



Parliamentary  
and Health Service  
Ombudsman

# Non-Executive Board Member

September 2024

# Welcome

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman is proud to present the opportunity to apply for the position of Non-Executive Board member. In this pivotal role, you will directly advise and support the Ombudsman as a member of the Board and one of its committees, contributing to organisational leadership and performance monitoring and providing constructive challenge, scrutiny and feedback on PHSO's work. This is an invitation at a critical time to join a dynamic, passionate team dedicated to influencing positive change in public services.

Dear applicant,

I am delighted that you are interested in joining our Board and look forward to reviewing your application.

At PHSO we provide a free national service for citizens, making final decisions on their complaints about UK Government and the NHS in England.

We operate with independence, impartiality and substantial influence to hold institutions and organisations to account and to right individual wrongs. We are in a unique position to identify and respond to recurrent issues, and our work frequently leads to systemic change that improves both organisations and people's experiences of them.

Formerly the Chief Executive Officer of PHSO, I was appointed Acting Ombudsman in April this year, to lead the organisation between the departure of the previous Permanent Ombudsman Sir Rob Behrens and the appointment of the next.

At a time of national focus on what has gone wrong in public services, from Windrush to the Post Office, the Infected Blood Inquiry and NHS maternity services, we are acutely aware of the need to listen to service users and learn from their experiences to improve. PHSO must lead by example in this regard. We also know that barriers to justice can vary significantly and that we must better understand the communities we serve in order to effectively support fair access to and positive experiences of public services.

We are on a significant journey of transformation towards becoming a digital Ombudsman service, harnessing the power of data and technology to improve user experience, outcomes and value for public money.



The Board is currently seeking two new Non-Executive Members to join a well-functioning and collaborative team. The successful candidates will bring the necessary skills, personal values and qualities to help lead the organisation and scrutinise its performance as well as developing and overseeing the delivery of our next Corporate Strategy.

In particular, we are seeking applicants with experience in government affairs, public policy, complaint handling and/or Ombudsman schemes who exemplify our values of independence, fairness, excellence and transparency.

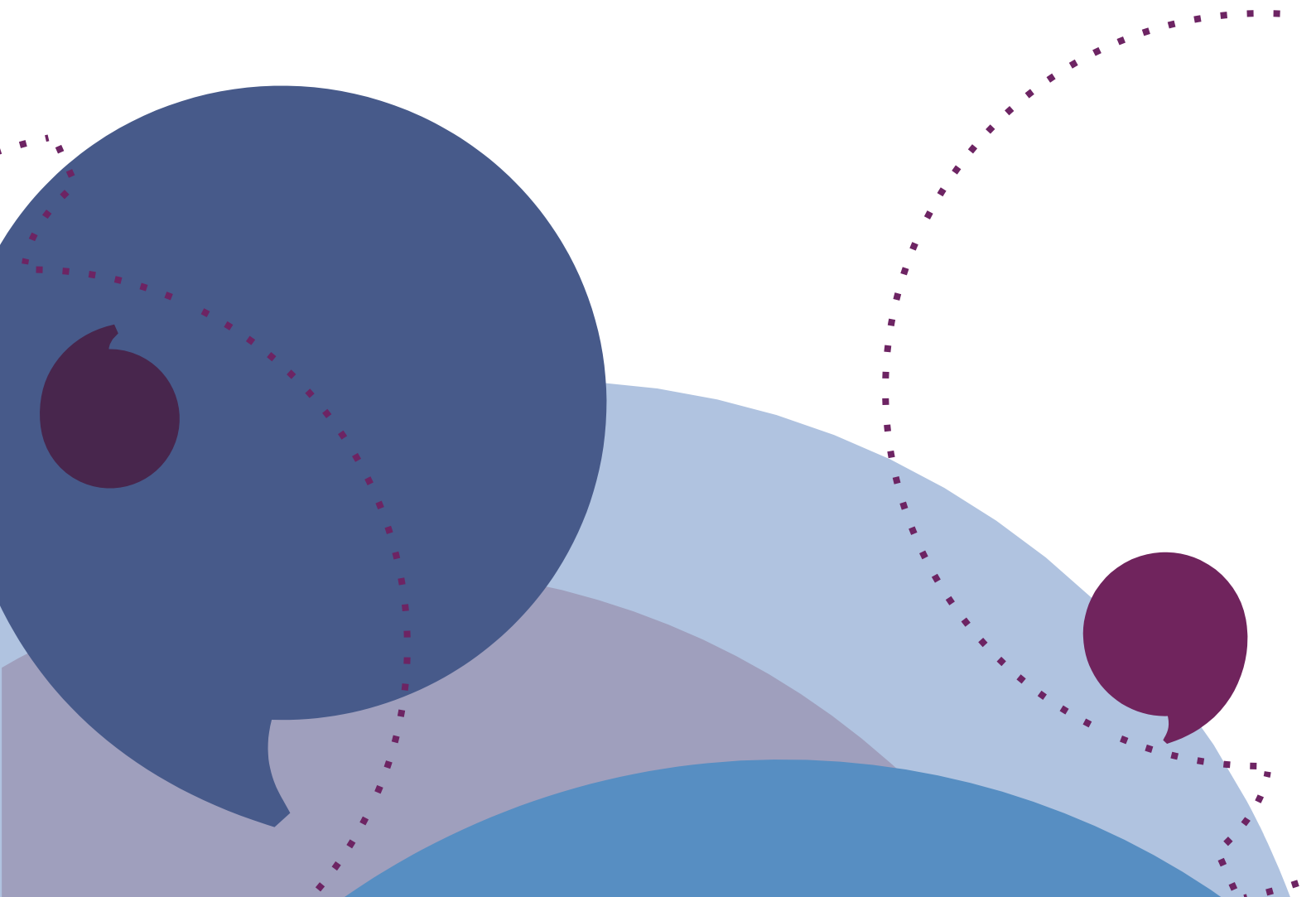
I hope that this information pack conveys the nature of this pivotal time for PHSO in our continuing journey of transformation and the important ways that you could contribute to this as a Non-Executive Member of our Board.

