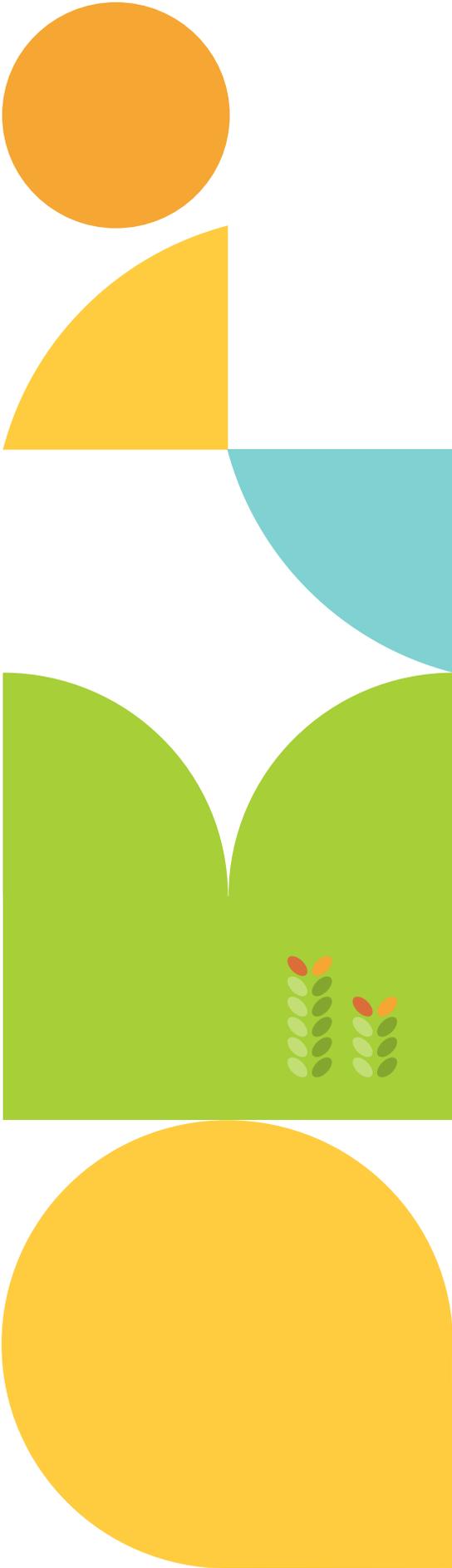


NORTH STAR
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER (CEO)

Candidate Brief April 2024



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1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction from Chair

Thank you for your interest in the CEO role at North Star.

Many organisations believe they have a great working culture, and true, every organisation is unique. However, here at North Star we believe what we have created is a culture that really does set us apart and delivers great outcomes - importantly we have the evidence to prove it. This culture has been carefully developed over the last ten years with Trust, Relationships, Collaboration, Influence & Inclusion as the key pillars.

Our values are embedded, our social purpose underpins our activity, and our vision is owned by everyone. Unusually our Corporate Strategies are co-created by Staff, Tenants, and Board, with the most recent one Leading & Growing 2026 developed in 2023. This is simply how we do things at North Star; we believe people are our greatest asset.

Everyone at North Star undertakes development, and our Board lead the way with its focus not only on essential fiduciary oversight but also on generative activity; consequently, we have strong and focused governance. As a result, we are a high performing housing association with a great reputation, delivering quality service to our customers.

We balance our investment carefully, to ensure our ambitions are delivered. Our housing stock is in very good condition through well planned asset management, and we deliver new homes to provide much needed affordable housing in our region. But we don't just do bricks and mortar. We invest in our communities through a well-resourced Communities Team, working with the strengths of neighbourhoods to sustain and support their growth - health, well-being, employment & training, breakfast clubs are all part of our offer. We are committed to enhancing neighborhoods and pride in communities.



Anna
Urbanowicz

We are creative, courageous, and connected and whilst we attained G1/V1 status last year through an IDA and reaccredited with Investors in People Platinum, we always strive for more. What is important is to constantly look carefully at what is coming on the horizon. Never more has change become business as usual and keeping alert to what is happening in the sector, the economy and our communities is essential. There are many things to navigate, but we don't just want to manage these, we want North Star and our customers to thrive.

We are looking for a new CEO to lead this journey through high levels of collaboration, vision, and ambition. They will need to work with the Board as well as staff to take North Star to its next level. For North Star this is a generational change event as our current CEO Angela Lockwood has been instrumental in making the organisation what it is today and we are seeking the right person to fill this role.

