

Oasis Community Housing
TRUSTEES
Appointment Details

 OASIS COMMUNITY HOUSING
HOPE. NOT HOMELESSNESS.



ABOUT US

Oasis Community Housing is a homelessness charity with 40 years' experience of delivering bespoke, effective services for vulnerably housed and people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

We exist to reignite a hope and a future for everyone facing homelessness. We believe that anyone's life can be transformed however dark things may seem.

Our values are based on Christian principles and the Christian faith is the driver behind our vision.

Our vision is for everyone to be part of a community where they are included, belong and have what they need to reach their God-given potential.

Our mission is to transform communities by creating access to housing, addressing homelessness and journeying with people as they fulfil their God-given potential.

Last year we supported around 1,300 people in a range of different ways.

Our work is divided into four broad activities:

HOME

We run a range of supported accommodation programmes in the North-East and London.

In both locations we provide 24-hour supported accommodation in houses and flats for young people, particularly young women and mums facing homelessness for a variety of reasons, including children leaving care, domestic violence, substance misuse recovery, mental health issues, offending, neglect, child removal and relationship breakdown.

@BASIS

With local authority and Big Lottery funding we run drop-in crisis services across the North-East providing a chance to get warm, clean, fed, advice on access to benefits and referrals for people with complex needs like poor mental health and addictions. We provide advice and support sessions and mobilise our team to reach out to rough-sleepers on the street inviting them in for a warm shower, hot food and help every week of the year.

