

Four new members appointed to Homes England's Board

The Secretary of State has announced four new non-executive directors to join the Board of Homes England, the Government's housing and regeneration agency.

All four members bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Board and will strengthen its capability and resilience. They will play an important role in helping the agency to build much needed new homes and regenerate places and communities across the country.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Michael Gove MP said:

Our Levelling Up White Paper sets out our plan to spread opportunity throughout the country and regenerating our towns and cities is an essential part of this.

Homes England have been given a hugely important role in this work – spearheading the transformation of towns and cities across the country to create vibrant and thriving communities on previously derelict sites.

Strengthening the leadership at Homes England is an important step on our mission to deliver these ambitious projects and I warmly welcome these new appointments.

Peter Freeman CBE, the Chair of the Homes England Board, said of the appointments:

With a renewed focus on regeneration for Homes England, it is an incredibly exciting time to be joining the agency and I am thrilled that Patricia, Lesley-Ann, Ian and Mark have been appointed to the Board.

Their diverse range of skills, passion and experience from across the country will be vital in guiding the agency as it continues to deliver on the government's housing and regeneration ambitions. As the country moves beyond recent challenges and looks towards levelling up, Homes England's role has never been so important.

Building a sense of place and community is at the heart of what Homes England does through its broad range of activity. I welcome the opportunity to work with all four new Board members as Homes England continues to evolve into an even stronger delivery institution.

Pat Ritchie CBE is the former Chief Executive of Newcastle City Council and Chair of the Government Property Agency.

Pat Ritchie CBE said of her appointment:

I am delighted to be joining the Homes England Board as it renews its focus on regeneration. I look forward to helping to create innovative partnerships with local places to drive housing and economic growth as part of government's commitment to levelling up the country.

Lesley-Ann Nash is a non-executive director at Workspace Group Plc.

Lesley-Ann Nash said of her appointment:

Housing is significant challenge facing the country and has the potential to create important social benefits. I am looking forward to contributing to the work of the Board and the agency.

Mark Henderson is the CEO of Home Group housing association and founder of Homes for the North.

Mark Henderson said of his appointment:

I am really looking forward to joining the Homes England Board and to working with the agency to deliver well designed and, importantly, more affordable homes for communities across the whole country.

Lord Ian Austin was MP for Dudley North from 2005 until 2019. During this time, Lord Austin served as the Minister for Housing and Planning and Minister for the West Midlands. In 2020, he was appointed to the House of Lords as Lord Austin of Dudley.

Lord Austin said of his appointment:

I am very pleased to be supporting Homes England's crucial work in supporting the government's levelling up agenda and delivering transformative regeneration projects that are so important to providing better quality and more sustainable homes for communities around the country.

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About Homes England

Homes England is the Government's housing and regeneration agency. We have the appetite, influence, expertise and resources to drive positive market change.

Homes England welcomes partners who share our ambition to challenge the traditional norms and build better homes faster. For more information visit our home page or follow us on Twitter @HomesEngland.

About the New Board Members

Pat Ritchie CBE

Pat is an experienced senior leader in economic development, housing, and property.

She was Chief Executive of Newcastle City Council for over eight years, where she notably secured the multi-million-pound investment deal to bring Legal & General to Newcastle's flagship 'Helix' development and led on negotiations to secure a devolution deal for the North of Tyne Mayoral Combined Authority where she was the first head of paid service. Pat led the city's response to the pandemic and oversaw the Newcastle Covid Recovery Plan including an ambitious £50m plan to transform the city centre.

Pat was appointed to Chair of the Government Property Agency in January 2020. She is a member of the Advisory Board of the National Leadership Centre and a member of Newcastle University Council. She is a former Chief Executive of the Homes and Communities Agency (Homes England) and former Deputy Chief Executive of the One North East Regional Development Agency.

Pat was awarded her CBE in January 2021 for services to Local Government and public service reform.

Lesley-Ann Nash, MBA, FCMA

Lesley-Ann spent two decades in investment banking, building and leading structured interbank businesses. She was a managing director of Morgan Stanley but left to offer her financial skills to government. She spent seven years in the Cabinet Office leading a range of commercial programmes which positively impacted both public and private sectors as well as citizens nationally.

On leaving Government, Lesley-Ann has embarked on a non-executive director career. She has been appointed to the boards of St James's Place plc (FTSE 100) and Workspace Group plc (FTSE 250). She also sits on the board of the business campaigning group, London First.

Lesley-Ann is a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and holds an MBA from CASS business school.

Mark Henderson

Mark is Chief Executive of Home Group, with 55,000 homes under management across Scotland and England and one of the largest providers of supported housing, working with 26,000 vulnerable people in nearly 500 services. Home Group is also one of the largest developers of housing in the UK with a turnover of some £430 million per annum. It was voted the UK's best Landlord and best Housing Association in 2014 and 2016.

Mark is currently a director and trustee of Whiteley Village Trust. He previously ran his own business before joining Home Group, before that had worked with the RDA as Operations Director and a variety of regeneration and economic development jobs across the country in local government, most recently as Chief Executive of one of the largest County Councils in the country. He was also a former Board Member for the National Housing Federation and former Chair of Homes for the North.

Lord Austin of Dudley

Lord Austin has spent a large part of his career working to meet housing needs by tackling homelessness, improving the provision of housing and addressing problems of affordability.

Lord Austin spent a significant time of his career serving his local area of Dudley where he served on Dudley Council before becoming the MP for Dudley North in 2005. During this time, Lord Austin served as the Minister for Housing and Planning and Minister for the West Midlands. In 2020, he was appointed to the House of Lords as Lord Austin of Dudley.

Lord Austin also serves as a member of the Corporation of Dudley College.