You will need drive, energy and enthusiasm and need to adopt and more importantly live, the North Star culture every day.

You will need to be excellent at building relationships and deliver great partnership working.

No one person has all the right answers, there should be no singular decision making. We don't use collaboration to stall our decision making, we use it to direct our approach and get to the best decision.

I am excited about this new phase for North Star.

Does this excite you?

If so we want to hear from you.



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ABOUT US

North Star Structure and History

North Star is an amalgamation of three housing associations. Endeavour was formed in 1974, Darlington in 1975 and Teesdale a stock transfer in 2006. In 2020 as part of a significant re-financing we amalgamated the group into North Star which was the pre-existing group parent. The group is an exciting mixture of two traditional housing associations and a successful stock transfer, with the housing stock representing that blend.

Based in Stockton on Tees, with an office in Barnard Castle, our 4,000 homes are mainly located across Teesside and Southwest Durham, although we also operate in neighbouring locations. We have around 500 homes for people with support needs including five women's refuges, and homes for people with learning disabilities, mental health problems, complex needs, homelessness and for people recovering from addictions. We have recently purchased homes for rough sleepers and for Afghan re-settlers and are excited to be working with a Community Land Trust in North Yorkshire. In 2023/24 we built or purchased around 80 new properties. We are known for our creativity, ability to find solutions to challenging housing problems, and to develop effective partnerships. Our Communities Team focus on the strengths of neighbourhoods to bring about opportunities. Our customer involvement approaches are broad, tailored, inclusive and relational to ensure high quality insight and influence of those involved. In the Institute of Customers survey that measures satisfaction with services, North Star achieved the highest score of 50 participating housing associations (we had the same score as Aldi!).

Vision, Values and Social Purpose

Our Vision

Creating homes, building futures.

Our Social Purpose

We care about the people and the communities that we serve. We work, in collaboration with others, to create stable, secure, trusting and supportive environments where people feel they belong.



We have worked hard to remain true to our roots, whilst modernising, and developing what we do and how we do it. We have a national reputation and are particularly known for our approach to people, flexibility, partnership working, community focus and adaptability. We were the first in the sector to achieve Investors in People Platinum in 2017 with two further re-accreditations. The most recent IiP survey in 2023 on a 93% response rate stated that 100% of staff feel trusted, trust the leadership and love working for North Star. We won IiP Platinum employer of the year in 2021 and landlord of the year in the CIH UK Housing Heroes Awards.

Building new homes and delivering local services are continuing priorities.

Our Values

Creative

We create environments to enable people, places and communities to thrive. We believe many things are possible and that our energy brings about exciting change.

Connected

We are connected to the world we live in. Therefore, we are relevant, informed and knowledgeable. We develop strong relationships that are based on integrity and trust.

Courageous

We challenge ourselves and others. We experiment, pioneer and we dare to be different.



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OUR STRATEGY

Strategic Objectives to 2026

The Corporate Strategy 2023-2026 is a three-year plan, that details the organisation's strategic vision and objectives. It is an ambitious but achievable plan that has been approved by the North Star Board. The three-year plan is distilled into annual objectives which are detailed in the annual Corporate Plan. Progress is reviewed and reported to the Board every six months. This ensures that the plan remains dynamic and is subject to scrutiny and challenge.



The corporate objectives, which are set out in broad terms as follows, are:

1. Customers and Communities

We intend to deliver high levels of satisfaction through quality services, strong relationships, clear and focussed communication, and transparency. Our understanding of customers from insight, connections and contact will shape the requirements of digital and face to face services – we will know what is required. Board will be confident they know tenant views that lead to even better decision making. Communities will be well connected, and we will further develop links to training and employment opportunities.

2. Growth, Assets and the Green Agenda

We will gain strength through ambitious growth in the development of new homes including supported housing. Standards will be reviewed using new ethnographical techniques, to ensure we are building what is required. A green strategy will be developed, and data will be used more effectively to better understand stock and its performance using a new tool that informs investment. Relationships with property contractors will strengthen through collaborative reviews and improved standards will constantly evolve using robust tenant feedback.

3. Technology

We will use technology to improve customer services, deliver efficiencies, and add value for money. A comprehensive digital provision will be available for customers who want to interact in this way; it will fully complement face to face contact. The new housing management IT system and enhanced digital processes will free up staff time, and data will be used effectively with one version of the truth.

