



**open**  
**solutions**

**Appointment of Board Member**

# **Recruitment Pack**



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August/September 2018



Dear Candidate

Now is a particularly exciting time to join Open Solutions (OSUK) as a Board Member.

We have refreshed our strategy and identified a range of key transformational and business priorities that will drive strong plans for OSUK and fulfil our ambition to do even more.

We are aiming to recruit a new Board Member to complement our existing high performing team and sustain our momentum, to support delivery of our plans, in line with our commitment to refresh our Board on a regular basis.

Key skills we are particularly looking for are:

- Commercial Acumen
- Knowledge and experience of Group structures
- Financial skills
- Business development
- Property related experience

We are particularly interested in skills, experience and expertise from candidates with a housing development or related background either as a contemporary Non-Executive or Executive.

We thank you for your interest and look forward to receiving your application.

Kind regards

Mark Forrest, Chair



# About Open Solutions

Open Solutions (OSUK) Ltd, trading as Open Door, was established as a wholly owned subsidiary of Halton Housing (HH) in January 2013. The goal is to establish a successful and profitable business that is undertaking property related activities that will provide a financial return to HH to reinvest in the delivery of affordable homes and services for its customers.

HH has approved an OSUK Business Plan requiring funding of **£40M**. The Plan comprises three elements; acquisition of properties for private market rent, buy to sell properties and new build development for either outright sale or private market rent.

OSUK currently owns and manages around 215 properties for private rent and is currently on site with its first new build development homes for outright sale. Turnover for 2017/18 was just more than £1M.

<http://www.opendoor-properties.co.uk/about-us/>

## Our Board

Our Board is made up of three Non-Executive and two Executive Board Members.

The Board meets every two months and Non-Executive Board members are remunerated at £5,000 per annum.

### Board Members



Mark Forrest

Chair of the Board



Judith Winterbourne

Board Member

**(Retiring 2018)**



David Hughes

Board Member





Nick Atkin

Group Chief Executive / Board Member



Rob Poole

Managing Director / Board Member

## Board Member Skills and Behaviours

As a Board Member, you should be able to demonstrate that you have:

<b>OSUK</b> <b>Core Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Setting strategic direction and objectives</li> <li>▪ Risk management, oversight and awareness</li> <li>▪ Audit, assurance and compliance</li> <li>▪ Equality and diversity</li> <li>▪ Corporate governance</li> <li>▪ Business planning, financial management or accountancy</li> <li>▪ Performance management</li> <li>▪ Value for money, efficiency metrics and use of resources</li> <li>▪ Growth through partnerships, merger and acquisition</li> <li>▪ Customer focus</li> <li>▪ Asset management</li> <li>▪ Property development</li> </ul>
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Behaviour	Definition	Behaviour descriptors
<b>CORE: Willingness and ability to govern in the OSUK culture</b>	Is a member who understands the unique culture of OSUK and demonstrates a fit with the ethos and practice of the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Understands and proactively engages in the Board’s responsibility to shape the culture of the organisation</li> <li>▪ Is able to balance effective risk management with a desire to be innovative and to develop best practice</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates a commitment to enabling others to develop and thrive</li> <li>▪ Is able to horizon scan and apply future thinking to OSUK’s strategy and delivery plans</li> </ul>
<b>1 Effective communication and engagement with colleagues</b>	As part of an effective Board and Committee it is important that members can communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communication is concise - sticks to the point and does not waste discussion time</li> <li>▪ Contributes at an appropriate time</li> <li>▪ Allows others to contribute – does not dominate the discussion</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates the ability to actively listen</li> </ul>

Behaviour		Definition	Behaviour descriptors
		effectively with colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Respects the roles and views of others – inside and outside of the Board and Committee</li> <li>▪ Is aware of the effect of own behaviour, feelings and actions on others and manages this sensitively to get the best from interactions with others</li> <li>▪ Reaches a conclusion based on a rational interpretation of the available information</li> <li>▪ Compromises where appropriate – is able to display collective responsibility for decision making</li> <li>▪ Responds to situations in a clear, open and professional manner</li> <li>▪ Builds, fosters and sustains effective working relationships</li> <li>▪ Recognises the strengths and contributions of other team members</li> <li>▪ Actively contributes to the effectiveness of the Board and Committee</li> <li>▪ Able to solve problems, identify and navigate through potential conflicts to build effective relationships with colleagues</li> <li>▪ Acts as a critical friend to OSUK</li> </ul>
2	<b>Working as part of an effective team</b>	Board and committee decision making is usually done by consensus and influencing skills play an important part. The ability to challenge constructively is also key since the Board and committee needs to maintain good working relationships while fulfilling their role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can confront and challenge with independent thinking without appearing aggressive</li> <li>▪ Challenges established thinking to ensure long term value and sustainability</li> <li>▪ Works collaboratively to secure consensus decisions</li> <li>▪ Influences others through persuasive, thoughtful contributions</li> <li>▪ Able to identify strengths and weaknesses in their own and others points of view</li> <li>▪ Raises issues in a way that is not personal and does not seek to attribute blame</li> <li>▪ Accepts and supports collective decisions</li> </ul>
3	<b>Leadership</b>	The extent to which a Board or Committee leads and motivates an organisation influences its success and is a key indicator from a regulatory perspective of effective governance. Within a Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Takes personal responsibility and encourages others to do the same</li> <li>▪ Actively promotes the interests of OSUK outside the organisation</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates high standards of honesty, ethics, integrity and probity, including understanding the impact on others</li> <li>▪ Is consistently fair and equitable in the treatment of colleagues, staff and stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Applies the principles and understanding of equal opportunities, diversity and OSUK's values at all times</li> </ul>

