

# Executive Director of Finance & Business Support

Recruitment pack | October 2024



Creating homes, building futures

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**creating  
homes,  
building  
futures**







**our culture is  
owned by all of  
us who work at  
North Star**

# Your application



**Thank you very much for your interest in the Executive Director of Finance & Business Support post for North Star.**

**On the following pages, you will find details of the role and the selection process to assist you in completing and tailoring your application.**

You will no doubt do your own due diligence but do read this pack carefully as it will provide you with a good overview of the organisation and the role. After you have done that, please feel free to get in touch with me, so that we can talk through your offer and get a sense of how it aligns with what North Star is seeking.

**To apply, we will need the following from you:**

- A CV. Make sure this confirms your current/most recent roles, including any NED posts; and you can sum up earlier roles, say before the last 15 years; tell us about your achievements so we get a picture of your skills and experience; try to keep it to two pages or three at most;
- A personal statement. We want to hear about your motivation, why this role/organisation, and you will also want to evidence how relevant your offer is to the role specification; again ideally in two to three pages; and

- The declaration form, which is accessible via the role page on our website and includes space to indicate if you cannot attend any of the interview dates

Please submit your completed application documents using the online form, which is accessible via our jobs page:

**[www.campbelltickell.com/jobs](http://www.campbelltickell.com/jobs).**

You will receive an email confirmation and see an onscreen confirmation message after submitting your application, but if you have any issues, you can call **020 3434 0990**.

The role closes at **09:00 on Friday 8th November 2024**. Please ensure we receive your application in good time.

I am happy to have further discussion, so drop me an email at the address below and we can arrange a time to speak.

Kind regards

Bill Barkworth  
**Senior Recruitment Associate**

**[bill.barkworth@campbelltickell.com](mailto:bill.barkworth@campbelltickell.com)**  
**07706 369273**

# Welcome to North Star



North Star is a special place. Our culture is rooted in our vision, values and social purpose which are genuinely owned by all of us who work at the organisation. The strength of our culture is apparent in our consistently high performance, in the great feedback we get from our customers, and in the high levels of engagement from our staff. That culture also strengthens our financial viability, ensures we can actively contribute to the development of new affordable homes, and enables us to support communities to thrive through investment in wellbeing, employment and training.

I am so pleased you are taking a look at this opportunity to join the Executive team at North Star.

I know that the Executive Director of Finance & Business Support post is a brilliant role because this used to be my job! I became the Chief Executive at North Star a few months ago and have already experienced what a privilege it is to be leading such a unique organisation. You don't need to worry about filling my shoes. The Board and I are keen that the next postholder makes this role their own. And you also don't need to worry that I am going to be looking over your shoulder the whole time, as I have plenty to be getting on with as the CE!

What you can expect is a warm welcome from the Executive team. We operate as a team and place a high premium upon our responsibility for collective leadership. We value our collaborative and supportive ways of working. That strong foundation positions us well when we need to check and challenge one another.

You'll be inheriting a fantastic team in your directorate. They are enthusiastic and keen to do their very best. When you meet them, you'll see that they value taking a steer, but they also have ideas to share. There will be a new member of the team in the form of a Head of Data & Digital. Building on our existing digital strategy, we are keen to continue to assess how we can implement further advances in technology to improve service quality and business efficiency.





Data and digital, finance and governance sit together in this directorate because we see those functions as important enablers. At North Star we operate a business partner model to ensure that these crucial services keep the organisation safe, viable and well-positioned to deliver on our commitments for high quality homes and services.

You may be from the social housing sector, or a related environment, but as a former FD, I would say that this is a role that is as much about leadership as it is about the business plan. Of course we need robust financial systems and a close eye on strategic financial planning for a secure future. But we also need you to be a champion for our customers and staff.

A confident leader who brings energy and enthusiasm, you'll likely recognise that you are an important role model so you'll be self-aware about your behaviours, appreciating the influence you will have on others.

