



EPIC Board Appointment
Board of Trustees
Candidate Information Pack



September 2025

CONTENTS

Welcome to EPIC - Simon Wilson.....	3
Welcome to EPIC - Tracey Johnson.....	4
Our History.....	5
EPIC Board of Trustees.....	7
Executive Team.....	9
Our Vision & Values.....	10
Key Competencies.....	11
Job Description.....	12
Practicalities.....	15
How to Apply & Key Dates.....	16



WELCOME TO EPIC

Thank you for considering the opportunity to join the Board of Trustees at EPIC.

EPIC was formed in 1998 and is a business with a strong social purpose. We are based in the Bentilee area of Stoke-on-Trent, where the majority of our nearly 1,400 homes are situated, with our main areas of operation in Bentilee, Hanley and Meir. We pride ourselves on being a local community-based organisation, ensuring that every home is safe and that the needs of our tenants are reflected in the services we provide.

In 2024, we established our three-year Corporate Plan with a refreshed vision of 'to empower our tenants with the resources and support they need to thrive, while also making a positive impact on the wider community'. As Chair of the Board of Trustees, joining in April 2023, I have seen a significant shift across the organisation, including the positive trajectory in response to the Regulatory downgrade in 2021, with a compliant regrade in 2023. The progress of EPIC didn't stop there, and under clear direction and leadership, the Regulator of Social Housing's Inspection in July 2025 resulted in a Regulatory Judgement of G1, V2 and C1. The full Regulatory Judgement can be read [here](#).

Our focus over the last two years has been on our organisational resilience and tenant engagement and influence. We are now on the cusp of developing a new Corporate Plan and have identified skill gaps in our board membership. We are keen to hear from individuals who have a combination of one or more skills in the areas of asset management, information technology, cyber security, artificial intelligence and/or lived experience as a social housing tenant (preferably as a tenant of EPIC). There are two opportunities available.

The future is positive and in our combined strength, from Board to Tenants, we are clear that our size is one of our unique selling points. We are close to the community, and we are able to provide a personalised service to tenants that is built on a positive culture of relationships.

I wish you every success with your application.

Simon Wilson
Chair of the Board of Trustees



WELCOME TO EPIC

I am delighted that you are interested in joining our Board of Trustees at EPIC.

We are here and we're making a difference! We have worked our way through some challenging times and come out stronger and much improved. Our relationship with tenants through the services we provide, and our interactions, are key to our success.

I have been with the organisation since July 2022 and continue to be delighted and excited by the impact we can make as a small, locally based housing association. At the heart of EPIC, there are great people, tenants and a board with a desire and passion to do more. Having now come out of our Regulatory Inspection and being delighted with our judgement, I am confident and positive about the future, recognising there is still more to do.

My number one priority continues to be ensuring our tenants live in safe, secure, and well-maintained homes. A joint number one priority for me is our people; without our people, we cannot deliver a service that our tenants expect and deserve. Keeping our people engaged, motivated and passionate means that our tenants feel that too.

We have much to do, not least of which is continuing to support tenants in dealing with the rising cost of living. Our corporate plan sets out our direction of travel, and working alongside the board, I am sure we will be successful if we continue with positivity, kindness, realism, and pragmatism.

It's a great opportunity and time to consider EPIC for either your first non-executive role or to add to existing. It won't be long before we look at our new Corporate Plan for 2027, capturing the changing environment that we work in, and our own ambitions to meet the needs of tenants and the wider community.

I look forward to working with the successful candidates, and thank you for considering EPIC as an organisation you want to be a part of.

Tracy Johnson
Chief Executive



OUR HISTORY

EPIC (Empowering People Inspiring Communities Ltd.) is a not-for-profit Registered Provider of Social Housing, with charitable status. We were formed in 1998 following a stock transfer from Stoke-on-Trent City Council.

In our first few years of operation, we concentrated on bringing our 925 flats into good condition and improving their management and maintenance. In 2000, we began to expand our stock, purchasing 10 houses in the Bentilee area. Now, over a quarter of our properties are family-sized houses. We have a strong commitment to our local communities, and in 2005, we worked with an architect and local people to develop the Bentilee Delivery Plan. Following this, in 2009, we worked to refurbish Bentilee Pavilion and Park.