Behaviour		Definition	Behaviour descriptors
		and Committee, effective leadership from the Chair is equally important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Able to make independent and critical judgements, providing challenges to the Executive Team</li> <li>▪ Keeps the Board and Committee focused on reaching decisions</li> <li>▪ Is willing to make difficult decisions</li> <li>▪ Seeks to develop others and offers constructive support</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates personal resilience and the ability to help others through challenges and set backs</li> <li>▪ Understands, is committed to and is able to articulate the short, medium and long term strategic objectives of OSUK</li> </ul>
4	<b>Analysing and scrutinising</b>	A key role of the Board and Committee is to monitor performance, requiring effective analysis of information in various formats. Board and Committee members also need to seek out information, giving them the context within which to knowledgably and confidently assess performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assimilates information effectively</li> <li>▪ Identifies any major gaps in information</li> <li>▪ Self-confident enough to not be right and certain all the time but have a willingness to bring questions to explore</li> <li>▪ Able to read between the lines</li> <li>▪ Weighs up the pros and cons</li> <li>▪ Adapts own behaviour appropriately to support and facilitate change</li> <li>▪ Explores the implications of a proposal or action</li> <li>▪ Able to analyse and interpret sometimes conflicting information to reach conclusions and choose an appropriate course of action</li> <li>▪ Offers appropriate and relevant comparisons</li> <li>▪ Keeps to the appropriate level of detail</li> <li>▪ Actively seeks facts, data and information necessary to ensure focus on management of risk and delivery of business performance is in line with regulatory, legal and other key factors</li> <li>▪ Able to draw correct conclusions from complex information</li> <li>▪ Pays attention to detail without losing sight of wider strategic goals</li> </ul>
5	<b>Directing strategy</b>	Effective performance in this area means that a Board and Committee member adds value to OSUK's framework for setting future plans and action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Able to take an overview, considering all factors</li> <li>▪ Offers creative ideas or perspectives</li> <li>▪ Believes in change and scans the environment to see the bigger picture and the longer term future in order to deliver added value</li> <li>▪ Applies specialist knowledge appropriately</li> <li>▪ Evaluates risks and likely outcomes when reaching decisions</li> <li>▪ Keeps up to date with internal and external operating environment</li> <li>▪ Recognises major/potential influences on the organisation's future and its strategic plans</li> <li>▪ Balances commercial and social principles</li> <li>▪ Focused on results and outcomes for customers and the organisation</li> <li>▪ Delegates responsibility appropriately</li> </ul>

Behaviour		Definition	Behaviour descriptors
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributes to setting, prioritising and monitoring delivery strategic objectives</li> <li>Flexible mind set, willing to adapt to plans in response to changes affecting the business</li> </ul>
6	<b>Customer focused</b>	A key goal for OSUK is to provide good quality housing alongside excellent customer services. The Board and Committee, therefore, need to align their approach with the requirements and priorities of customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows constant awareness of the customer as the primary business driver</li> <li>Listens to, understands and responds to the needs, views and aspirations of OSUK's customers</li> <li>Uses qualitative and quantitative lines of assurance to inform Board decision making in an open and transparent way</li> <li>Understands the impact of the digital agenda in relation to customer services</li> <li>Demonstrates a clear tenant perspective and an ability to understand and articulate tenants' needs</li> </ul>
7	<b>Self-management and development</b>	It is imperative that a Board and Committee member takes ownership of their own personal development and commits fully to the role they have been given	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepares in advance, regularly attends and participates fully in Board and Committee meetings</li> <li>Uses delegated powers appropriately</li> <li>Demonstrates enthusiasm, energy and commitment to the work of the Board and Committee</li> <li>Respects confidences</li> <li>Participates fully in appraisals and Board and Committee effectiveness reviews</li> <li>Actively seeks feedback</li> <li>Passionate about continuous learning to develop effectiveness as a Board and Committee member and demonstrates this learning</li> <li>Seeks opportunities to be exposed to new thinking, experiences and insights</li> <li>Is up to date and in touch with relevant issues</li> </ul>
8	<b>Partnerships and relationships</b>	Committed to partnerships and relationships which support the delivery of OSUK's strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acts responsibly and appropriately</li> <li>Demonstrates loyalty to OSUK</li> <li>Able to bring value to the Board and Committee as a result of involvement in other partnerships, networks and activity</li> <li>Demonstrates an awareness of stakeholder and partner roles and their value to OSUK</li> <li>Actively develops appropriate networks on behalf of OSUK</li> <li>Established a rapport and commands the respect of other Board and Committee members</li> <li>Effective ambassador and advocate, enhancing OSUK's reputation and profile</li> </ul>