I hope that the flavour that I have given you of North Star and this role means that you want to find out more. I think like me you'll discover it's a truly a brilliant place to be. I shall look forward to meeting you, so we can talk further about what more we can do together.

Warm wishes

James

**James Walder | Chief Executive**





# About North Star



## Our vision

Creating homes, building futures.

## Our social purpose

We care about the people and the communities that we serve. We work, in collaboration with others, to create stable, secure, trusting and supportive environments where people feel they belong.

## Our values

### Creative

We create environments to enable people, places and communities to thrive. We believe many things are possible and that our energy brings about exciting change.

### Connected

We are connected to the world we live in. Therefore, we are relevant, informed and knowledgeable. We develop strong relationships that are based on integrity and trust.

### Courageous

We challenge ourselves and others. We experiment, pioneer and we dare to be different.

## Our profile

We were formed as an amalgamation of three organisations, with a legacy stretching back 50 years.

Today we are responsible for just under 4,000 homes. This includes around 500 homes for people with support needs including five women's refuges, as well as homes for people who are homeless; and people with learning disabilities, mental health problems, complex needs, and those recovering from addictions. We have recently purchased homes for rough sleepers and for Afghan re-settlers and are excited to be working with a Community Land Trust in North Yorkshire. In 2023/24 we built or purchased around 83 new properties.

We are proud of our Teesside roots and presence and are based in Stockton on Tees, with an office in Barnard Castle. Our homes are mainly located across Teesside and Southwest Durham, although we also operate in neighbouring locations.





We are known for our creativity, ability to find solutions to challenging housing problems, and to develop effective partnerships. Our communities team focus on the strengths of neighbourhoods to bring about opportunities. Our customer involvement approaches are broad, tailored, inclusive and relational to ensure high quality insight and influence of those involved.

### **Our corporate strategy**

Our three year plan - Leading and growing to 2026 has been co-created with customers, staff and Board, and sets out our ambitions which are formed around six corporate objectives:

1. Customers and communities: we will deliver high levels of satisfaction through quality services, strong relationships, and transparency. Customer insight is influential in planning and in our decision-making including at Board level. We will continue to invest in communities.
2. Growth, assets and the green agenda: we continue to develop new homes. Standards will be reviewed using customer feedback and ethnographical techniques. A new green strategy will also help us to better understand stock performance to inform investment plans.
3. Technology: will help us to improve customer services and add value for money including a new housing management IT system to support data integrity. Customers can access services via comprehensive digital provision, that will complement in-person contact.
4. People and culture: we will continue to develop and maintain a relational culture, with a focus on the growth of people and the provision of opportunity through continued investment in our people. North Star will be equitable, diverse and inclusive.
5. Value for money: a healthy operating margin continues to underpin financial strength. The budget process is embedded and drives effectiveness. The surplus for purpose statement ensures shared ownership and understanding of our fiduciary responsibilities.
6. Governance: the Board's generative journey has continued to evolve. The Board is more diverse and understanding of tenants needs strengthened. There are clear succession plans. Regulatory standards are being delivered to a very high calibre.



**we will  
continue to invest  
in the growth  
of people and  
the provision of  
opportunity**

### **Governance and leadership**

Our dedicated and highly effective [Board](#) and [Executive](#) maintain oversight of the organisation. You can find further corporate details about us within our [2024 annual report and financial statements](#).

Our last In-Depth Assessment (November 2023) confirmed that we had retained our G1 and V1 ratings for governance and viability respectively.

Equality, diversity and inclusion - different together: At North Star, EDI are part of our DNA. Together, we continue to build a culture that encourages, supports, and celebrates difference. It fuels our innovation and connects us even closer to our customers and communities. You can read more about our EDI approach [here](#).

Time to act: Our [environmental strategy](#) sets out our road map to zero carbon emissions for 2025.