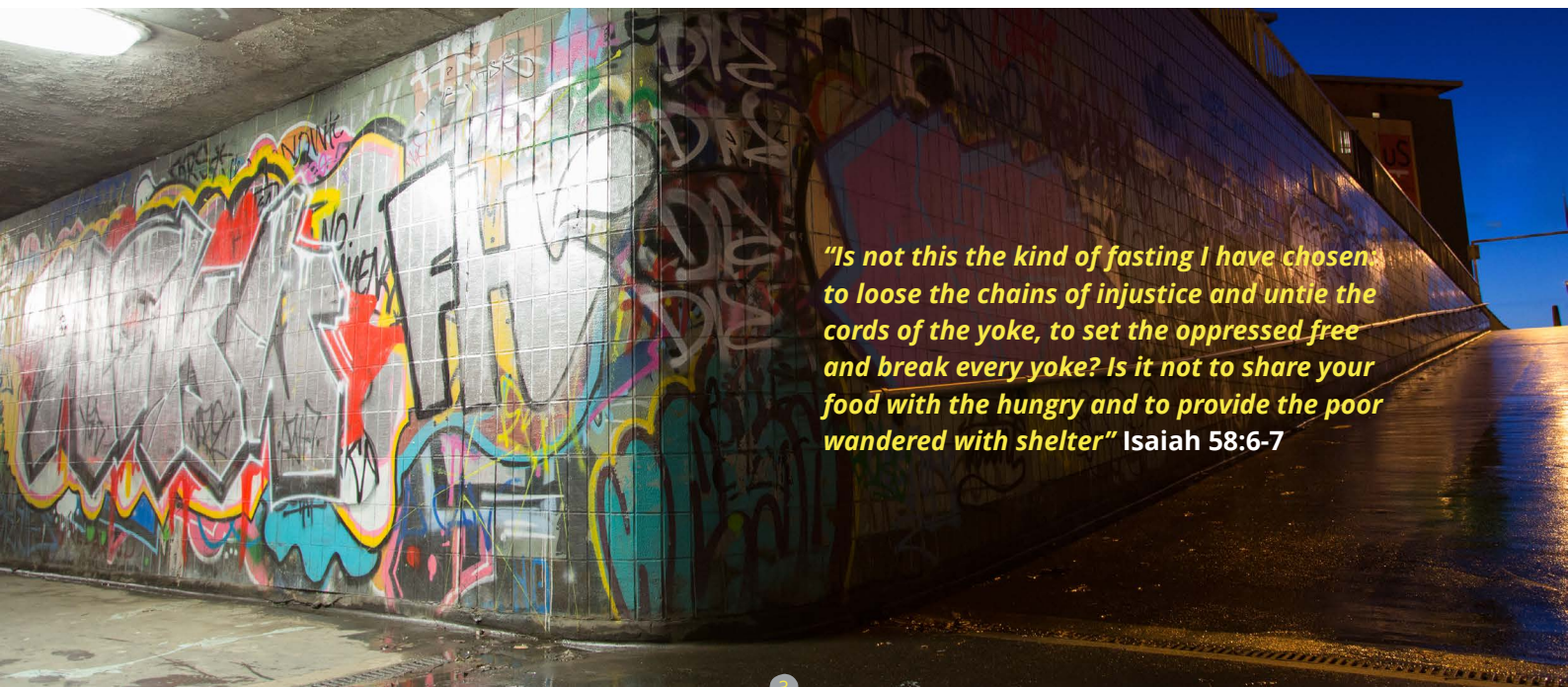
ASPIRE

We have supported hundreds of young people to take a significant step forward in their journey into employment and we have dedicated resource to help support individuals to access financial services, maximise their income and navigate the benefits system.

EMPOWER

In partnership with Gateshead Council we are delivering a ground-breaking ten week programme for young women to break the cycle of abusive relationships for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Last year our turnover was in excess of £4.5m.



"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wandered with shelter?" Isaiah 58:6-7

OUR VALUES

Our ethos is rooted in the Christian faith and we have five core values, which come from elements of this faith, reflected in the life and work of Jesus. These values are:

- **Hope** – We have a deep sense of hope that things can change and be transformed, regardless of what the current circumstances may say. We will encourage those we serve to dream big dreams.
- **Worth** – We believe in the inherent worth and dignity of all people, we will therefore treat everyone equally, respecting differences.
- **Inclusion** – Everyone has a need to belong. So, we are passionate about including everyone.
- **Perseverance** – We are committed to people and communities for the long term, and will give second, third and fourth chances.
- **Life** – We will work to enable 'life in all its fullness' to be a reality for those we work with.

We consider our Christian ethos to be a reason to champion equal opportunities, stemming from our belief that all are made in God's image and we are committed to both the transformation of communities and to the inclusion of every person in that process. It is because of our Christian values, not in spite of it, that in all we do Oasis Community Housing will:

- Serve and respect all people regardless of their age, disability, gender, race, ethnic origin, religion or beliefs, pregnancy or maternity status, marital or civil partnership, sexual orientation, physical and mental capacity.
- Acknowledge the freedom of people of all faiths and none to both hold and to express their beliefs and convictions respectfully and freely, within the limits of the UK law.
- Never impose its Christian faith or beliefs on others.





DAVEY'S STORY

Davey's life began to take a turn when his marriage broke down. Distraught and lonely, Davey turned to alcohol to escape during the times where he felt depressed. Things became a lot worse when Davey lost his job.

He did his utmost to manage the situation, but things became even more difficult when he received the tragic news that his son had lost his life.

Five years of trying to come to terms with the death of his son and his situation followed with little to no support. This spiralled into homelessness in October 2018 after Davey lost his flat.

With nowhere to call home Davey slept in a tent on unused wasteland.

Within three months of sleeping rough Davey's tent was burned to the ground. Cold, alone and with the fear of another attack on what little possessions he had, Davey slept on the streets for another three years.

It was at our Basis Gateshead homeless drop-in centre where Davey found hope – here his journey out of homelessness began.

Davey was able to set up a bank account and direct debits with support from Sally and the team, which then allowed him to re-associate with his doctor. He was also given a mobile phone which he used to contact relevant services.

Basis Gateshead homeless drop-in centre provided a community for Davey – a hub from which he had someone to talk to.

Despite now having a place of his own Davey regularly visits the drop-in to wash his clothes and keep in touch with staff. It's this sense of community within our projects that is so important.

As well as popping in for a cuppa every so often, Davey even gets involved in the direction of the charity by attending meetings as part of the co-production group – a group of people that we support who discuss ways in which we can improve as a charity.