4. People and Culture

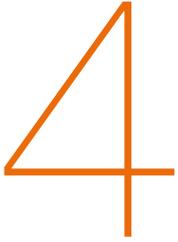
We will continue to develop and maintain the relational culture, with a focus on the growth of people and the provision of opportunity. Where possible North Star recruits from within the organisation whilst developing its offer to apprentices and graduates. There will be continuing investment to develop prospective leaders as role models, collaborators, coaches, and pioneers. North Star will be equitable, diverse and inclusive. North Star encourages staff to become professionally qualified and access academic qualifications.

5. Value for Money

The operating margin at the minimum of 20% will underpin financial strength and assist in retaining a strong credit rating – this will enable us to deliver more. The budget process is embedded and owned with everyone responsible for driving effectiveness and efficiencies. The surplus for purpose statement will ensure there is ownership and understanding.

6. Governance

The Boards generative journey has continued to evolve, the Board is more diverse and understanding of tenants needs strengthened. There will have been a successful transition to a new Chair, with clear succession plans in place for all Board members to provide continuity and reduce disruption. Regulatory Standards are being delivered to a very high calibre. The dynamic governance improvement plan will be delivered.



ROLE SPECIFICATION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Description

Job Title

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Reporting Relationships

Responsible to:

Chair of the Board

Direct Reports:

Executive Director of Assets & Growth

Executive Director of Customers

Executive Director of Finance & Business Support

Director of People & Culture

Overall Purpose

Championing and leading the delivery of cutting-edge services for tenants by providing inspirational leadership and vision.

Working closely with the board, effectively translate board strategies, business plans and policy decisions into operational results.

Working with the executive team and board ensure that North Star demonstrates the highest level of standards and performance and that the strong prevailing culture is further developed.

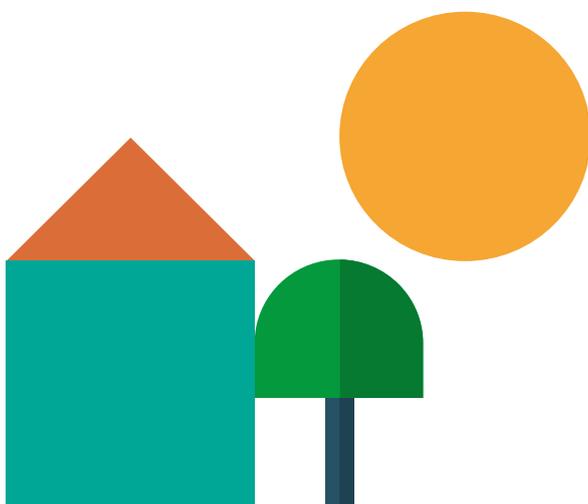
Key Terms and Conditions of Employment

- Competitive Salary
- 35 hours per week
- Hybrid working
- 7% Pension Contributions
- Essential Car User Allowance
- 25 days annual leave on commencement rising to 28 days after three years, plus bank holidays plus three days at Christmas