North Star has 98 fantastic colleagues working at the organisation. We were the first in the housing sector to achieve Investors in People Platinum in 2017 with two further re-accreditations. The most recent IIP survey in 2023 on a 93% response rate stated that 100% of staff feel trusted, trust the leadership and love working for North Star. We won IIP Platinum employer of the year in 2021 and landlord of the year in the CIH UK Housing Heroes Awards. We have been shortlisted for two Investors in People Awards 2024 - the award for 'UK Employer of the Year' and for 'Best Culture'. In the Institute of Customers survey that measures satisfaction with services, North Star achieved the highest score of 50 participating housing associations. You can find more details of our tenant satisfaction measures [here](#).

# Role profile

## Role profile

### Overall purpose:

- Responsible for the collective leadership of North Star, including contributing to the setting and delivery of the vision, values and strategic objectives, and ensuring that our culture continues to evolve.
- Actively supports and furthers the organisational culture of service excellence and ambition for growth, with a focus on efficiency, sustainability and delivering a positive impact.
- Leads a robust finance, data and digital function that is a true business partner, enabling North Star to meet its objectives for financial viability, digital transformation, business efficiency and growth.
- Acts as the Company Secretary, leading on all governance and regulatory compliance activity for the entire organisation.
- Is an active and effective member of the Executive team working collaboratively with the Chief Executive, Board members and Director colleagues on all matters of corporate strategy.
- Contributes to the regional and national debate on social housing, further positioning North Star as an authoritative and influential housing organisation.

## Key relationships:

**Line manager:** Chief Executive

**Line manages:** Head of Data & Digital and Director of Finance

### External:

Funders; regulators; professional advisors; internal/external auditors; other strategic partners; trade and influencing bodies

### Internal:

The Board and its Committees (staff lead for Risk & Audit Committee); the executive team; the directorate team; the wider staff team; and Tenants' Voice Panel

## Key responsibilities:

### 1. Accountability and compliance

- 1.1 Lead the development of corporate objectives, business and financial planning, reporting to the Chief Executive and Board on strategic direction.
- 1.2 Provide appropriate information, supporting an open and transparent dialogue across executives and non-executives, with high standards of probity.
- 1.3 Take oversight of the development and maintenance of key governance and financial instruments, including strategic plan, business plan; scheme of delegation, risk map; the Code of Governance etc.

- 1.4 Provide company secretarial services to the organisation and lead on all governance and regulatory compliance activity, to ensure that governance and regulatory compliance is embedded across the organisation.
  - 1.5 Develop a strategic approach to risk and assurance management, develop procedures and appraisal systems for all significant areas of business and financial risk, across the organisation.
  - 1.6 Ensure robust processes for the completion and submission of all regulatory returns.
  - 1.7 Be the staff lead for the Risk and Audit Committee.
  - 1.8 Be the staff lead for relationships and work programmes with external and internal auditors.
- 2. Business delivery**
- 2.1 Develop, recommend and implement financial, data and digital strategies, plans and policies that enable the management of costs to achieve economies, value for money, efficiencies and effectiveness across the whole of the business.
  - 2.2 Prepare and keep under review financial business plans, to provide clear and regular management information on key indicators of the financial, cash flow and operational performance.
  - 2.3 Ensure the organisation's financial systems and controls comply with statutory/regulatory requirements and best practice, and that internal and external audit requirements are met and kept up to date.
  - 2.4 Develop and manage finance and data & digital functions; ensure inspirational leadership to develop high quality, responsive internal services that meet the demands of the organisation.
  - 2.5 Lead and deliver the value for money strategy, ensuring that it is embedded across the organisation, developing a strategic approach to procurement of goods, services and contracts to ensure that the organisation operates within a consistent framework and secures value for money to deliver a quality and cost-effective service to tenants.
  - 2.6 Take oversight and review all aspects of treasury management including the credit rating process and funder relations.
  - 2.7 Ensure contribution to an effective performance management framework, supported by data integrity and transparency in the setting of targets and on-going monitoring of progress and improvement.
  - 2.8 Proactively engage in the diversification and growth strategy of the business, identifying and maximizing opportunities for new/additional funding and income generation.