He says, "Rather than being homeless and being unseen, I'm now being seen".

THE CONTEXT

Homelessness is primarily about people, not houses. Real people, with hopes, dreams and stories of their own. Everything we do as an organisation is about preventing and responding to homelessness by providing the right support, to the people who need us, in a way that puts them at the heart of the process.

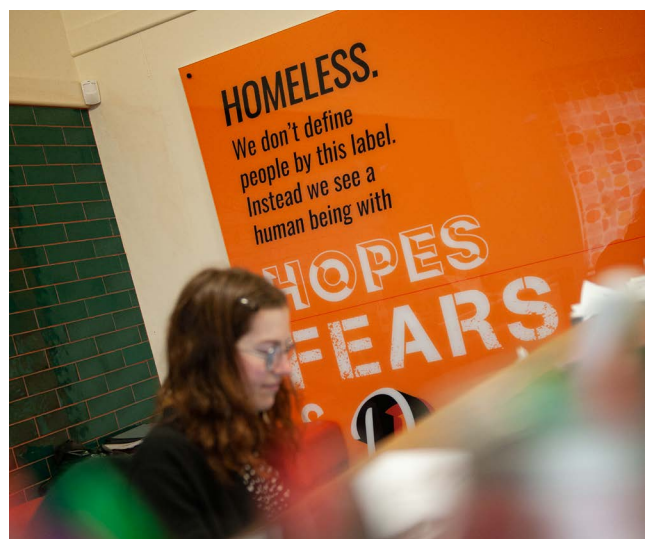
The last 4 years have been tumultuous and challenging for us all due to the enduring legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is a period in which we have been stretched and tested across the range of our work, pushing us to the limits of our abilities. However, this stretching time has given us an opportunity to express our passion for our mission, and ability to innovate and be agile in the face of the rapidly changing needs of the people we serve.

In spite of the challenges of the last 4 years we have seen a 41% increase in unrestricted donations over the last two years.

As we move into a season of economic uncertainty Oasis Community Housing is well-positioned to grow and adapt to the increasing need that we expect to see in the communities in which we already work.

With a growing reputation for excellence, sound finances and a passionately engaged and innovative team we are confident in our ability to do more to serve the growing number of people affected or threatened by homelessness.

If you share Oasis Community Housing's vision and believe you have the necessary skills and qualities to be a Trustee on the Board, we very much look forward to receiving your application.



GOVERNANCE

Oasis Community Housing (OCH) is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It was formed out of a merger of Aquila Way, a homeless charity in the North-East and Oasis, the housing arm of the Oasis Charitable Trust, in 2014. Oasis Community Housing is a subsidiary of Oasis Charitable Trust.

Oasis Charitable Trust brings together the following organisations to create integrated, empowered and inclusive communities so that all people experience wholeness and fullness of life.

The other subsidiaries of OCT are:

- **Oasis Community Learning** – a Multi-Academy Trust running 53 primary and secondary schools across England
- **Oasis Community Partnerships** —a Community-based charity doing grassroots community development, including youth work and other locally-owned projects in 36 hubs across England.

OCH and these other subsidiaries of Oasis Charitable Trust are increasingly aiming to work together.

OCH has a governing Board of Trustees (currently 8) which is committed to maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance. Trustees, all of whom are non-executive and unremunerated except for the reimbursement of essential expenses, are drawn from diverse backgrounds. They bring a broad range of relevant experience and skills to Board discussions. New Trustees are recommended for appointment by the existing Trustees on the advice of the Selection Panel. [Click here](#) to read the profiles of our existing Trustees.

There are four committees of the Board, on one or more of which a new Trustee may be invited to serve:

- Finance, Audit and Risk, which reviews audit activities, our investment portfolio, the risk and control framework, the effectiveness of our processes and the annual report and statutory accounts. They meet quarterly;
- Health and Safety, which supervises and monitors the safeguarding and health and safety arrangements ensuring that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused and that the health, safety and welfare of all is maintained across all services. They meet every 4 months;
- Property, which supervises the management of accommodation owned, rented and let by the charity. They meet every 6 months;
- New Opportunities, which reviews and assesses ideas and initiatives aimed at raising funds and support for the charity. They meet every 6 months;

There is a clear distinction between the oversight role of the Board and the responsibility of senior management for the day-to-day running of the organisation. Matters such as policy and strategic plans are prepared by senior management for consideration and approval by the Board.