# Board Member

## Job Description

<b>Role:</b>	OSUK Board Member
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Board Chair
<b>Accountable for:</b>	OSUK and its future and accountability to HH as parent and shareholder
<b>Supported by:</b>	The Governance Team

### Overall Purpose of the Role

- To contribute to and promote OSUK's vision, mission and values through the management control, accountability and good conduct of OSUK and of the Board.
- To support OSUK's role as a subsidiary of HH in delivering the Group strategy.
- To provide, in conjunction with other Board Members and the Executive, strategic leadership to OSUK.
- To share responsibility for Board decisions and act only in the best interests of OSUK.

### Specific Duties and Responsibilities

1. To ensure that the policies and procedures relating to governance, legal, regulatory requirements and good practice are in place and reviewed on a regular basis.
2. To help deliver OSUK's objectives and support and challenge the Executive Team to help achieve these objectives.
3. To ensure that these objectives are also achieved through the appropriate delegation of authority, operational procedures and the employment of suitably skilled staff.
4. To regularly measure and review the performance of the organisation and make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.
5. To ensure the organisation runs efficiently, maximises the impact of its resources and provides Value for Money in its service delivery.
6. To review the activities of the organisation from time to time and to recommend changes that are appropriate or in the interests of OSUK.
7. To agree annually OSUK's budget and business plan and seek agreement on its appropriateness from HH.

8. To exercise sound financial management and maintain financial viability by approving the business plan, accounts, budgets, liquidity and borrowing facilities whilst meeting OSUK's vision, values and objectives.
9. To ensure that the interests and needs of OSUK's current and future customers are considered in all matters.
10. To ensure that the organisation's assets are kept in good order and are used for the benefit of the organisation.
11. To promote openness, accountability and transparency in the organisation's dealings with all its stakeholders.
12. To contribute to and implement the risk management frameworks for OSUK and ensure risks within it are identified and managed.
13. To attend on a regular basis, Board meetings and contribute effectively to them, to ensure that, as a group, the Board has the capacity and commitment to achieve the strategic aims of the organisation.
14. To ensure that the business of the Board is suitably conducted, documented, is timely and meets the requirements of good practice and governance.
15. To attend conferences, training sessions, seminars, meetings and other events where they are in the interests of the organisation and to act as a representative for OSUK.

## Remuneration

Board Member	<b>£ 5,000 per annum</b> Plus learning and development opportunities
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# How to apply

Please email a CV and covering letter, outlining your reasons for wishing to join the OSUK Board and the potential contribution you think you could make, to our independent consultant;

Paul Johnson  
Managing Director, 3Dk Solutions Ltd.  
Mobile: 07713 085001  
[paul.johnson@3dks.com](mailto:paul.johnson@3dks.com)

It is important that your covering letter highlights supporting evidence of how your previous experience and skills relate to the criteria outlined in the recruitment pack.

Your CV should provide the following:

- Full name and postal address
- Work telephone (if applicable) and home telephone number, mobile number and email address (most written communication with you will be electronic)
- Details of any criminal convictions other than spent convictions (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)
- Employment history (explaining any gaps)
- Education and dates your qualifications were obtained
- Current memberships of relevant professional associations/Institutes and dates
- Name and contact addresses/phone numbers of two referees. We will not contact your referees without your prior permission.

You need to state if you are related to a Board Member, an existing employee or customer of OSUK or Halton Housing, and if you have any financial interest in either organisations. If you are invited for interview, you may be asked to bring along evidence of your professional qualifications as described on your CV.

If you would like an informal and confidential discussion before formally expressing your interest, please contact:

Nick Atkin, Group Chief Executive                      07903 594827

Paul Johnson, 3Dk    07713 085001

## Key dates:

Closing date:    **12 Noon, Friday 12 October 2018**

Final Interviews:    **24 October 2018**

Your application will be treated in the strictest of confidence.