



HR CONSULTANT ENGAGEMENT BRIEF

2025

NOT YOUR ORDINARY CHARITY

With a history of over 400 years, Southwark Charities provides affordable housing giving older people the opportunity to live independently in a safe, secure, and supportive environment. We also provide grant funding to a wide range of community organisations and charities working with older people in Southwark. We have a thriving membership programme to help enrich older people's lives, support their health and well-being and tackle isolation.

Due to our prudent financial management our investments and varied income portfolio yields an annual operating budget of £1.9 million each year. Of this, we distribute around £500,000 in grants, a figure set to increase to approximately £1 million by 2029. We pay modest annual grants to around 200 individual members and organise a wide range of activities—such as theatre outings, day trips, and community events—for both almshouse residents and our wider membership community.

On completion of our new almshouse we will be providing affordable office space for like-minded organisations.

We are proud of our long history of service to Southwark's older people and are committed to ensuring our organisation is well positioned to meet future challenges, including property expansion, increased grant-making, and a growing programme of resident and community engagement.

Current staffing

- Clerk/Chief Executive (FT) – due to retire in November 2028.
- Operations Manager (FT) – appointed three years ago to free up the Clerk so they could oversee a major building programme.
- Grants Officer (FT) – currently manages ~£500k in grant giving (expected to rise to ~£1m by 2029) and provides administrative support to another charity.
- Membership Officer (0.8 FTE) – supports and organises activities for ~250 local people.

Future challenges

- Leadership transition with the retirement of the CEO (2028).
- Expansion of our property portfolio by 30 additional units on completion of a major works project, with the potential of a further site of 18 homes coming into our management and the rental of affordable office space.
- A possible second redevelopment of an existing site
- Growth in our grant-making capacity (from £500k to ~£1m annually).
- Expansion of membership support, resident engagement, and facility management responsibilities.



THE BRIEF



Objectives

We seek to engage an HR consultant to provide advice and proposals on the following:

- **Staffing Structure Review**
 - Assess the current organisational structure and workforce capacity.
 - Review roles and functions through one-to-one interviews for clarity, overlap, and efficiency.
 - Benchmark against similar organisations.
- **Skills Audit**
 - Identify current skills, gaps, and training needs across the team.
 - Recommend professional development opportunities.
- **Future Planning**
 - Develop short-term (2025–2027) and medium-term (2028 onwards) staffing models.
 - Provide options for succession planning, particularly in light of the CEO's planned departure.
 - Advise on HR implications of property & services expansion, increased grant-giving, and membership growth.
- **Practical Options & Recommendations**
 - Present at least 2–3 structural options with cost implications.
 - Improvements to HR processes and systems
 - Any potential risks, concerns or obstacles and solutions to overcome them
 - Suggest phased implementation plans to align with organisational growth.

Deliverables

- Written report with analysis, skills audit results, and recommended structures (short-term and medium-term).
- Presentation to Board/Leadership team to discuss findings and options.
- Optional: Ongoing advisory support during implementation phase (to be agreed separately).

Timescale

- Initial engagement: 2025–2027 (review and preparation).
- With a possible
- Phase two: 2028 (CEO transition, scaling of operations).

WHO WE NEED & HOW TO APPLY

CONSULTANT PROFILE:

We are seeking an HR consultant (or consultancy) with:

- Experience in the non-profit, community housing, or grant-giving sectors, desirable but not essential.
- Demonstrated expertise in workforce planning, succession planning, and organisational design.
- Strong understanding of governance and operational needs of small-to-medium charities.

We would welcome an outline of your approach, proposed fee structure, and relevant experience.



HOW TO APPLY

Interested consultants are asked to have an informal discussion with our Chair, Caroline Croft email - ccacroft@gmail.com before submission of any proposal.

Proposals should be no more than 10 pages and emailed to info@southwarkcharities.org.uk by 22nd October outlining:

- Your approach and methodology.
- Relevant experience and case studies.
- A proposed work plan with timelines.
- Fee structure (day rates or project fees)

INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Applications open until 22nd October

Shortlisting: By 24th October

Interviews: Week commencing 27th October

Due diligence and reference checks completed by: 31st October

Contract starts: 3rd November

Draft report: 20th November

Final Report/Presentation to Board – 27th November