THE ROLE

- The role of a Trustee is to provide strategic leadership and advice in line with the Charity's strategic plan and objectives.
- To use your knowledge, skills and experience to ensure that Oasis Community Housing achieves its charitable objectives.
- You will also be an ambassador for Oasis Community Housing in the public arena, with the ability to effectively represent the Oasis Community Housing in your sphere of influence.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES OF A TRUSTEE

Strategy

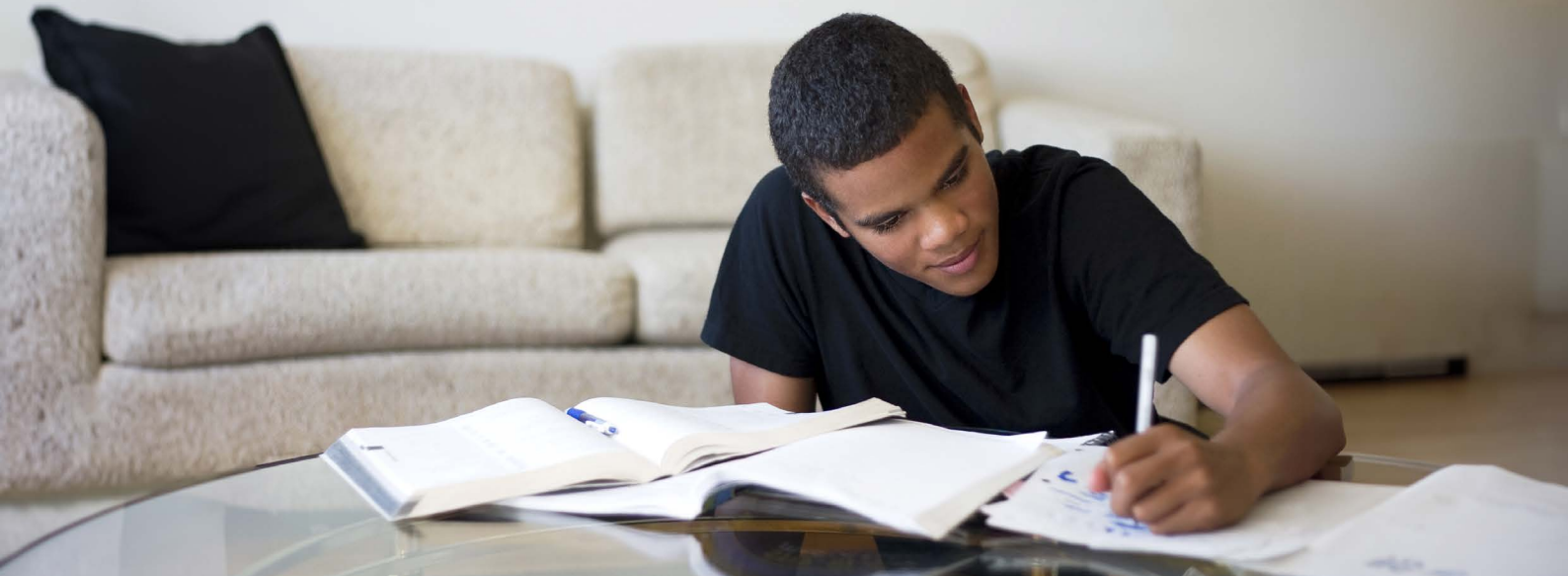
- Take part in formulating and regularly reviewing Oasis Community Housing's strategic aims and objectives.
- Monitor and review Oasis Community Housing's performance against the strategic aims and ensure that all activities fall within the Charity's stated objects and that it is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.
- Contribute where appropriate specific skills, knowledge and experience in support of Oasis Community Housing's operations and fundraising, financial and administrative activities.