If successful in your application, you can be assured of a warm welcome to an effective and committed group. We look forward to hearing from you.



**Rebecca Hilsenrath**

**Acting Ombudsman and Chair of the PHSO Board**



# About the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

PHSO is a modern, vibrant organisation full of passionate, committed people. We independently investigate complaints about UK Government departments and the NHS in England and do this fairly and without taking sides.

We believe in the power of complaining: A well-handled complaint has the power to reveal the truth, bring closure and create lasting positive change. That is why we work closely with people to understand where, how and why public services sometimes fall short and fail to put people first.

When we find things have gone wrong, we find ways to put them right. We are here to help inspire a better relationship between people and public services.

PHSO is accountable to Parliament. Our work is scrutinised by the [Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee](#).

Our main office with around 550 staff is based in the center of Manchester, with a smaller office of around 50 staff in Millbank Tower, Westminster.



# Our Values



## Independence

from organisations we investigate, holding them to account for service failure.



## Excellence

learning from engagement with complainants and organisations investigated to improve accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness, as well as the quality of our decisions.



## Fairness

listening carefully to complainants and the organisations we investigate and making impartial and fair decisions based on relevant evidence.



## Transparency

communicating with those who use our service and publishing information about our findings, how we are performing, and how organisations we investigate have implemented our recommendations.

# Corporate Strategy 2022 to 2025

Our [current corporate strategy](#) took effect from April 2022. It sets out our vision to be a voice for improvement in public services through the provision of an independent, impartial and fair complaints handling service, as an internationally respected public services ombudsman. The strategy sets out three objectives:



address barriers to justice



strengthen the quality and speed of our service



help improve public sector services

# Development of our next Strategy

Following a one year bridging strategy 2025/26, our next corporate strategy will go live in April 2026. As a member of the Board, your voice will be integral to overseeing its development, helping to establish PHSO's key organisational priorities for the future. The Board is also responsible for overseeing its delivery, scrutinising performance against strategic objectives.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion are fundamental to the way we work and reflected in our core values. We are committed to fairness and accessibility as both a public service and as an employer, with awareness of the interdependency of those two roles.

We recognise the importance of diverse perspectives and experiences in increasing awareness of and access to our service, and to making PHSO a great place to work.

We are focused on making PHSO more representative and understanding of the communities we serve at all levels throughout the organisation - including the Board - supported by a culture where colleagues are supported to perform at their best.

We know that large sections of our communities do not bring complaints to us, despite experiencing failings and injustices when using public services. We need to develop our understanding of the reasons for this, and make sure that our service is adaptable to meet everyone's needs so that they can fully engage with us.

We welcome interest from first-time Non-Executive Board Members and those with a range of backgrounds, skills and experience. We particularly encourage applications from candidates who are likely to be underrepresented within the organisation, including people who identify as:

- Asian, Black, Mixed Ethnicity or another ethnic background;
- Disabled;
- Neurodiverse;
- LGBT

If you believe you would add value to our Board but do not meet all the criteria we have laid out in this advert, we would still love to hear from you.



