security for them.

We want to improve the quality of our existing homes, and significantly improve our services for customers, creating a seamless, omnichannel experience that makes it easy for customers to contact us in a way that suits them. Our people and culture, technology, data, systems, and processes will be key to achieving this, as will our relationships and influence with suppliers, partners, and government.

At the same time, we need to make sure that we continue to build new homes to improve our portfolio and help ease the UK's housing crisis, and with the increasing aging population, we need to explore ways to build and maintain homes that meet the needs of our customers throughout their lives.

We have a lot to do.

Our 2030 strategy

Driving Excellence in Customer Experience

Our new strategy captures our ambition to provide amongst the best customer experience of any housing association in the country, whilst reshaping our approach to create a more sustainable and resilient model for the future.

Doing so will allow us to materially increase the positive impact we make now and in the future.



What our new strategy will deliver



Maintaining homes that our customers love

What this will deliver

Improvements to the quality and energy efficiency of our homes and communities.

How we will measure success

- Average Net Present Value of our homes
- All homes achieving a minimum of EPC band C
- A Thriving Community Score of between 5.9 – 6.1



Delivering new and regenerated homes to improve our portfolio and assist in tackling the housing crisis

What this will deliver

More new and regenerated homes, so more people have a great place to call home, with improved energy efficiency ratings for our new build developments.

How we will measure success

- 5,700 new and regenerated homes
- All new schemes achieving 'A' Environmental Impact Rating



Delivering excellent customer service

What this will deliver

Improved repairs services and customer experience.

How we will measure success

- Upper quartile customer satisfaction (TSMs) ratings
- A reputation as a leader in customer service



Attracting, retaining, and developing engaged colleagues who share our purpose

What this will deliver

Enhanced individual and enterprise capability, delivered by highly engaged colleagues who share our purpose.

How we will measure success

- Upper quartile colleague engagement



Making a positive difference to our customers and society

What this will deliver

Customer support programmes and increased localised services to make a positive impact for our customers and society.

Continuing decarbonisation of our homes, operations and supply chain, and supporting customers in the transition to net zero.

How we will measure success

- £100m of social value achieved by 2025; 2030 target to be modelled in 2025
- 50% reduction in direct GHG emissions by March 2031



Creating a sustainable and resilient model for the future

What this will deliver

Innovative new ways of working to materially increase the positive impact we make and the number of people we directly support.