Policy

- Ensure that Oasis Community Housing's functions within the legal, risk and regulatory framework of UK charity law and strives to achieve best practice in governance.
- Ensure the financial stability of Oasis Community Housing and manage its resources responsibly.
- Uphold the fiduciary duty invested in the position, undertaking duties in the best interests of Oasis Community Housing.
- Be adequately informed about the work of Oasis Community Housing.

Practice

- Regularly attend and adequately prepare for meetings of the Trustee Board and any committees and Away Days.
- Participate in seminars offered for the benefit of Trustees and undertake training.
- As appropriate, promote awareness of Oasis Community Housing to third parties.
- Perform such other tasks as may be requested from time to time by the Board of Trustees, the Chair or the Chief Executive.
- Respect and observe in practice the distinction between the duties of Trustees and those of senior staff.



PERSON PROFILE

This post is subject to an occupational requirement that the holder be a practising Christian under Part 1 of Schedule 9 to the Equality Act 2010.

In our passion and commitment to represent the diversity of God's Kingdom, we are particularly keen to invite applicants from presently under-represented groups, including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicities, female, those with a disability and younger leaders.

We are looking to appoint trustees with experience in the following specialist areas:

Finance – with strategic financial leadership experience in order to ensure effective oversight and risk management at a governance level.

Property/Facilities Management/Planning – with experience of lease agreements, property licensing and planning regulations.

Whilst these are skill areas we have identified as priority areas we would be open to considering candidates from other professional backgrounds too.

Overall, we are seeking individuals who have the following experiences, qualities and skills:

- A committed Christian of any denomination or tradition, with a heart for social justice.
- A track record of successful organisational and strategic leadership and good judgement.
- A strong understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, liabilities and responsibilities of Trustees and clarity on the difference between governance functions and management functions.
- Ability to speak one's mind, challenge constructively and the confidence to engage and contribute in areas outside your specialism.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, able to both empower and challenge supportively.
- Ability to work well as part of a diverse team of Trustees and in support of the Executive Team.
- An ability and willingness to represent Oasis Community Housing in an ambassadorial capacity.
- An understanding of, commitment to and enthusiasm for Oasis Community Housing and its work.

It would be desirable but not essential that this individual:

- Has experience of Board governance in a charitable, non-profit or corporate setting.



TERM OF APPOINTMENT

A Trustee is appointed for a term of three years extendable by mutual agreement for up to two further terms of three years up to a maximum continuous period of nine years. The role is unpaid but reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

TIME COMMITMENT

The total time commitment required of a Trustee is currently likely to equate to approximately 10 – 12 days per annum.

- Preparing for and participating in the four Board meetings. Over the course of the year one meeting is held in Newcastle, one in London and two are online. Each meeting lasts about three hours.
- Serving on one other committee which includes Finance, Risk and Audit, Health & Safety, Property and New Opportunities. These typically meet once a quarter online for two hours.
- Being prepared to be an ambassador for Oasis Community Housing and attending and supporting their events which typically take place in the North-East.
- Supporting directors in certain projects, initiatives or areas in which they have specialist skills, knowledge or experience.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications should be sent by email to Mark Powys-Smith at mark.powys-smith@macaulaysearch.com

The closing date for applications is Thursday 7th November 2024 at 5pm GMT.

Your application should comprise:

- A full CV including a full employment history showing more significant Executive and Non-Executive positions, responsibilities held and relevant achievements;
- A covering note of not more than one and a half pages summarising your motivation and reasons for being interested in a Trustee position at Oasis Community Housing;
- Daytime, evening and/or mobile telephone numbers (to be used with discretion).

THE PROCESS

Macaulay Search has been engaged as advisor on these appointments.

A selection of candidates will be invited to an initial interview by Zoom during w/c 25th November by the appointment panel chaired by Nick Salisbury. Later in the process there would also be an opportunity to informally meet Sarah Lister, the Acting Chief Executive.

You can expect to hear from Macaulay Search if you have been invited for interview by end of the day on Friday 22nd November.