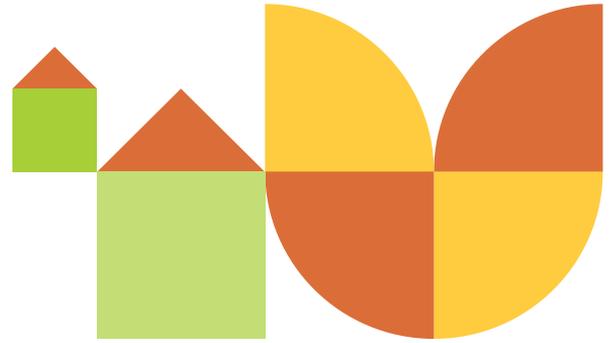
Principal Responsibilities

1. To set a clear strategic direction for the organisation.
2. To deliver and drive forward the corporate vision to make the organisation forward-thinking, efficient, and innovative.
3. To provide motivational leadership and support to the Executive team, ensuring clear direction and a shared vision of an ambitious and dynamic organisation.
4. Leading the Executive team, to adopt a collaborative and supportive approach, maintaining up to date professional knowledge and providing advice and assistance to colleagues as required.
5. To deliver excellent governance by ensuring the activities of the organisation are carried out to the highest standards of integrity and professionalism in accordance with regulatory requirements, statutory bodies, relevant legislation, and best practice.
6. To be the steward of the culture ensuring its growth and development.
7. To lead the development of strategic goals, risk management, organisational objectives, business, and financial plans,
8. To inspire a culture of organisational development that creates a learning organisation and promotes personal growth and development.
9. Demonstrate ambition that inspires the Executive to transform services and communities.
10. Deliver strong compliance on regulatory standards, statutory and legal requirements across North Star. Keep the organisation safe, legal, and compliant.
11. To lead the organisation in achieving excellence in customer service with a focus on high quality customer insight, influence and involvement that leads to transforming, and innovating services.
12. To ensure that communities are well supported, sustained, and developed and that place shaping is integral in our plans.
13. To support and develop the North Star brand ensuring that the organisation is consistently presented in a strong, positive way and that is relevant to stakeholders.
14. Represent the organisation professionally and positively and support and develop North Star's profile in the region.
15. Influence the social housing debate at a regional and national level that impacts positively on the organisation.
16. Promote and champion Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in all aspects of the organisation's business.
17. Secure the medium and long term future of the organisation through pursuit of partnership, project development and acquisition/merger opportunities in line with strategic plans.
18. Ensure the effective attraction, recruitment and retention of senior managers and staff ensuring an appropriate balance of skills, experience, and diversity.
19. Responsible for all aspects of Health and Safety ensuring an appropriate culture exists that places the highest priority on H&S matters and a compliance with all requirements.
20. Work with the chair to ensure appropriate governance arrangements are in place and that committees are effective and impactful.
21. Ensure healthy engagement and collaboration between staff and board that lead to effective dialogue and high quality decision making.



Location

Based in the Stockton office at Endeavour House although will be required to travel between sites throughout the North East and North Yorkshire. Hybrid working is available; however, we expect that the CEO spends at least part of the week at the main office as appropriate. Therefore, this role would not suit someone who is unable to easily access Stockton.



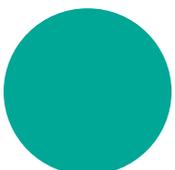
Person Specification Chief Executive Officer

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Skills and Experience		
Proven ability acting as a champion of organisational values and culture	✓	
Track record of achievement at Director level in the social housing or a related regulated sector.	✓	
A strong social purpose and an understanding of (or ability to develop) the challenges faced within the environments and communities in which we operate and the drive and empathy to develop effective responses and strategies.	✓	
Proven ability to work effectively and collaboratively with Boards, customers/tenants, partners and wider stakeholders.	✓	
Proven experience of promoting equality diversity and inclusion in relation to employment and service delivery.	✓	
Proven success in building effective partnerships.	✓	
Track record of identifying, analysing and developing new and diverse business opportunities.	✓	
The ability to understand and effectively lead a response to current and future challenges facing social housing.	✓	
Well-developed understanding of the dynamics of business and financial management within a complex organisation.	✓	
Financial and commercial awareness and the ability to analyse complex information, deal with uncertainty and frame appropriate strategies and responses.	✓	
Experience in formulating and implementing business and strategic plans and in effectively leading others to operationalise the strategies.	✓	
Motivational leadership skills that inspires people to be their best and develops a people first culture,	✓	
Possessing the gravitas and empathy to effectively work with internal and external stakeholders.	✓	
Confident and effective decision maker.	✓	
Able to demonstrate high standards of personal resilience and integrity.	✓	
Able to work under pressure and public scrutiny and deliver results to tight deadlines.	✓	
Able to demonstrate the ability to influence the social housing agenda on a regional and national basis.	✓	
Ability to establish and sustain trust and confidence with stakeholders, partners, communities, tenants and the general public, and to promote and represent North Star positively and professionally at all levels.	✓	



Person Specification Chief Executive Officer

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Skills and Experience		
Ability to build on and enhance North Stars reputation and impact regionally and nationally.	✓	
Experience of successfully leading organisational change and transformation, both on a strategic and project-specific basis.	✓	
Able to articulate a compelling vision and strategic direction and effectively create an organisational culture and structure to deliver.	✓	
An understanding of the sector legislative and regulatory frameworks.		✓
Familiarity with IT/Digital enablers and strategy and how these can add value to an organisation.		✓
Creative and courageous in personal approach and supportive of others.	✓	
A believer in agile and hybrid working approaches.		✓
Qualifications		
Relevant professional qualification, related degree and/or management qualification.	✓	
Evidence of continually developing professional knowledge.	✓	
High level of written, presentation and interpersonal skills appropriate to a wide range of individuals and audiences.	✓	
Behaviours/Organisation Match		
A strong focus on relationships.	✓	
Demonstrates integrity and trust.	✓	
Demonstrates a strong social purpose.	✓	
Takes accountability for actions.	✓	
Driven to make a difference.	✓	
High level communication skills.	✓	



