

Chair of Audit & Risk Committee Candidate Brief

October 2026



Appointment - Chair of Audit & Risk Committee (ARC)

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Teachers' Housing Association (THA) as a new Board Member and Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee.

This is an exciting time to join THA. We are a small, specialist housing association with a strong social purpose, a clear sense of identity and fresh ambitions for the future.

Founded in 1967 to address the shortage of affordable housing for teachers, today we own and manage around 650 homes, including general needs housing across six London boroughs and sheltered housing for more than 300 older residents across England.

Our offer has broadened over the years to include other key workers, but our connection to education remains central to who we are. Our size is also one of our strengths; we can stay close to our tenants, understand what matters to them and shape our services around their feedback.

The need for affordable housing continues to grow. Demand from teachers and other key workers significantly exceeds supply, while demand for affordable sheltered housing is also increasing at a time when some providers are withdrawing from the sector. This gives THA a real opportunity to build on its heritage and expertise while responding thoughtfully to changing housing needs.

Earlier this year we launched our new Corporate Plan for 2026–2031. It sets out our refreshed vision, mission and values and the priorities that will guide us through the next phase of our development.

Underpinned by a strong financial business plan, the Corporate Plan balances ambition with resilience and sustainability, while keeping our focus firmly on delivering high-quality homes and services for our tenants.

Our staff and Board are passionate about the difference THA makes. We may be a relatively small organisation, but we are distinctive, responsive and ambitious about what we can achieve.

Our current Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee will step down at the end of the year having completed their tenure, and we are now looking for someone to build on that strong foundation.

Alongside contributing as a Board member to THA's strategic direction and governance, you will lead the Audit & Risk Committee and help ensure the Board has clear, proportionate and effective assurance across audit, financial reporting, risk management, internal controls and regulatory assurance.

We are seeking a professionally qualified accountant with current or recent senior-level financial experience and the confidence to operate effectively at Board or Committee level. You will bring strong expertise in audit, financial reporting, risk and assurance, together with the ability to cut through complexity, identify what really matters and communicate it clearly to the wider Board.

An understanding of social housing, its regulatory environment and the wider challenges facing the sector will also be valuable.

Just as importantly, you will bring sound judgement and a measured, collaborative and inclusive approach. You will know when to challenge, when to listen and how to draw out different perspectives, while building positive relationships with fellow Board members, the Executive Team, auditors and advisers.

We hope this candidate brief gives you a strong sense of THA, our ambitions for the future and the contribution you could make at an important point in our development.

If this opportunity aligns with your experience, values and aspirations, we would be delighted to hear from you.



Steven Dennis
Board Chair



Sandra Fawcett
Chair of Nominations & Remuneration Committee

Thank you for your interest in joining Teachers' Housing Association.

This candidate brief is intended to help you understand the opportunity and prepare your application.

Hilary Channing Associates have been engaged to manage the recruitment process so please ensure your application is sent to: hilary@hilarychanningassociates.co.uk

Your application should consist of:

- **Your CV:** concise, tailored to the role and ideally no more than three sides of A4.
- **A supporting statement:** ideally one or two sides of A4, explaining your motivation for applying and demonstrating your suitability for the Chair of ARC role. Concise examples to illustrate this are encouraged.

Please also complete the Declaration Form and you are invited to complete the Equality and Diversity Form on the page beside this brief. Both forms will be detached from your application on receipt.

Please mark your email subject line: Chair (ARC) THA Application.

We will acknowledge applications within 24 hours of receipt. If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please contact us so that we can check; proof of sending an email does not constitute proof of receipt.

We are committed to an inclusive recruitment process and are happy to discuss reasonable adjustments you may need. Please also read the Privacy Statement on our website before applying, for information about how your personal information is held and used.

Key dates and selection process

Stage	Date and arrangements
Closing date	9am, Monday 2 November 2026
First interviews	Online with Hilary Channing, Managing Director of Hilary Channing Associates, and an Associate Director, on Thursday 12 or Friday 13 November 2026
Final interviews	In person, during the afternoon of Thursday 26 November 2026, at Teachers' Housing Association in London, with the Board Appointments Panel

Please let us know if you cannot attend on the final interview date. We aim to be as flexible as possible, although arranging an alternative date may be challenging due to panel members' availability.

If you would welcome an informal conversation about the opportunity, please email hilary@hilarychanningassociates.co.uk to arrange a call back.

We look forward to receiving your application.