The 2010s saw us continue to grow. We have done this by buying existing properties across Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands, bringing them up to modern standards. In 2010, we made our first purchase via a Mortgage Rescue scheme. In 2014, we grew to 1,010 properties, meaning that we officially became classified as a large Housing Association by the Regulator of Social Housing. In 2015, we were awarded £636,000 in grant funding to deliver our most ambitious growth programme to date.

We currently own just under 1,400 properties and work closely with three local authorities, together with a range of partners, to ensure our homes help to meet the needs of local people in Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle under Lyme, and Staffordshire Moorlands.

Over a quarter of our portfolio is made up of family-sized homes, and we offer a mix of houses, flats, and bungalows, together with a small number of commercial retail outlets for rent. We let properties charged at either Social, Affordable or Intermediate Rents; we have an offer to include a path into homeownership through our Rent2Buy scheme.



OUR HISTORY

In July 2025, as part of a Regulatory Inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing, we received a G1, V2 and C1 rating. It's the first time we've been assessed against the Consumer Standards, and it was great to achieve the highest rating possible (C1).

This achievement is due to a number of factors, but not least of which is the leadership and culture at EPIC. The Board of Trustees, led by Simon Wilson, has set and steered our strategic direction, with Tracey Johnson as the CEO. Changes around the Board and Executive table have meant that EPIC never stands still and continues to look at ways in which to improve, be it organisationally, from a governance perspective, to tenant engagement and influence on the services that are provided.

Our number of colleagues has almost doubled since 2021, and a culture of openness, honesty and transparency is evident throughout. Our most recent employee survey said that 96% would recommend EPIC as a great place to work, with 97% saying they are likely to be working for EPIC in 2 years' time. 100% find their work meaningful too!

Financially, we are in a much-improved position, although as a small organisation, we continue to monitor and manage our budgets very closely, steered and overseen by the Board.

Board is supported through two established Committees – Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and Governance and Remuneration Committee. Successful candidates would be required to sit on at least one of these Committees in addition to the Board.

In 2025/26, we will be reviewing and refreshing the ways in which tenants engage and influence services, and this is likely to result in a more formal Tenant Committee being established, that potentially would be chaired by a member of the Board. This is in exploration currently.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Simon Wilson

Chair

Simon has been Chief Executive of the Pioneer Group, a community-led Housing Association in Birmingham, since 2018. With nearly 30 years' experience of working in the social housing sector, Simon started his housing career with Places for People in Bradford, West Yorkshire. He has also worked for Accent Group before, more recently spending 8 years' as Director of Housing at Wulvern Housing in South Cheshire. He has also served 9 years' as a Non-Executive Director on boards and operational committees.

Alun Bragg

Alun has over 25 years' experience working within local authority and housing associations across North Staffordshire and the South Cheshire region. Alun has been a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing for over 17 years and is passionate about the social housing sector and putting the customer at the heart of service and community development. He is the Director of Communities at Aspire Housing, and leads on all housing services, including neighbourhood management, tenancy support, contact centre and customer engagement.

Rachel Challinor

Rachel has over 20 years' experience working in the housing sector; she currently works for Amplius as the Director for Governance, Compliance and Regulation. Her skills and expertise are in governance, compliance and assurance. She has additional experience, which includes portfolio management of commercial and residential loans, and she was previously a school governor Chair for a local, special education school. Rachel is also a Director of two small property maintenance companies.

Margaret Dodwell

Chair of Audit & Risk Assurance Committee

Margaret has worked in the social housing sector since 1996 and is a member of both the CIH and CIPFA. She is the Chief Operating Officer at VIVID, and also an Executive Board Member and on the Board of their charitable arm, VIVID Plus. She has previously been a non-executive director of two housing associations.

Rob Emery

Term ends May 2026

Rob has worked in social housing for over forty years. He has recently retired from the role as Strategic Manager for Housing Management at the City Council and has held senior management roles at Housing Associations and Councils around the country. Rob is our current Member Responsible for Complaints.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Amandeep Jhawar

Aman has worked in the social housing sector for 15 years and is the Director of Assurance with the Orbit Group. He has previously held roles across commercial and non-commercial sectors. He firmly believes that a great home, in a thriving community, provides the ideal foundation to build a successful life.

