

Board Members



Andrew Foster Group Chair

Andrew Foster is the owner and Director of Andrew Foster Consulting Limited, a specialist consultancy focussing on carrying out governance reviews and providing other related services to clients in both the public and private sector.

Andrew was, until April 2019, Executive Director of Governance and Contracts at Midland Heart, a Housing Association headquartered in Birmingham with 33,000 homes under management. His role there focussed on ensuring the effective operation of governance and risk management and ensuring its procurement activities deliver value for money and high-quality services to customers. Andrew's responsibilities cover Governance; Legal; Risk and Audit; Procurement; Health and Safety; Facilities; Insurance; Policy.

A qualified solicitor, he previously worked in law firms and in the IT outsourcing sector.

He has a strong belief in the critical importance of a quality home to the wellbeing and life chances of social housing tenants, and in the role of social housing providers in empowering the communities in which they operate.

Andrew lives in North Worcestershire and enjoys running and music and mentoring young people in his spare time.

Specialist Skills

Strong knowledge of governance

Good commercial acumen-has a well-developed understanding of what makes for a well-run and efficient business and recent experience of delivering major change projects

A contemporary and detailed knowledge of the Housing sector and how policy change may affect housing providers in the future



Kaye Law-Fox
Group Vice Chair/Chair of Oakleaf Commercial Services

Kaye Law-Fox is an experienced executive and non-executive director, with 25 years senior management experience in public, private and charity sector roles: including the NHS, security agencies of the Home Office, a national charity and several not-for-profit companies. In her early career Kaye was responsible for purchasing and property development for a national restaurant chain; for the majority of her career she developed or provided strategic corporate governance systems and latterly provided research and analysis for national charity projects.

Kaye has eight years non-executive experience, including audit and risk and professional standards committees; serving Boards of three housing associations and a sector skills body.

Kaye's management qualifications include BSc (Hons) Management Systems: MSc Health Management: MSc Rural Resource Management. She is also a qualified project, programme and portfolio manager.

Specialist Skills

Strategic business planning – establishing systems of corporate business planning

Regulation & Governance standards - strategic business development

Project, programme and portfolio management



Jane Preece
Group Board Member
Chair of People & Performance Committee

Jane Preece moved to the West Midlands in 1990 from her native Wales to pursue a career in human resources and related areas. She has worked in the public, private and not for profit sector at Director level, most recently with Walsall Housing Group where she was Director of Organisational Development and Company Secretary.

Her project management and leadership skills have enabled organisations to achieve IIP Gold Standard, ISO9001, TUPE transfers of employees, changes of employment contracts in unionised environments. She has been nominee for Ofsted and involved in housing regulator inspections.

In 2016, a house with a canal mooring brought her to Kidderminster; she joined The Community Housing Group's Vestia Board and started her "dream job" at Severn Valley Railway as their first HR Manager, responsible for their paid employees and the Heritage Skills Training Academy apprentices.

Jane has held a number of non-executive directorships/trustee appointments in the fields of housing, training and various charities. Currently, she is the Chair of Sustain UK Ltd who provide supported accommodation for vulnerable adults in Birmingham and is a board member of PTP Ltd who deliver training opportunities in the West Midlands. Having undertaken the role of Company Secretary in a housing group who collapsed their group structure, Jane will bring relevant experience to the The Community Housing Group Board.

Specialist Skills

Human Resources

Governance

Strategic thinking

Interpersonal and communication skills, having worked in people management roles for over 30 years



Andrew Fry
Group Board Member

Andrew is a professional company director, non-executive director and chair with 30 years of diverse private and public sector management and director experience.

Andrew trained initially in FMCG brand management marketing and advertising. Subsequently he founded a specialised retail design and manufacturing group which he headed as a hands-on MD for 19 years. He now combines work as a professional NED and charity trustee with running a property and innovation consultancy business.

Andrew's NED experience over the last 10 years includes roles as diverse as Vice Chair of Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust; Chair of Sandwell Arts Trust and of Sandwell Leisure Trust; trustee of the Black Country Living Museum; and NED at The Community Housing Group and Oakleaf Commercial Services.

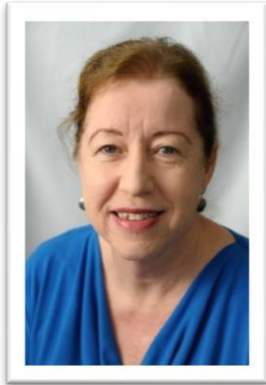
Andrew has a particular interest in the natural and built environment which combines with his experience in design and an enthusiasm for history. He also has a strong commitment to social inclusion and in particular to the care of those with mental health issues.

Specialist Skills

Entrepreneurship

Strategy - including strategic analysis and challenge

Corporate governance - including managing boards, balancing support with challenge; risk management; health and safety management both practical and strategic; financial scrutiny; HR and legals.