# Our Board members

## Executive Board Members

**Rebecca Hilsenrath**  
Ombudsman; Chair of the Board

**Joined June 2023**



Rebecca was appointed as Acting Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman and **Chair of the Board** on 18 April 2024. She holds this role on a temporary basis while we await the appointment of a permanent Ombudsman, following the departure of Rob Behrens whose seven-year tenure ended in March 2023.

Prior to taking up the role of Ombudsman, Rebecca was our Chief Executive Officer from June 2023 and before that was the Director of Strategy.

Before joining PHSO in 2021, Rebecca was Chief Legal Officer and then Chief Executive Officer of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Prior to that, she held a number of roles in the then Government Legal Service, before being appointed CEO of the national charity LawWorks.

**Gill Kilpatrick**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Joined May 2015**



Gill was appointed Acting Chief Executive Officer on 22 April 2024. Prior to that she was the Chief Operating Officer since May 2015. A qualified accountant with 30 years' experience of financial management, she has worked in a number of financial roles across local government, including four years as County Treasurer for Lancashire County Council and Lancashire County Pension Fund.

**Karl Banister**  
Deputy Ombudsman and Director of Operations, Legal and Clinical

**Joined June 2024**



Karl joined PHSO in July 2017 from the Government Legal Department, where he held various positions including Deputy Director roles in the Department for Culture Media and Sport, Ministry of Justice, Department for Constitutional Affairs and leadership of the Justice and Security Public Law team. He also represented named participants in two public inquiries. Before working at the Government Legal Department Karl worked for the Serious Fraud Office.

## Non- Executive Board Members

**Sir Alex Allan KCB**  
Senior Independent Member

**Joined January 2018**



Alex has many years of experience gained throughout his long career at the highest levels of civil service. Alex was until recently the chair of the Selection Panel for Queen's Counsel Appointments and a trustee of the Treloar Trust - a charity providing education and support for young people with physical disabilities.

His former roles include the Prime Minister's Independent Adviser on Ministerial Interests, Principal Private Secretary (Chief of Staff) to the Prime Minister and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Justice, High Commissioner to Australia, and chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee. He has led various Government reviews, including two of record management.

**Professor Dean Fathers DL**  
Chair of the Quality Committee

**Joined January 2018**



Dean has over 20 years of experience chairing NHS organisations in primary, acute, mental health and community provider bodies as well as commissioning organisations. He has also been on the Board of NHS Providers, was Vice Chair of the NHS Confederation's Mental Health Network and held appointments on the Workforce Race Equality Standard, Leadership and Talent Academy Boards within the NHS. He holds Honorary / Visiting Professor appointments with the University of Nottingham and the University of Lincoln.

**Anu Singh**  
Chair of the Inclusion and Wellbeing Committee

**Joined April 2020**



Anu is a Board level local government and health leader, has chaired an NHS Integrated Care Trust, and held the role of statutory Director of Adult Social Care.

Anu was previously Director of Patient and Public Participation and Insight for NHS England, where she made sure that the voices of patients, service users, carers and the public were at the heart of how the NHS worked. She was responsible for equalities, health inequalities, person centered care, and the national relationship with the voluntary and community sector.



**Polly Curtis**

**Joined May 2022**



Polly Curtis joined the Board on 9 May 2022. She is a journalist, author, and media executive, and is currently the Chief Executive of Demos. She has worked as a reporter, news editor, and then digital editor at the Guardian before leading HuffPost UK as Editor-In-Chief.

She served on the Cairncross Review for the future sustainability of high-quality news, has been a visiting fellow at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism and was most recently Managing Director of PA Media, the UK's national news agency.

**Professor Anne Davies**  
**Chair of the Remuneration and Nominations Committee**

**Joined May 2022**



Anne Davies is Professor of Law and Public Policy in the Faculty of Law at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of Brasenose College. Her research interests include employment law and administrative law. She was Dean of the Faculty of Law from 2015 to 2020 and holds a part-time role as a member of the Advisory Panel to the Welsh Language Commissioner. She has previously served as an independent member of the Council of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS).

**John Ainsworth**

**Joined May 2023**



John is the Chief Executive Officer for Atos BPS Limited and Head of Business Transformation Services for Atos. John is also a board member for Blackpool Pride of Place where he has played an active role in securing inward investment from Government for the regeneration of the area. John sponsors through his company the Digital Vision for Blackpool to maximise community opportunities and support schools to develop a non-traditional business-led digital curriculum alongside the creation of a digital education hub that is accessible to all children in one of the most deprived areas in the UK.