Rev. Nicholas Leggett

Term ends December 2025

Nicholas is the Rector of a group of churches near Banbury and has been in Holy Orders for 20 years. He has served on several Boards over the last 20 years and has also chaired a number of audit, finance, remuneration and nominations committees. His Board work has covered three sectors: health, housing and education. He is also a Chaplain for the Army Cadet Force.

Jonathan Moore

Chair of Governance & Remuneration Committee

Jonathan brings over 30 years' of experience in the financial services sector, including a recent tenure as Chief Executive of Stockport Credit Union, where he led a successful modernisation programme. He has extensive board-level experience across several sectors, currently serving as Chair and non-executive director for several organisations focused on financial inclusion and wellbeing.

Rob Morton

Rob joined the Board in February 2024 and brings over 20 years' of experience in commercial and financial leadership roles across the private, social housing, and charity sectors. He is currently the Chief Finance Officer at Caudwell Children, where he oversees Finance, IT, HR, and Facilities Management. A Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, he is committed to delivering impactful support for children and young people with disabilities.

Dave Newmarch

Dave has been leading and delivering housing services and related support for over 30 years. He is committed to delivering services which meet the needs of the most vulnerable members of society. He is currently the Corporate Services Director at Framework Housing and has over 14 years' Board experience.

EXECUTIVE TEAM

Tracey Johnson

Chief Executive Officer

Tracey brings over 20 years of experience in social housing across Merseyside, Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, and Staffordshire. She has served as both an executive and non-executive director in housing, education, and the charity sector. As a resident of Stoke-on-Trent for over 10 years, Tracey deeply appreciates the community's warmth and has actively contributed to establishing her new home.

In her role as CEO of EPIC, Tracey is dedicated to working closely with tenants and the community, especially during these challenging times. Her commitment to people is underscored by her expertise in governance and housing regulation.

Notably, Tracey received an MBE in 2021 for her outstanding work during the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting local charities in Staffordshire and promoting workforce well-being in the financial services sector.

Sharon Shaw

Director of Resources & Company Secretary

Sharon was appointed as Director of Resources & Company Secretary in August 2024 with responsibility for Finance, HR, ICT & Change and Governance.

She brings over 33 years' experience in finance, 27 years within Housing in Staffordshire. Born and brought up in Stoke, Sharon has her roots in the community and is proud to be part of its future. Sharon also takes on the role of Company Secretary for EPIC.

Cindy Gleghorn

Director of Housing

Cindy was appointed as Director of Housing in August 2022. She brings over 30 years' experience in housing and is passionate about the design and delivery of great services to residents and customers.

Having worked at both a strategic and operational level, Cindy is working to refresh service delivery at EPIC. As part of her role, Cindy has the responsibility for compliance with the consumer standards.

Jon Parkes

Director of Asset Management & Building Compliance

Jon has worked in social housing for over 12 years within the Staffordshire area, with strategic and operational experience in property maintenance, asset management and building compliance. Jon brings a wealth of knowledge with a strong background in building surveying, and he is also EPIC's health and safety lead.

OUR VISION, VALUES & MISSION

Our Vision

Our vision is to empower our tenants with the resources and support they need to thrive, while also making a positive impact on the wider community.

Our Mission

In order to deliver our vision, we will ensure that every home is safe and that the needs of our tenants are reflected in the services we provide. We will work closely with partners and agencies to enable people to access other services to live a full and good life, developing relationships that are transparent and responsive to the needs of our tenants.

Our Values

The heart of our culture, which sets the tone for our interactions with tenants, employees, and other stakeholders:

- **FAIRNESS:** We treat people equitably and make decisions based on facts, not personal opinions.
 - **RESPECT:** We treat people with respect and act with courtesy.
 - **UNDERSTANDING:** We are empathetic, approachable and act professionally.
 - **INTEGRITY:** We are honest, dependable, and do what we say we will.
 - **TEAMWORK:** We work with our tenants to ensure we deliver good services. We believe that using our combined strengths makes us a better organisation.
 - **EXCELLENCE:** We take pride in what we do and strive to improve services.
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Our Strategic Objectives

Our mission and values are fundamental to the delivery of our Corporate Plan and set our guiding culture on how we will operate to deliver our vision. Our values and mission drive the five strategic objectives that have been set for 2024-2027 as part of our Corporate Plan and have accompanying actions.