Liz Heaven
Chair of Vestia Community Trust

Liz has over 35 years' experience working in the social care sector, principally in social work and learning and development roles. Most recently, prior to becoming a freelance consultant, she worked for the national sector skills council for social care - Skills for Care. She was employed there as Manager for the Midlands area, which encompassed the whole of the East and West Midlands.

Since 2013 Liz has worked on a freelance basis for a not-for-profit organisation operating in the fields of social care; third sector charities and public sector institutions. The organisation provides a bespoke learning and development service, designing and delivering learning for a wide range of audiences. It also supports organisational development and quality improvement through a range of consultancy services, including bespoke audit and assurance commissions.

Liz's Professional qualifications include Freelance management consultant and trainer/Qualified and registered social worker; Degree and Msc in Social Sciences; Post graduate qualifications in health and social services management; teaching and learning; coaching and mentoring; programme and project management; Graduate of the Institute of Personnel Management and Prince 2 accredited - Foundation and Practitioner levels.

Specialist Skills

Strategic thinking and analysis

Programme and project management for business development and assurance

Occupationally, current professional experience in social care and health - including a robust understanding of the legislative, regulatory and policy drivers relating to the sector



Martin Jukes

Chair of Worcestershire Telecare (Trading as amica24)

Martin is Managing Director of Mpathy Plus, a management consultancy formed in 2005 who specialise in customer service and contact centre. He operates at both a strategic and operational levels in three main areas; business transformation, performance improvement and operational support. This involves working in various areas including Operations, IT, HR, Marketing etc. Although working in all sectors, Mpathy Plus has over 50 social housing providers as clients. Clients from other sectors have included Centrica, Coutts, DWP, Exxon Mobil, G4S, Open University, Punch Retail, Ricoh, Rolls Royce and Bentley Motor Cars, Virgin Trains, Vodafone, Western Union and others.

Previous employment has involved working for Sitel; a global business process and contact centre outsourcer where he led the team of Consultants across Central Europe, Birmingham Midshires Building Society where he had various roles in IT, Service Delivery and Project Management and BT where he maintained large business customers equipment.

Martin also provides support to Small and Medium Enterprises in developing their businesses to meet their needs e.g. growth, rationalisation, exit etc.

He is an MBA graduate and has completed various other training including Prince2. He is a Worcestershire Ambassador whose members aim is to promote Worcestershire as a place to 'Work, Live or Visit'.

Specialist Skills

General Business Management

Development of new models of service delivery

Harnessing ICT to transform a business



Tony Tench

Tony has over 20 years of experience in housing, development, asset management and social care. He is currently Chief Operations Officer for Housing and Care 21, a leading registered provider of quality housing and social care for older people. Previously, Tony held a number of Executive roles at Hanover Housing Association and prior to that led on Extra Care housing development for Anchor Trust. Tony is a Business and Marketing Graduate.

Tony's achievements in housing and social care include: Improving organisational governance; working with the Board to agree a realistic strategy and business plan, simplifying the governance structures, agreeing and prioritising core purpose, improving the control environment and re-aligning operations management; Leading development; delivering an innovative £72m retirement village re-development and leading a sustained development programme of new specialist extra care housing delivering over 1,300 new properties in the last 3 years and currently managing a pipeline of circa 1,700 new build.

Tony has also led on a number of sizeable acquisitions of both rented and leasehold properties; Improving assets; agreeing the strategic approach to asset management. Ensuring properties are safe for residents and staff; and investing to maximise both resident satisfaction and the long term value from properties; Driving quality improvements from services; being the responsible person with CQC for social care services delivering circa 40,000 hours per week; and driving service improvements in housing and care services evidenced by a balanced set of qualitative and quantitative key performance indicators; Leading on digital developments that support more effective ways of working (to improve resident satisfaction and enable staff to do their roles more efficiently); and working in partnership with suppliers to offer residents better and less intrusive support services enabled by technology.

Specialist Skills

Leadership

Strategy Development

Housing, Asset Management and social care sector knowledge



Tim Leslie

Tim is a senior civil servant at Ofqual, the exams regulator. He joined Ofqual in 2012 as its Director of Risk and Markets. His current position is Director of the National Reference Test, a new test launched in a sample of schools this year. He has been responsible for its design and development, procurement and commercial management, and now leads its annual delivery. He has also contributed to the reform of GCSEs and A levels, making regulatory decisions on the proposed new qualifications.

Tim has a broad background in regulation and risk management. Prior to joining Ofqual, he was Chief Executive and Director of Regulation at Standards for England, a non-departmental public body sponsored by DCLG, which regulated ethical standards in local government. He led teams responsible for investigating complaints, publishing guidance and monitoring local authorities' operation of the standards framework. He also worked at the Financial Services Authority, supervising major banks.

