

# Harrogate Homeless Project

## Vacancy for Trustee Chair

### Brief for candidates

June 2026



# Welcome.

Thank you for your interest in Harrogate Homeless Project and in becoming our next Chair.

Harrogate Homeless Project is the leading charity in the Harrogate district supporting individuals who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or recovering from homelessness. We use our expertise to address the root causes of a person's homelessness and support them to long-term independent living. We aim to influence local, regional and national policy to help deliver better outcomes for our clients.

After six successful years as a trustee and five as our chair David Thomas is standing down later this year to take up new non-executive opportunities. We are looking to recruit another exceptional chair to lead our board of trustees and work with our management team to embed our current three-year strategy and develop our next one.

We have bold ambitions to make a step change in the support we give our clients. These ambitions include developing and extending the pathways available to our clients to move from a life of entrenched rough sleeping and homelessness to long-term independent living. We also want to extend our influence on local, regional and national housing policy.

The next period promises to be exciting for Harrogate Homeless Project as we develop our direct services to clients, extend the support offered in our premises by partners, to put our influencing of public policy on a firmer footing and to significantly invest in, and expand, our fundraising.

If you want to be part of this we would very much like to hear from you.

# Our objectives, vision and values.

Our charitable objective is to relieve the need of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness by providing temporary accommodation advice and counselling.

Our vision is that nobody in the Harrogate district has to sleep rough and that those experiencing homelessness have all the support they need to move towards independent living.

Our core values are to bring **hope** and **empowerment** to our clients through **collaboration** with others.

To do this we provide 42 rooms in different types of accommodation across Harrogate. We also run the Springboard day centre in Harrogate which provides a lunchtime meal for anyone who is at risk of homelessness or has a history of homelessness or rough sleeping. Alongside this we also provide, through collaboration with partners, counselling, a GP service, recreational activities and other support.

## Find out more.

Our annual review is available at [www.harrogate-homeless-project.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Annual-Review-2026-web-version.pdf](http://www.harrogate-homeless-project.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Annual-Review-2026-web-version.pdf).

# Board profiles.

## David Thomas (Chair)

David has a wealth of experience in general and risk management, internal audit and regulatory activities. His previous roles include Chief Risk Officer at SMBC, EMEA Region, Chief Risk Officer at RBS Plc, Corporate Banking Division and Managing Director responsible for Ulster Bank's Corporate and SME business in Ireland. David is Chair of Toronto-Dominion Bank Europe Limited and Deputy Chair of the West Bromwich Building Society.

David joined HHP as treasurer and has chaired the board of trustees for the last five years.

## Lee Evans (Vice chair)

A local Harrogate resident, Lee Evans is a business leader and Trustee. After building and successfully exiting his own regional business, Lee has been part of the charity for several years. He brings a deep passion for the local community, a drive to support those facing homelessness, and a down-to-earth approach that turns strategic skills into real local impact

## Ian Holt (Treasurer)

FCCA qualified business leader, operating at Director level for 16 years with over 35 years knowledge and experience gained through a progressive career in US and UK based public, private and VC backed limited companies. Natural leader contributing creativity, stability and purpose, achieving success through the inspiration of people and development of systems. A proud Yorkshireman who doesn't take himself too seriously.

## Dolly Dalton (Trustee)

Dolly is a registered social worker and qualified psychotherapist with 20 years experience in the voluntary sector within leadership roles supporting people facing multiple disadvantages. Dolly acts the lead trustee for safeguarding within the board. Dolly lives and works in Harrogate and is passionate about supporting people facing homelessness.

### **Stephen Day (Trustee)**

Following a 40-year career at senior level in the Housing Industry, Stephen became a trustee three years ago primarily to assist in the acquisition of properties that would help provide stability for those affected by homelessness. He has also actively taken part in fundraising within the internal team, organising events and ‘shaking the tin’ in Harrogate town centre. In his spare time, Stephen is a keen golfer and enjoys most sports.

### **Jen Denning (Trustee)**

Jen worked in schools as a librarian until she retired. The life experience she brings is a passion for fair play and integrity coming from her Christian faith. Jen has local church contacts which are an important part of our charity’s heritage and key partners for our charity. Jen has lived in Harrogate for 26 years.

### **Paul McCann (Trustee)**

After a short spell of being homeless himself, Paul joined the Army and had a successful career both as a soldier and an officer. On leaving the Army Paul joined Accenture as a management consultant before moving on to being a Partner in EY for 15 years where he finished as the EMEA COO for the Tax, Law and People Advisory Services business.

### **Karen Tyrell (Trustee)**

Karen brings over 25 years of experience across health and social care, and is the Chief Executive at Drinkaware, the UK’s leading alcohol charity. Prior to that, she worked in Executive roles for Humankind and before that at Addaction (now called With You), a drugs, alcohol and mental health charity.