1. **Tenants** - Work alongside our tenants, ensuring that their tenancy with EPIC is sustainable, supported and enjoyable.
2. **Tenants' Homes** - Ensure that tenants' homes are accessible, right size, safe, and well-maintained, and there is clear and timely communication in place for replacing key components, e.g., kitchen, bathroom.
3. **Communities** - Make the most of our geography and place in the community for the benefit of all. This will be driven by having deep knowledge of every tenant, their community and other organisations in the area.
4. **Information** - Make the best use of technology available and be confident in the integrity of the data held to inform decision-making.
5. **People** - Develop our culture to enable a great employee experience and opportunities to fulfil everyone's potential, for the benefit of the individual and our tenants.

KEY COMPETENCIES FOR ALL TRUSTEES

Big Picture Thinking

Scans the environment, sees patterns and transferable ideas in the bigger picture and envisions the long-term future to enable added-value contribution to consideration of strategic direction and innovation.

Critical Information Seeking

Demonstrates appropriate curiosity to actively seek significant facts, data and information necessary to ensure the focus on delivery of tasks and achievement of goals in line with regulatory, legal and other key factors.

Steering Strategic Action

Able to translate understanding of the organisational environment into expectations and goals to enable strategic performance to be delivered and monitored.

Working with Others

Fosters and sustains effective relationships both in a team-working context and through networking. Works collaboratively to add value.

Influencing

Consciously chooses and uses a range of communication methods and approaches tailored to the audience context, culture and priorities at hand.

Sensitivity to Others

Has an awareness of the effect of own behaviour, feelings and actions on others and is able to manage this in order to get the best from interactions with others.

Exercising Judgement and Balancing Risk

Analyses issues, breaks things down into their component parts to solve problems, identify risks and options that inform and influence strategic decisions.

Building Capacity and Capability

Enables the sustainability of EPIC through growth and renewal of the Board over the longer term. Works with the Chair and Chief Exec to lead the creation of a learning environment for the development of Board Members that adds value.

Confidence and Self Control

Demonstrates belief in own ability to take up both personal and organisational challenges and opportunities. Is able to remain objective and exercise sound judgement when faced with potentially conflicting options.

Impact on Society

Sets a personal example to others by demonstrating the highest standards of ethics and integrity. Shows, through own behaviour, alignment to the goals and values of EPIC and wider community objectives.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Role: Trustee

Reports To: The Board

Base: Stoke-on-Trent

We know that experience and skills come from a variety of places, and at EPIC, we want to reflect the world that we live in. We know that having a diverse Board of Trustees leads to better debate and ultimately better decisions. Divergent backgrounds mean ideas are looked at in different ways and can create positive disruption from the status quo. We do have key attributes that we are looking for at the current time in EPIC's continued evolution, but we absolutely welcome interest from a broad spectrum of applicants. A variety of backgrounds can make EPIC more adaptable to the ever-changing environment.

We are looking for specific experience in the following areas:

- Asset management
- Information Technology
- Cyber security
- Artificial Intelligence
- Lived experience as a social housing tenant (preferably as an EPIC tenant)

Main purpose of the role

- To lead and work with the senior leadership team in setting and steering the strategic vision of EPIC, in line with statutory and regulatory requirements, good governance, performance management and effective strategic planning.
- To act as an ambassador for EPIC.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Core Responsibilities