- 2.9 Ensure trading relationships and trading accounts are effectively and robustly monitored and managed, in order to maximise value for money and the organisation's commercial influence.
- 2.10 Ensure the business continuity policy and plan is updated and reviewed (including annual DR testing), including involvement of all managers.
- 2.11 Ensure effective cyber security systems are in place including liaising with key suppliers and training and raising awareness with staff.

### **3. People and culture**

- 3.1 Embrace North Star's shared leadership approach.
- 3.2 Work with the Executive team, adopting a collaborative and supportive approach to drive forward cultural change across the organisation to one of relational leadership.
- 3.3 Drive a commitment to equality so that it informs all we do, establishing North Star as a place where diversity is valued, to support an inclusive culture.
- 3.4 Provide motivational leadership and support to line managers, ensuring clarity of direction, effective communication and development of personal potential.

- 3.5 Actively seek and develop external opportunities and partnerships that support the delivery of North Stars vision and raise its profile
- 3.6 Actively horizon scan, and keep abreast of statutory, political, regulatory and economic trends across the broader environment.
- 3.7 Shows curiosity with a commitment to learning, and is open to exploring new technology and innovation for the pursuit of our strategic objectives and ambitions.

This role profile describes the main purpose and elements of the job. It is a guide to the nature and principal duties as they exist currently, but is not intended to be comprehensive or permanent, nor does it form part of the contract of employment.



**customer  
involvement is  
inclusive to ensure  
high quality insight  
and influence**



# Person specification

## You can demonstrate:

- a. A relevant professional financial qualification and practicing member of the professional body e.g. ACA/ACCA/ CIMA/CIPFA. A management qualification or evidence of continuous professional development would be advantageous.
- b. A track record of senior leadership in a finance setting in a dynamic business environment. Responsibility for corporate functions such as ICT, governance etc. would be advantageous.
- c. Experience of formulating business and strategic plans.
- d. A high level of skill in strategic and analytical thinking; ability to make critical decisions.
- e. Evolved people skills as a natural and rounded leader, who is a confident and effective decision-maker.
- f. A leadership style that motivates and inspires your team and other staff to deliver results and high-performance.
- g. A commitment in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to staffing/people matters and service delivery.
- h. Insight into operating in a regulated environment, with a focus on assurance and compliance.
- i. Exposure at Board level, including giving advice and understanding accountability to a Board.
- j. A high-level of written, presentation and interpersonal skills appropriate to a wide range of individuals and audiences.
- k. Success in building and maintaining effective partnerships, managing relationships with purpose.
- l. Flexibility to carry out the role, including regional and national travel as required and a commitment to being visible and present in the role.

## You understand that it is important to:

- m. Align to our organisation values in all that you do.
- n. Be committed to collaborative leadership based on involving and valuing the contribution of others and facilitating strong internal team relationships and corporate working.
- o. Foster a culture of innovation and best practice.
- p. Establish and sustain trust and confidence with stakeholders, partners, communities, tenants and the general public.
- q. Have the authority, presence and integrity to engage respect from internal and external colleagues.





- r. Promote and represent positively and professionally the organisation at all levels.
- s. Take a risk-based approach to planning and resource allocation, able to assess risk and promote risk awareness, without being risk averse.
- t. Work under pressure and public scrutiny, delivering results to tight deadlines.
- u. Innovate and champion the optimisation of the use of IT and other new technology. A track record of leading or sponsoring change, digital or data projects with successful outcomes would be advantageous.

