

# CANDIDATE PROFILE

## AILEEN EVANS

Aileen is the group chief executive of Grand Union Housing, where she has worked since 2014. Her career in housing began in 1979 with Nottingham City Council as a neighbourhood services manager. She has held executive level positions in housing for the last 22 years and she has been a member of CIH for 30 years.



## CANDIDATE STATEMENT

My parents; a coal miner and a hospital receptionist, scraped together a deposit to buy a house. It gave my siblings and I a stable family home, and an environment where we felt secure and could learn and grow, without worries about being served notice or asked to move, without insecurity about where we might move to or whether our education would be disrupted. This happy, secure start benefitted us enormously.

Everyone deserves that. Without it, I wouldn't be doing what I do now.

Contrast that with families' experiences today: shortage of good quality housing and insecurity of tenure (especially in the private rented sector where evictions are now the single largest reason for homelessness). And an affordability crisis which extends beyond the low-paid, locking many out of the housing market, leaving families vulnerable and damaging people's life chances.

What we do as housing organisations has never been more necessary. It matters. Hence what the CIH does matters too.

CIH's role is to equip those working in housing with the skills to deal with our challenges: the housing crisis and welfare reform.

CIH needs to be resilient, clear in purpose, promoting the art and science of housing.

As the home of professional standards, CIH exists to ensure its members are skilled - remaining equipped for the challenges involved in working in a rewarding profession in a fast-paced, ever-changing environment.

My long career in both local government and housing associations means that I would bring a unique set of skills to the role of vice president - CIH isn't a trade body but a professional body; acting in the public interest, not just the sector's interests. I believe my skills and experience would support this broad role.

I am experienced in the science of governance too – I sat on the board of the YMCA until recently, and currently chair a school governing body.

I have good links across housing – Shelter, Placeshapers, TPAS, the National Federation of ALMOs and the NHF.

The #makeastand campaign has shown what the sector can do if we pull together; I want to build on this. As a co-founder of the SHOUT campaign, I believe that continuing to make the economic case for properly affordable homes is vital to solving the housing crisis.

I believe it is important that CIH continues to embrace differences in policy across the UK's devolved nations – we can learn from one another and I would seek to promote this.

I have considerable media experience in informing the public about our work to alleviate the housing crisis (Channel 4, ITV, BBC regional programmes and Radio). I write for the housing press (Inside Housing and 24 Housing) and would continue to promote housing's cause and the CIH role in finding solutions to the crisis.

As a housing association chief executive, I know the challenges we face in transforming our organisations, meeting government expectations, and managing risk. As vice president, I want to work with the membership, those who would be members and the CIH to help us rise to those challenges.