

## **New Chair and Trustees join Centrepoint board Tarek Khlat MBE appointed Chair alongside six new trustees**

Leading youth homelessness charity Centrepoint has announced a new Chair-designate alongside six other appointments to its board of trustees.

Centrepoint supports around 16,000 homeless young people every year alongside its partners, through accommodation, psychotherapy and access to employment, training and education. The charity also provided crisis advice to 7,500 young people facing homelessness through the Centrepoint Helpline last year, and began providing youth homelessness prevention services in schools.

Tarek Khlat MBE, whose background is in financial services, succeeds Symon Elliot who has served as trustee since 2015 and Chair since 2017. He will step down in August 2024.

Tarek has over twenty years of experience in financial services and co-founded Crossbridge Capital in 2008. As Group CEO, Tarek leads the firm's businesses that serve the wealth and investment management needs of high-net-worth clients globally. He has also worked for several leading media companies including CNN and Fox Broadcasting Company. Tarek is a Trustee and Patron of the NSPCC as well as on the Board of publicly listed specialist motor finance & bridging lender, S&U PLC. He was awarded an MBE by Her Majesty the late Queen in 2021. He holds a BA degree in Economics from Georgetown University and an MBA degree from Harvard Business School.

**Tarek Khlat said:** *"I am deeply honoured and humbled to assume the role of Chair at Centrepoint. I am inspired by Centrepoint's mission to end youth homelessness in the UK by 2037, and together with our incredible team and invaluable partners, we will steadfastly persevere on this transformative journey. I look forward to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to prevent youth homelessness, continuing to help and support those affected by it and campaigning for truly affordable housing options for young people so that every young person has a safe and stable place to call home."*

**Centrepoint's current Chair of the Board of Trustees, Symon Elliott, said:** *"I am honoured to have served on and led the Board of Trustees of Centrepoint for the last nine years. I am particularly proud that together with our trustees, staff and volunteers, Centrepoint has supported thousands of young people to leave homelessness behind for good. I am also proud that as an organisation we committed together in 2021 to a vision that Centrepoint will successfully end youth homelessness by 2037. It is an incredibly ambitious vision but I look forward with great optimism to seeing this vision become reality, led by Tarek Khlat MBE and supported by six new trustees, all of whom bring extensive skills and experience."*

**Centrepoint's chief executive, Seyi Obakin, said:** *"The new trustees join us at a time where Centrepoint's housing and support services, together with our mission to end youth homelessness, are more needed than ever. Last year, almost 136,000 young people faced homelessness and all the indications are that even more will be in crisis this year."*

*"Centrepoint was fortunate to have benefitted from the work of our departing board members, especially outgoing Chair Symon Elliot, whose advice and guidance, particularly during the pandemic, was greatly appreciated. I am excited to start work with the new members and I know their diverse set of skills, experience and insights will ensure the charity continues to support*

*thousands of the country's most vulnerable young people and campaign for changes they need to leave homelessness behind for good."*

You can read more about the six trustees appointed to Centrepoint's Board below.

### **Chris Wilkins**

Chris is CEO of London-based strategic advisory firm Audley which works with leaders in business and government to help them achieve their political, professional and personal goals. Over a twenty-year career, he has operated at the highest levels of government, politics, business and diplomacy, advising prime ministers, politicians, CEOs and military leaders on everything from strategic communications, storytelling, public policy, stakeholder engagement and crisis management strategies. In 2018, Chris co-founded the Atlantic Future Forum – an annual gathering of military leaders, security officials and policymakers that exists to explore the future of the defence, security and technology relationships between the US, UK and EU. Chris has worked in a number of countries around the world including Iraq, Kuwait, Pakistan, the UAE, Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco, as well as the UK and US. He is a regular commentator on politics and global affairs on TV and radio and has been published by the Times, Guardian and Daily Mail newspapers among others.

### **David Thomas**

David joined the Board of Barratt Homes Plc as an Executive Director and Group Finance Director on 21 July 2009, and was appointed Chief Executive on 1 July 2015. David has a wealth of financial and leadership experience acquired over a number of years in senior positions. He is a Non-Executive Director of the HBF and an Associate of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. He was formerly Group Finance Director and Deputy Chief Executive of The GAME Group plc. Prior to this he was the Group Finance Director at Millennium and Copthorne Hotels plc and held senior financial roles within House of Fraser and Forte plc. David is Chair of the Future Homes Hub, a representative on the Green Jobs Delivery Group, a member of the Net Zero Buildings Council and a Senior Adviser to the Construction Leadership Council.

### **Emma Fraser**

Emma Fraser is a senior civil servant whose experience in Government includes work in housing, transport, social care and wider economic policy and programme delivery. She has been Director of Housing Markets and Strategy at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities since 2019 and is on the Board of Homes England, the Government's housing delivery agency. Previous roles have included establishing the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, leading the delivery of the Government's affordable housing priorities following the 2015 election and heading the Transport Spending Team in HM Treasury.

### **Mike Hood**

Mike is CEO of LandsecU+I, Landsec's urban mixed-use regeneration business, and is responsible for driving a £10bn portfolio of transformation projects in city centres across the UK many of which are public private partnerships delivering significant socio-economic impact in their surrounding communities. Prior to joining U+I in 2020, Mike was Managing Director of Capital & Counties Properties PLC (Capco), where he led the 77 acre Earls Court project and spearheaded major, award-winning heritage and restoration projects for Capco's prestigious Covent Garden estate. Mike trained originally as an architect in the UK and Holland.

**Orla Gallagher**

Orla is an experienced Chief Executive with an unwavering commitment to achieve the best for people, to reduce homelessness, and social injustice. Orla has an acute understanding and foresight of the challenges and opportunities in housing and the wider community with over 30 years experience working in the housing sector. Orla leads Housing Solutions a hugely successful, modern, and ambitious housing provider operating in the South East with an outstanding reputation as an organisation that achieves more for local people. Previously Orla was the Chief Executive of Hounslow Homes, the Chief Transformation Officer at the LB of Hounslow, Chief Executive of CDS Co-operatives and MD at Genesis Housing Group. Orla's passion is to ensure people and especially vulnerable children benefit from a secure and safe place to live.

**Steve Jefford**

Steve Jefford is an executive coach and HR consultant. He was previously Group HRD at the Phoenix Group, the FTSE 100 pensions and savings business. Prior to this he held a number of senior HR roles in Financial Services. Steve is a NED at the commercial arm of Living Streets (formerly the Pedestrians Association), and sits on the charity's Audit and Risk committee. Steve graduated with a BA from Bristol University and has an MBA from City University (now Bayes Business School.)

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**About Centrepoint**

- Centrepoint is the leading charity for homeless young people aged 16-25.
- Centrepoint operates nationally, with bases in London, Manchester, the North East and Yorkshire.
- Centrepoint supports 16,000 vulnerable young people a year by providing accommodation, teaching valuable life skills, tackling their physical and mental health issues and working with them to get them into education or employment.
- The Freephone Centrepoint Helpline is available for any young person aged 16-25 worried about homelessness. It is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. The Centrepoint Helpline number is: 0808 800 0661.