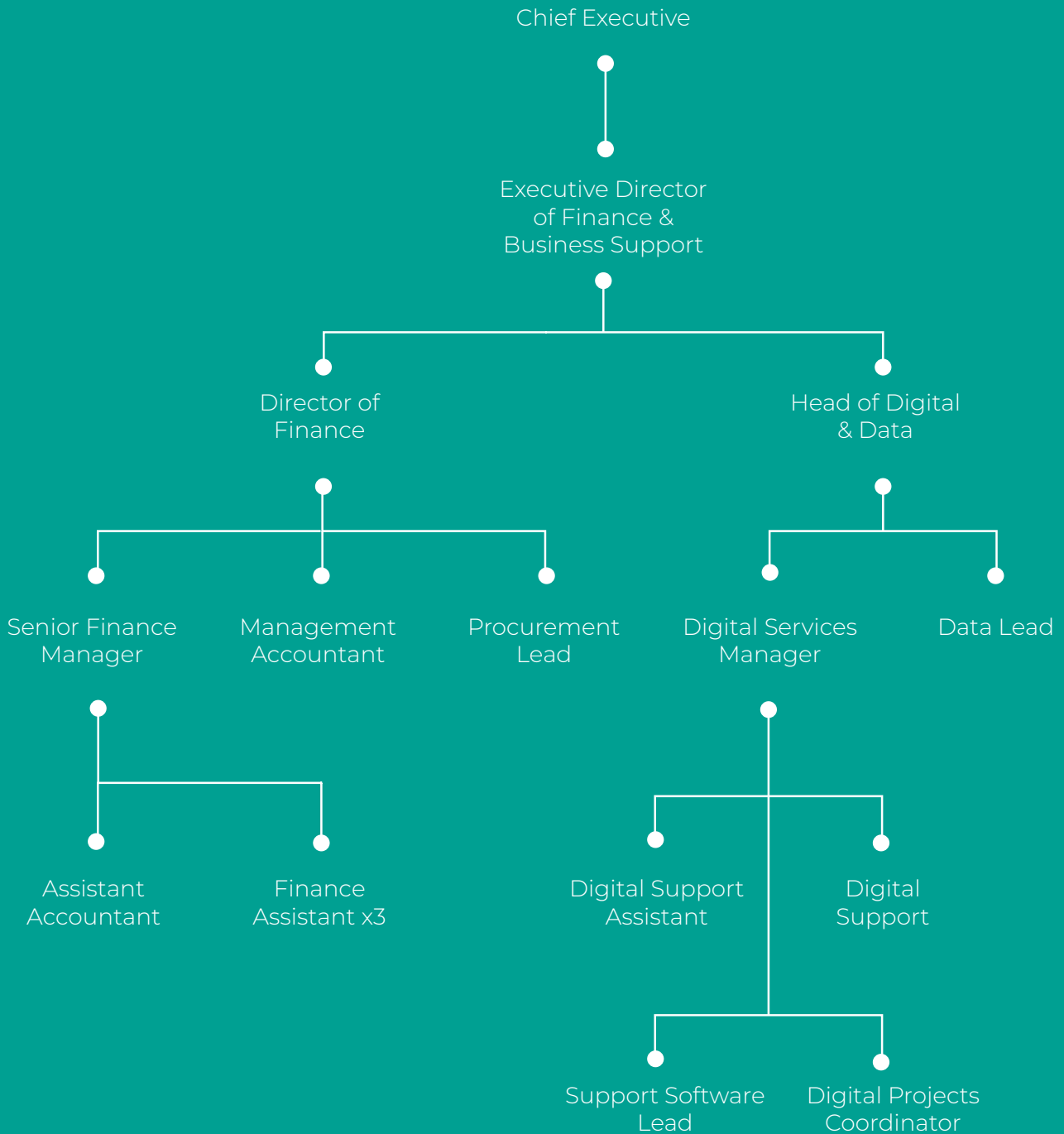
**You have:**

- v. An unstinting commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- w. High standards of personal resilience and integrity.
- x. A desire to improve and raise performance so customers have access to high-quality services.
- y. A commitment to continuous development of yours and others skills and knowledge.
- z. A determination to make a real contribution to the collective running of the organisation.

# Leadership structure



# Directorate structure



# Key terms and conditions



## Remuneration

Salary is circa £123,000.