1. Work with the Board of Trustees (Board) and Senior Leadership Team in setting the strategic vision, values, and culture for EPIC.
2. Ensure effective Board oversight of delivery against the corporate plan, monitoring of customer satisfaction with the services and overall value for money.
3. Ensure the necessary financial and other resources are in place to deliver the strategic outcomes and promote the long-term, sustainable success of the organisation.
4. Ensure good oversight of the governance arrangements.
5. Ensuring effective risk management, stress testing of the financial plan and effective mitigation measures are in place.
6. Ensure effective decision making, actively contributing experience, insight, and skills to provide constructive challenge, debate and inform decision-making.
7. Ensure EPIC is compliant with all its legal and regulatory obligations, including Building Safety, the Regulator of Social Housing standards, the National Housing Federation Code of Governance and recognised good practice.
8. Comply with EPIC's Code of Conduct, Control Framework, rules and other internal policies and procedures as set and amended by the Board.
9. To maintain a clear service user and community focus, ensuring the needs and safety of the organisation's current and future tenants are placed at the heart of the Board's decision-making.
10. To approve an annual business plan and budgets that support the achievement of the corporate plan and strategic aims.
11. To ensure that all assets are managed efficiently and effectively, and that capacity is properly utilised, so as to maintain long-term viability and sustainability of the organisation and its assets.
12. To oversee performance and continuous improvement to drive excellence.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

1. Evidence of working within an environment requiring an understanding and appreciation of organisational complexities, be those operational, financial or from a business assurance perspective, with a particular awareness of the organisation's strengths and weaknesses and the impact of Board decisions upon them.
2. An ability to communicate effectively within a collaborative framework, building good relations and earning the confidence of the leadership team and board. Actively participating in discussions, taking account of other viewpoints
3. An ability to evaluate and analyse problems effectively in line with the needs and aspirations of the organisation, whilst having regard to the long-term implications of any decisions and an awareness of the framework of delegation.
4. An understanding of the perspective of key stakeholders, including tenants, ensuring these are considered in all decisions and all relevant diversity issues are actively championed.
5. A track record in overseeing the delivery of exemplary customer-focused services and developing services in a multi-channel setting.
6. Experience, knowledge, or awareness of issues affecting the housing sector and tenants.
7. Can demonstrate passion, motivation, drive, integrity and an inclusive style.

General

1. A willingness and capacity to attend Board meetings and training courses in order to improve knowledge of the business, likely to be held outside normal working hours.
2. A willingness to share knowledge in areas of expertise as may be required from time to time, having regard to the need to record any potential/actual conflicts of interest.
3. A willingness to actively participate in sub-committees that may be established within the Governance structure.



PRACTICALITIES

The Practicalities

- We pay our Trustees a fee of £2,500 a year plus out of pocket expenses.
- Board members are appointed for a three-year term, which can be extended to a maximum of six years.
- We provide papers online for Board and Committee meetings a week in advance. Board and Committee meetings are a mix of in-person at our offices in Bentilee and Meir, Stoke-on-Trent, and online via Microsoft Teams
- Our Board currently meets 6 times per year, and Committees in addition to this. We estimate that the average time commitment involved for meetings, training and preparation is between one to two days a month.
- You will receive a Board member induction programme and receive training and development that is relevant to all members, but also tailored to your needs, based on your skills, knowledge, and experience.
- You will receive a Service Agreement detailing the terms of your appointment.



HOW TO APPLY

Please submit your CV and covering letter to **Kelly Heath** at **k.heath@epichousing.co.uk**

It is important that your CV highlights supporting evidence of how your previous experience and skills relate to the criteria outlined in the role description and the key competencies described in this pack.

We are keen to understand why you are interested in the role, so please use your covering letter (maximum of three pages) to convey why you're attracted to the role, describing how your experience and skills will help us map out our future purpose, direction, and priorities. The covering letter is considered an important aspect of your application and will be used to assess your motivation for the role.

The timetable for the selection process is included below. In your supporting letter, please advise us if you have any difficulties with the dates outlined. We try to offer flexibility, but it can be difficult to convene the selection panel outside the advertised selection dates due to diary commitments.

We are committed to ensuring an inclusive and accessible recruitment process. If you require any adjustments to support your application or participation in the interview, please let us know, and we will do our best to accommodate your needs.

Please return your application by midnight on **Monday, 22nd September 2025**. Your application will be treated with the strictest confidence.

If you would like an informal discussion about these two opportunities, please email **Tracey Johnson** at **t.johnson@epichousing.co.uk**.

Timetable