Leadership and Governance

THA's Chief Executive, Operations Director and Finance Director all joined the Association in 2024. Further information is available here [Our Executive Team - Teachers' Housing Association](#)

THA is a registered social landlord with exempt charitable status. It is an affiliated member of the National Housing Federation (NHF), and its Board has signed up to the NHF Code of Governance. Its services to tenants and complaints handling fall within the remit of the Housing Ombudsman.

The Board currently comprises ten members, including the Chair, which will reduce to eight in time. It is supported by two committees: Audit & Risk and Nominations & Remuneration. The Board also convenes Task and Finish Groups as required to consider specific challenges or priority matters.

Board member biographies are available here [Our Board - Teachers' Housing Association](#)

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

By 2031 THA will be a recognised provider of accommodation for key workers especially those with a background in education and will be delivering new housing supply in line with the national and local housing strategy.

Mission

To provide good quality affordable housing for our tenants, delivering new homes for key workers, especially those with a background in education.

Values

TIDE - how much we move forward through living our values together.

Trustworthy - we're clear, transparent and do what we say.

Inclusive - we're inclusive to all and put people first by listening and understanding.

Determined - We make it happen.

Evolving - We learn and adapt to improve our services.

Our Strategic Objectives

Objective 1 - Provide good quality housing and customer services

THA will provide high-quality, affordable, energy efficient, safe homes and services that meet the diverse needs of our tenants. Our homes will be well maintained and fully compliant with all relevant regulatory and quality standards.

Objective 2 - Financial sustainability

THA will be financially sustainable, demonstrating our capacity to deliver agreed operating surplus targets, and maintain strong, strategic asset management.

Objective 3 - Modernise systems & processes

THA will be a modern, efficient organisation that uses systems, data and technology to enhance how we work and improve services for tenants and customers.

Objective 4 - Diversity & excellence

THA will be a diverse and inclusive organisation who attract and retain a professional workforce that care passionately about what they do and the services they provide to tenants and customers. Through increased tenant engagement, we will develop an understanding of our tenants' needs to effectively target our services and deliver fair, equitable outcomes.

Objective 5 - Deliver a sustainable programme of growth

THA will have a sustainable programme of growth to provide additional homes that support the national, local strategic housing agendas.

For more information on our Strategic Objectives, please visit our [Corporate Plan](#).



Chair of Audit & Risk Committee

Role Profile and Specification

Purpose of Role

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is a Board member who leads the Committee on behalf of the Board and ensures that it fulfils the responsibilities set out in its Terms of Reference, including oversight of audit, risk management, internal controls, financial reporting, fraud, whistleblowing and regulatory assurance.

The Chair (ARC) provides effective leadership, scrutiny and challenge across the Committee's principal areas of responsibility to ensure that the Board receives clear and proportionate assurance on these matters.

The Chair (ARC) will work constructively with Committee members, the Board, Chief Executive, Executive Team, Company Secretary, internal and external auditors and other advisers.

Key responsibilities (ARC)

Committee leadership

- Chair ARC meetings effectively, ensuring focused discussion, inclusive participation, robust scrutiny, constructive challenge and clear conclusions and recommendations.
- Work with the Chief Executive and Company Secretary to ensure agendas and papers are proportionate, timely and aligned to the Committee's Terms of Reference and Corporate Plan.
- Ensure the Committee has the information required to consider matters fully and discharge its responsibilities effectively.

Audit, Assurance and Statutory Accounting

- Lead the Committee's oversight of internal and external audit and its review of the annual financial statements.
- Oversee the process for the appointment and review of the external auditor.
- Lead the Committee's review of the draft annual financial statements, including accounting policies, standards, audit findings, significant adjustments and the management letter, before recommending approval to the Board.
- Ensure significant accounting, audit and control matters are properly explored and that recommendations to the Board are clear and evidence based.
- Maintain an effective and appropriately independent relationship with the internal and external auditors.

Internal Controls

- Lead the Committee in obtaining assurance that effective policies, procedures and internal controls are in place and supported by an appropriate control culture.
- Oversee the Chief Executive's annual internal controls assurance report and the annual review of financial regulations, referring proposed changes to the Board for approval.

Internal Audit

- Ensure effective and proportionate internal audit arrangements are in place and aligned to organisational risks and assurance needs, including appropriate review of the internal audit provider and recommendations to the Board on appointment where required.
- Lead the Committee's review of internal audit reports and ensure agreed management actions are monitored and completed.