Karen is a collaborative leader, with expertise in strategy and communications. She has spent time working in business development and started her career as a volunteer.



# Role profile.

## Job title:

Chair of board of trustees

## Key relationships:

Trustees, chief executive and management team, stakeholders.

## Role purpose:

The primary responsibility of the chair is to ensure the activities and plans of Harrogate Homeless Project fulfil its charitable objective.

The chair provides leadership to the Harrogate Homeless Project board of trustees ('the board') with prime responsibility for ensuring it has agreed priorities, appropriate structures and processes with a productive culture. Through this the chair should ensure the board and senior staff are able to govern well and add value to the charity.

The board is responsible for setting the strategic aims, objectives and direction of Harrogate Homeless Project delegating day-to-day management to the staff management team led by the chief executive. The board ensure the long-term sustainability of the charity through sound financial management. The chair's main role is to provide clear leadership, setting the board agenda and leading trustees in playing a full role in the development and determination of the charity's strategy.

# Role profile (cont.)

## Main responsibilities of the chair role

In addition to those duties and responsibilities performed by all trustees the chair has specific additional accountabilities as follows:

- Leading the board providing clarity of vision in fulfilling its charitable objective and encouraging all trustees to contribute their skills, experience and opinions in a positive and respectful environment.
- Ensuring the board of trustees has a diverse range of skills, expertise and life experiences and that new trustees are properly inducted, developed and appraised.
- Providing support and guidance to the chief executive and their team
- Ensuring effective governance and efficient administration of the charity and ensuring financial stability and legal compliance within the Charity Commission's regulated guidelines.
- Guiding the approval of strategic plans and discussions on the strategic development of Harrogate Homeless Project ensuring that lived experience – the voice of our clients – is heard in that process.
- Leading in the annual appraisal of the chief executive and ensuring an appropriate separation between the strategic and day-to-day operational functions of the charity.
- Building and maintaining close relationships with key stakeholders.
- Chairing board meetings, in conjunction with the chief executive drafting agendas and supporting papers for trustee meetings and ensuring the efficient and effective conduct of business in these meetings.
- Undertaking an annual review of the skills of trustees and addressing any skill gaps where appropriate.
- Safeguarding the reputation of Harrogate Homeless Project and leading by example to uphold the values of the charity.
- Ensure that the organisation promotes diversity and inclusion for all its stakeholders
- In moments of crisis authorising actions to be taken as necessary to protect our staff, clients and the reputation of Harrogate Homeless Project.
- Using networks and connections to further Harrogate Homeless Project and its aims.

# Person specification.

## Knowledge and experience

- Experience of chairing another organisation or having equivalent transferable skills from another position.
- Demonstrable record of sound judgment.
- A successful track record of bringing a diverse range of stakeholders together.
- An extensive list of local contacts to help further our charitable objective.
- A keen interest in housing, homelessness and rough sleeping and the policy background shaping these areas.

## Personal style and leadership

- An optimistic, positive and motivational approach.
- Clarity of thought in high pressured situations.
- A collaborative style bringing different ideas together into positive action.

## Skills and abilities

- Outstanding strategic leadership and board management skills.
- Ability to operate in an environment where safeguarding is a key priority.
- Great interpersonal skills used to maximise support from stakeholders.
- A strategic thinker who can adapt to a rapidly changing policy and funding environment.
- Credibility in our stakeholder community.

# Terms of appointment.

## Term and remuneration

Trustees may serve up to three consecutive terms of three years each.

The role is offered on a voluntary basis. All reasonable expenses incurred in the role will be reimbursed.

## Time commitment

The role requires one day a month although this may vary considerably. This includes:

- Six board meetings per year
- Bi-monthly meetings with the chief executive
- Attendance at occasional stakeholder events
- One-to-one meetings with trustees
- Attendance at ad hoc meetings as required

## Location

Board meetings take place at our Springboard day centre in Harrogate.

# How to apply.

To apply for this role please contact Richard Cooper, chief executive by emailing [richard@hhphostel.org](mailto:richard@hhphostel.org). You should include:

- A covering letter of no more than two sides demonstrating how you meet the person specification and the experience you will bring to the role.
- Your CV

Deadline for applications is 31 July 2026.

## Informal discussion

If you would like an informal discussion with a current trustee please ask our chief executive, Richard Cooper, by emailing him at [richard@hhphostel.org](mailto:richard@hhphostel.org) or calling 01423 647741.

## Recruitment timetable

Closing date:	31 July 2026
Shortlisting:	First week in August
Briefing with the chief executive:	Before 31 August
Interviews:	14 September