How we will measure success

- More customers supported and greater social value achieved

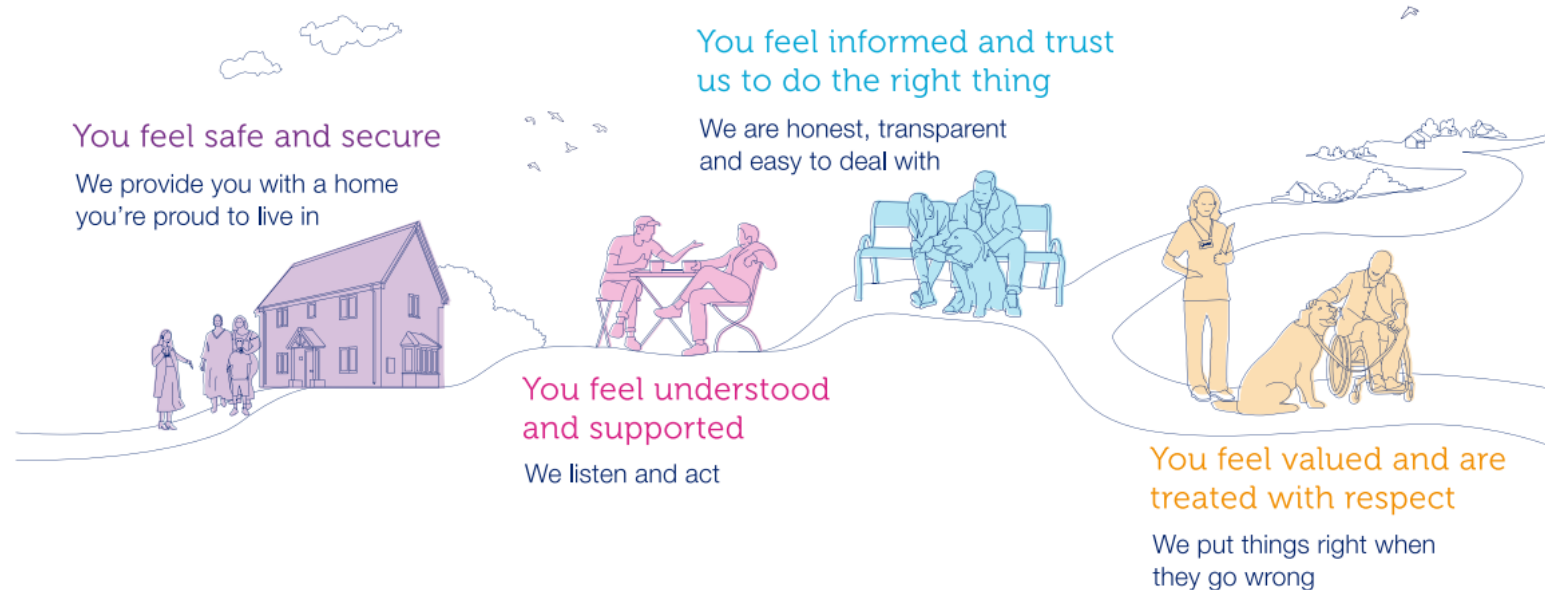
Our values and culture



Our customer commitments

Our Customer Commitments outline what customers value from us and what we must deliver in return. Developed with customers, they shape our service expectations for customers, colleagues, and supply partners, and by embedding this in all we say and do, they enable us to develop a more customer-centric culture and deliver what our customers value most from us.

Our future improvements will be heavily influenced by this, helping to shape all future service design, quality frameworks, policies, and performance measures

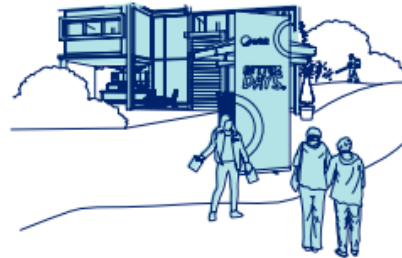


Our values

Our customers are at the heart of everything we do and we believe that delivering an excellent experience is key to achieving to our vision. That's why we've defined our Customer Commitments, which reflect what our customers value most from our services.

Our Customer Commitments inform our Values. Developed by colleagues for colleagues, our values shape who we are, what makes us different, and reflect our inclusive culture.

**We respect and
value customers**



**We support and care
about each other**



**We grow and
achieve together**



Valuing diversity

We aim to create inclusive, age-friendly communities where people feel safe and at home. Customer services and support will ensure everyone feels valued and heard, and this extends to our employee experience, so we provide great places to live as well as a great place to work.

Our diversity and inclusion commitments:

- We will create a diverse and inclusive workplace where everyone in our workforce feels valued.
- We will provide a fair, accessible, and inclusive customer service to all our residents.
- Lead on diversity and inclusion in the sector

The role of Chair



The role of Chair

With a new CEO at the helm and our bold new strategy, the period 2025-30 will be a particularly exciting time and critical period of transition for Orbit.

As David Weaver prepares to step down after serving his maximum term, we are looking for a new Chair who shares our values, and who will be a determined champion of our 2030 strategy and focus on customers.

The new Chair will lead the board, as well as oversee important planned changes to our governance structure, which are intended to deepen our understanding of customers and improve our performance. The Chair will provide important support and challenge to executive colleagues, and enable Orbit to deliver against its ambitious objectives.