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HOW TO APPLY

- A completed Personal details form (available from the microsite)
- A curriculum vitae (CV)
- A cover letter (concisely let us know why you want this role and why you think you are the right person)

Further information is available at our candidate microsite here:

<https://www.dixonwalter.co.uk/opportunities/north-star-chief-executive-officer/>

If you would like to discuss this opportunity further or have any questions about the role, please contact Jim Allcroft at jim@dixonwalter.co.uk or 07388 642 631.

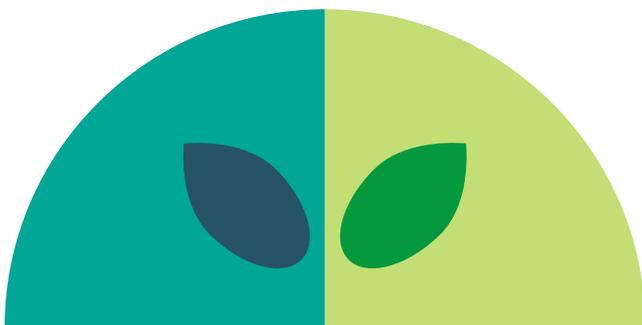
The closing date for applications is Monday 20th May at 1200.
Final selection w/c 17th June (TBC).

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion - Different Together

At North Star, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion are part of our DNA. Together, we continue to build a culture that encourages, supports, and celebrates difference. It fuels our innovation and connects us even closer to customers and communities.

We are keen to reflect the communities we serve and welcome applicants from a broad range of backgrounds and experience. We are committed to tackling issues of under representation in our staff team. As such we will guarantee an interview to any candidate who, has a disability, or considers themselves to be from an ethnic minority background and meets the essential criteria of the role.

We can provide all recruitment material in any format, this includes accepting written applications, as well as online. We will also make any reasonable adjustments necessary to help candidates participate in our recruitment processes.





MEDIA ADVERT



Chief Executive Officer, North Star, Stockton-on-Tees, competitive salary, and pension

North Star is searching for a visionary Chief Executive Officer to lead the organisation to the next level. It is an innovative organisation that holds Investors in People Platinum (where 100% of staff stated North Star is a great place to work), with excellent levels of performance, and renowned for punching above its weight. We are seeking an exceptional individual who can build on these achievements.

North Star develops people potential in a way that ensures continued success and growth. The culture is North Stars major strength and has been developed over many years with trust, relationship, collaboration, influence, and inclusion as its key pillars. It is embedded and lived by everyone.

We value being a great landlord that includes creating environments to enable people, places, and communities to thrive. We develop

You

With a proven record of senior leadership in the housing sector or a related regulated sector. You will be able to evidence experience of providing senior leadership and strategic direction coupled with a passion for cultural development, best in sector performance, building new homes, community development and social impact.

To succeed in the role, you will have to build and maintain strong relationships with stakeholders, partners, and community leaders alongside maintaining effective governance and compliance with regulatory requirements.

As an advocate for the needs and interests of our tenants and communities at local and national levels, your commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion will shine through in every aspect of your work. Your resilience, adaptability, and collaborative spirit will be essential in navigating challenges and achieving our shared vision for the future.

Why Join Us

This is a rare opportunity to lead an organisation that is truly making a difference. At North Star, you will have the chance to shape the future of housing in the sub region and leave a legacy of positive change. You will be part of a supportive, dynamic team, dedicated to excellence and driven by a shared passion for excellence. If you are ready to make your mark and be part of something extraordinary, we want to hear from you.

strong partnerships, valuing the role these play that are based on integrity and trust. We challenge ourselves and others, we experiment, pioneer and we dare to be different. This is our hallmark. We are deeply connected to our community and committed to our place shaping role.

As our Chief Executive Officer, working with a strong board, you will lead our organisation, steward the culture, steer our strategic direction, and live and breathe our values. The opportunity to join an incredible organisation doesn't happen often, particularly one with the strength and growth potential of North Star. You will be able to innovate, collaborate, and truly make a difference in the lives of our tenants and communities.

How to Apply

- A completed Personal details form (available from the microsite)
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