Risk Management

- Lead the Committee in overseeing THA's risk management framework and internal controls, including regular review and scrutiny of risk maps and the effectiveness of management action in response to identified weaknesses or emerging risks. Ensure recommendations are made to the Board for approval where required.
- Advise the Board of significant changes to THA's risk profile and ensure material risks are appropriately stress tested where they may affect the business plan.
- Ensure the Committee receives assurance that assets are protected, risks are mitigated and adequate insurance cover is maintained.

Fraud, whistleblowing and regulatory assurance

- Lead the Committee's oversight of fraud, bribery, whistleblowing and relevant regulatory assurance, escalating material concerns to the Board and, where appropriate, ensuring regulatory requirements are met.
- Oversee THA's systems and controls for the prevention of bribery and money laundering.
- Ensure whistleblowing arrangements are secure and effective, with appropriate independent investigation and follow-up action.

Assurance and escalation

- Ensure the Committee has access to, and uses its authority appropriately to obtain, the information, reports, investigations, advice and independent assurance reasonably required to fulfil its role.
- Where concerns cannot be resolved satisfactorily, ensure they are escalated appropriately to the Board.

Reporting to the Board

- Report to the Board after each Committee meeting on significant matters considered, conclusions reached, recommendations made and any issues requiring Board attention or decision.
- Ensure the Committee makes appropriate recommendations to the Board on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed.

Key Responsibilities as a Board member

In addition to chairing ARC, the postholder is a member of the THA Board and shares the collective responsibilities of all Board members. These include:

- contributing to the strategic direction and effective governance of THA;
- acting in the best interests of the organisation and its residents, and supporting delivery of THA's purpose, values and strategic plan;
- providing constructive challenge and support to the Executive Team while maintaining appropriate non-executive boundaries;
- contributing to sound decision-making, effective oversight of performance and risk, and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements; and
- upholding high standards of conduct, integrity, equality, diversity and inclusion.



Essential

- A professionally qualified accountant (for example ACA, ACCA, CIMA, CIPFA or equivalent), with current or recent senior level financial experience.
- Experience of operating effectively at Board or committee level, with the ability to chair discussions, draw out different perspectives and reach clear conclusions without dominating.
- An understanding of the social housing, regulation, governance and wider operational environment in which THA works.
- Strong understanding of audit, financial reporting, risk management, internal controls and assurance.
- Ability to interpret complex financial, audit, risk and regulatory information, identify the key issues and communicate them clearly to a non-specialist Board.
- Confidence to provide constructive and proportionate challenge to the Executive Team, auditors and advisers, while maintaining positive and effective relationships.
- Sound judgement, independence of thought, integrity and a strong commitment to good governance.
- An understanding of the responsibilities of a non-executive Board member and the distinction between governance and executive management.
- A commitment to THA's purpose, values and to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Sufficient time to prepare for, attend and chair Committee meetings, attend Board meetings and undertake relevant induction and development.

Desirable

- Previous experience as an Audit and Risk Committee Chair or member.

Key attributes

- Measured, collaborative and inclusive, with strong listening and facilitation skills.
- Proportionate and balanced in approach with the ability to manage risk in an open and calm manner.
- Analytical and questioning, comfortable challenging constructively and supporting evidence-based decision-making.
- Able to build trust with fellow Board and Committee members, the Executive Team and professional advisers.
- Respectful of confidentiality and able to handle sensitive matters appropriately.



The Opportunity & Key Terms

Position

Chair of Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) and Board Member

Board Fees

£3,250 per year paid through PAYE.

Term of Office

Board appointments are for two terms of three years, with a maximum of six years' service.

Training

A full induction and training programme will be provided.

Time Commitment

There are four Board meetings each year, held in person in London on Thursdays during the day, from 10am – 1pm. There is also an annual Board Strategy Day, together with occasional engagements such as training and resident events. Preparation for meetings, Board appraisal and training activities also form part of the commitment.

Audit & Risk Committee meetings are held virtually on Thursdays during the day.

Scheduled Meetings

The meeting dates for the 2026/27 financial year are set out below. Dates for 2027/2028 are due to be agreed in December 2026.

Meeting	Date	Format	Time
Nominations & Recruitment Committee	11 February 2027	Teams	9am - 11am
Audit & Risk Committee	25 February 2027	Teams	10am - 12 noon
Board Meetings	10 December 2026 and 11 March 2027	In person	10am - 1pm