Key responsibilities

Our new Chair will play a key leadership role in a period of significant strategic, governance, operational and cultural change at Orbit. The Chair's role includes:

Building and leading a customer-focused board

- Championing our focus on customers and service quality
- Ensure the board has strong and rich insights into the experience of Orbit's customers
- Ensuring the board has the values, skills and focus to support the delivery of our 2030 strategy and its focus on putting customers at the heart of everything we do
- Approving strategies and policies to achieve the Orbit's plans and objectives
- Ensuring that the board, in all its behaviours and work, is aligned with Orbit's values, and customer and colleague commitments
- Ensuring that the board delegates sufficient authority to its committees, the Chair, the CEO and others

Effective Control Environment

- Ensuring risk and performance is monitored and

managed through effective systems of internal control and delegation

- Ensuring that the board is effective in overseeing financial performance and viability.

Comprehensive Planning

- Overseeing Orbit's long-term strategic direction
- Ensuring business plans and organisational structures are effective

Develop Effective Relationships

- Ensuring the board has strong and dynamic connections into, and understanding of, Orbit's customers
- Establishing a constructive working relationship with, and providing support for, the CEO and ensuring that the board acts in partnership with executive colleagues
- Building a constructive relationship with and between other board members, and with other

boards and Committees within the Orbit Group

- Leading the development of individual board members to ensure a cohesive, collaborative and vibrant team where positive debate and constructive challenge are the norm.

Appropriate Governance

- Shaping and overseeing planned changes to Orbit's board structures and ensuring governance arrangements reflect best practice and support the delivery of the 2023 strategy
- Ensuring that the board receives professional advice when it is needed, either from senior colleagues or from external sources
- Ensuring Orbit complies with the Regulator of Social Housing's Standards, the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance and other relevant policies and standards.

Person specification

First and foremost, our new Chair will bring an authentic commitment to Orbit's social purpose, personal values aligned to those of a dynamic social business, as well as the credibility and confidence to lead the board of a large-scale landlord and developer. Our Chair will also have:

Qualities

- An inclusive style and the natural ability to role model our values
- Leadership skills, with the ability to engender respect and develop trust
- A natural ability to listen and engage
- A chairing style which encourages discussion as well as clear, collective decision-making.
- A determined commitment to promoting and understanding equality, diversity and inclusion issues
- The confidence and enthusiasm to act as an ambassador for Orbit
- On a practical level, the flexibility to commit to work an average of four days per month, but with considerable variation

Our 2030 strategy emphasises our commitment to leading on diversity and inclusion in the sector.

We are committed to representing the diversity of the communities we serve and hope to encourage and attract interest in this important role from people with the broadest possible range backgrounds.

Experience and knowledge

- Strong experience as a non-executive, and of chairing boards and/or key committees, overseeing and improving governance and decision-making processes.
- A strong customer-orientation and experience of large and complex, customer focused organisations
- Experience and understanding of a range of sectors
- Experience and understanding of organisations with diverse asset portfolios
- Experience of regulation and of working with regulators
- Experience of delivering strategic and cultural change at scale, in an executive and/or non-executive capacity
- A strong track record of developing and maintaining strong business relationships with a range of people at senior level, including high-profile stakeholders across a range of different sectors.
- Financial acumen – understanding of financial accounting and capital markets and the confidence to lead the board of an organisation with relatively complex financing strategies and structures.

Terms of Appointment

Term

The initial term of office will be 3 years, renewable for a further term of 3 years, subject to annual performance review.

Time commitment

We expect the time commitment to average approximately around 4 days per month, but with considerable variation.

Location

We are a large and dispersed organisation, and as such our Chair could be based anywhere. They will need to be willing and able to attend main board and some committee meetings in Coventry/London, and spend some time visiting other parts of the organisation and our operations across the Midlands, the East, London and the South East of the UK.

Remuneration

This appointment currently attracts an annual fee of £33,000, plus expenses.

Main board meetings

There are usually 5 main board meetings each financial year, and they usually have a morning start.

Our Chair will also attend or host other internal or external meetings throughout a typical year.



How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Orbit on this appointment.

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

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Wednesday 17 July**.

* 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.

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.



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