Tim's earlier career was in the private sector. Between 1997 and 2008, he had various roles at Xansa plc, a business process and IT outsourcing company including as its Risk Director, where he implemented a new approach to enterprise risk management. He also worked at NatWest for 17 years in roles including Director of International Markets in its Treasury and Capital Markets business, and Head of the Group's Business Consultancy unit.

Tim has worked extensively with boards via his experience as CEO of Standards for England, senior civil servant at Ofqual and as Risk Director at Xansa Plc.

Tim has a degree in Engineering from Cambridge University and is an Associate of the Institute of Bankers.

Specialist Skills

Corporate governance and regulatory management

Risk Management

Programme and change management



Colin Small
Group Board Member
Chair of Audit & Assurance Committee

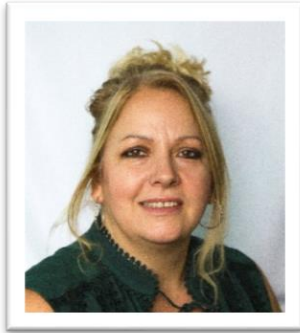
Colin is a finance based professional with public, private and (considerable) third sector experience. As a qualified accountant, his early working years were spent in industry including heavy machinery manufacture, trailer repair and manufacture, and a builder's merchant. Joined the local water authority in 1975 and spent 3 years moving from public to private outlook following the 1974 move from water boards.

In 1979 Colin joined his first Housing Association based in Wolverhampton as Financial Controller, becoming Finance Director later. This was the start of a 28 year career with Normid, Touchstone (now Midland Heart) and Festival (Now Fortis) at senior executive level and taking on HR and company secretarial duties along the way.

In 2007/2008 Colin decided to move away from full time employment and develop a portfolio of activities. This has involved board related appointments previously as Chair of Mercian Housing Association, Circle Housing Group (now Clarion) and currently Stonewater Housing Group (and Chair of Risk and Assurance Committee) Chair of the Social Housing Pension Scheme, Trustee of the Pensions Trust and Senior Independent Director at Trident Housing Group (and Chair of the Remuneration Committee). Throughout this time Colin has also general managed a small West Bromwich based Community Association and from 1999 till 2006 served on the board of the Wrekin Housing Trust. All this has given me a unique insight into the sector at executive and non-executive level, including 3 completed successful mergers.

Specialist Skills

Finance
Risk Management
Governance



Julie Robinson
Group Board Member

Julie has over 10 years' experience in the social housing sector at senior and executive level and has had responsibility during that time for all areas of the business providing regular reports to Audit & Risk Committees, Remuneration Committees, Development Committees and Board.

Julie has strong strategic planning skills across all areas of the business and ensures that a risk and assurance culture is embedded throughout the organisation. Specifically, her experience lies in determining the financial and treasury strategy for organisations, ensuring it aligns to the organisations risk appetite and growth objectives, and where identified leading to renegotiations of existing facilities and raising new finance. She has led the business planning cycle in different organisations and has experience of stress testing those plans and developing and monitoring recovery plans in the event of a "perfect storm" scenario.

Julie has a sound understanding of the regulatory environment in which we operate and as well as an in-depth understanding of finance and has a broad understanding and practical experience of most aspects within the social housing sector. Julie is an advocate of lean, systemic thinking approaches as a methodology to improve internal, customer centric services whilst maintaining the requirements of complex financial models to deliver against business plans and delivering efficient and effective services.

Her experience as a non-executive is as a Trustee at a Hospice in Watford where she was also Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee for 5 years. Whilst in the role, Julie was seen as a good communicator who demonstrated the behaviours that she values which are honest, respectful and professional. She was instrumental in ensuring that the Board operated effectively, sharing the organisations values and working collaboratively without self-interest putting the interest of the business and customers first at all times.

Specialist Skills

Finance
Audit & Risk Assurance
Lean Systems thinking



Trevor Graham

Trevor has a background in Building Surveying working at Birmingham City Council's Housing Department in numerous roles culminating in a managerial role within the organisation's Technical Services. Department.

Subsequent roles included Structural Surveyor with a Birmingham based Structural and Civil Engineering consultancy followed by Stoke-on-Trent City Council as a Senior Surveyor, and South Staffordshire Housing Association as Senior Technical Officer.

In 2003 Trevor made the move from the public sector to the private sector to become the Partnering Director of a West Midlands based contractor specialising in the provision of social housing repairs and maintenance services, with responsibility for the company's growth and diversification to become a major regional provider of maintenance services to social housing in the Midlands and Wales.

In 2017 Trevor set up his own consultancy specialising in transformational change, helping social housing providers to develop and implement service improvement strategies and processes, and assisting small and medium size contractors to build their businesses.

Specialist Skills

Building Surveying

Asset Management & Development

Transformational Change