Defined contribution pension, 7% employer contribution. Essential car user allowance.

After completion of probation, there is access to a wide range of staff benefits, including for example: physio support, counselling services, financial advice, pension advice, cashback health care scheme, car loans (for essential car users) and 35 hours paid volunteering per year.

## Annual leave

25 days (rising to 28 days) plus public holidays and three additional days over Christmas closure.

## Probation and notice period

The probationary period for the role is six months, after which the notice period is three months.

## Working arrangements

Full time hours are 35 hours per week. However, given the seniority of the role, flexibility is essential, including evenings and occasional weekends.

North Star has adopted hybrid working arrangements, so staff are typically in the office for two to three days per week. Visibility is crucial in this role, with staff, our stakeholders and across our operating areas and office sites, and particularly so as you settle into the role.

## Place of work

We are based at Endeavour House, St Marks Court, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6QN.

# Key dates and the selection process



**Closing date:** Friday 8th  
November 2024 | 09:00

We will be in touch to let you know the outcome of your application by the end of the following week.

**First interviews:** Wednesday 20th  
November 2024 | via Teams

Longlisted candidates will be interviewed by a Campbell Tickell panel.

We will be in touch to let you know the outcome of the interview the following week.

**Final stage selection:** Thursday  
5th December 2024 | in-person | at  
Endeavour House

Shortlisted candidates will have the opportunity to have conversations with senior staff, some of the Board, and a selection of residents.

**Final interview:**

There will be a final panel interview, led by James Walder, CE, with Board members Mark Thompson and Graeme Allinson. Bill Barkworth from Campbell Tickell will also be in attendance.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion - different together.

At North Star, EDI are part of our DNA. Together, we continue to build a culture that encourages, supports, and celebrates difference. It fuels our innovation and connects us even closer to customers and communities.

We are keen to reflect the communities we serve and welcome applicants from a broad range of backgrounds and experience.

We are committed to tackling issues of under representation in our staff team. As such we will guarantee an interview to any candidate who, has a disability, or considers themselves to be from an ethnic minority background and meets the essential criteria of the role.

We can provide all recruitment material in any format; this includes accepting written applications, as well as online. We will also make any reasonable adjustments necessary to help candidates participate in our recruitment processes.

If you are unable to participate on any of the identified dates for interviews or other sessions, please do speak to Campbell Tickell before making an application.



**we seek a  
leadership style  
that motivates  
and inspires**



## Executive Director of Finance & Business Support

Circa £123,000 | Stockton-on-Tees

North Star is a special place. Ask around, we are confident, people will tell you good things. It's consistently evident in the feedback from our customers and staff, and across our performance information. You'll see it in the quality of our homes and in the impact that we make within the communities that we work with.

So, our new ED of Finance & Business Services will be joining a highly regarded organisation. Your portfolio of responsibility includes finance, data & digital and governance – all important enablers in our business. These core functions are very much at the core, as they help ensure our growth and viability. They are valued as they support the delivery of our commitment to creating homes which build futures.

This is a role that is as much about leadership as it is about the business plan. So, while you will be a qualified finance professional, you'll also be able to offer us strong people skills and a leadership

approach that generates confidence in others. You will be joining a top team who value collaborative working that encourages check and challenge, so that we collectively continue to innovate and increase our impact. We invest in our people and their potential; and they shine because our culture and values are owned by us all.

These are just some of the things that contribute to what makes us special. Explore this leadership opportunity, to find out more. We are sure you'll see that we are true to our reputation.

You can download a job pack from [www.campbelltickell.com/jobs](http://www.campbelltickell.com/jobs)

Please contact **Bill Barkworth** to arrange a time for further discussion:  
[bill.barkworth@campbelltickell.com](mailto:bill.barkworth@campbelltickell.com)  
**07706 369273**

**Closes | 09:00 | Friday 8th November 2024**

**Creating homes, building futures**

# CAMPBELL TICKELL

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