**Michael Parsons**  
**Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

**Joined May 2023**



Michael is a qualified accountant and has held several executive and non-executive board positions in the wider public and charitable sector.

Before returning to his alma mater Christ's College Cambridge as Bursar in 2021, Michael was Director General, Government Property at the Cabinet Office (2017-2021) and head of the Government Property Function, leading a network of over 5,000 colleagues with responsibility for a range of property-related activities across a range of Government departments, delivery organisations and agencies. He was responsible for the Government Estate Strategy and launched the Government Property Agency.

**Amerdeep Somal**  
**Ex-Officio Member**

**Joined July 2021 (Non-Executive); February 2024 (Ex-Officio)**



Amerdeep Somal joined the Board in July 2021 as a Non-Executive Member. She became Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) for England in February 2024, and her membership of the PHSO Board is now *ex-officio*.

Amerdeep is Chair of the Board of The Law Society of England and Wales and a Judge of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal. Her previous roles include Complaints Commissioner to the financial regulators (Bank of England, FCA and PRA), Chief Commissioner at the Data and Marketing Commission, Independent Assessor to the Financial Ombudsman Service and Board member at both the General Medical Council and Nursing and Midwifery Council.

# Role profile

The PHSO board is responsible for leadership, performance scrutiny, risk management and governance and for overseeing the building of public confidence in the service. You can read more about the Board's role [here](#).

The overall purpose of the role of the Non-Executive Board Members is:

- to contribute to the board leadership and development strategy
- to monitor the performance of the organisation
- to ensure appropriate and constructive challenge to and effective scrutiny of the executive team
- to ensure robust governance arrangements.

As a Board Member it is expected that you will:

- attend meetings of the board and other meetings as required and appropriate
- chair and/or participate in board committees
- lead and contribute to projects and corporate activities as determined by the Ombudsman from time to time
- help champion PHSO's commitment to continuous improvement.

# Person specification

All PHSO's Non-Executive Board Members are required to demonstrate general and specific core competencies. We welcome applications from individuals with both public and private sector backgrounds. Notwithstanding professional background, what is most important is the transferability of experience and ability to accelerate progress in all aspects of our work through the appropriate application of knowledge.

## Specific backgrounds sought for this appointment:

We are looking for individuals from a range of backgrounds and are particularly interested in applicants with experience in **government affairs, public policy, complaint handling and/or Ombudsman schemes.**

## Core competencies (all Non-Executive Board Members):

### Ability to contribute to strategic direction:

- understanding of the relationship between the purpose and values of an organisation
- knowledge and experience of strategic planning and delivery, with ability to scrutinise performance data
- experience of contributing to the achievement of objectives within time and resource constraints.

### Ability to explore accountability:

- understanding of the role of governance
- offer appropriate challenge to help achieve the best outcomes for the organisation
- able to support the executive team whilst holding them to account for their performance
- willingness to accept responsibility and to be held accountable for personal decisions and to accept shared responsibility for corporate decisions
- experience of evaluating own performance.

### Awareness of equality and diversity issues:

- able to explore and work with values of respect, inclusion, fairness and transparency and what these might mean
- awareness that equality and diversity issues are of key importance throughout any organisation.
- recognise that addressing equality and diversity is crucial for delivering a user-focused service and ensuring we are accessible to all.

We know the value of having diverse, representative teams across our organisation. This is why we particularly encourage applications from candidates who are likely to be underrepresented within the organisation.

# Terms of appointment

## Remuneration

The Non-Executive Board Member remuneration is £10,000 per year. Remuneration is taxable under Schedule E and subject to Class I National Insurance contributions. It is not pensionable.

Board Members will also be eligible to claim expenses, according to PHSO policy, for travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred on PHSO business. In particular PHSO will reimburse:

- travel expenses to and from home to the PHSO Board meeting venue
- travel and subsistence expenses incurred as part of any work of a member of the Board away from the normal venue.

## Impact of appointment on people in receipt of benefits

Your appointment may have an effect on your entitlement to benefits. If you are in receipt of benefits you should seek advice from the Benefits Agency.

## Time commitment and location

It is expected that a commitment of approximately two days a month will be required. Board meetings are held in Manchester or London.

## Length of appointment

The initial appointment will be for a period not exceeding three years. Any Board member may hold office for a maximum of two terms. Re-appointment can be made at the end of the first period of office for a further maximum period of three years, subject to satisfactory performance appraisal and the needs of PHSO. However, a degree of change is often appropriate and there should be no expectation of automatic reappointment.

To ensure that public service values are maintained at the heart of PHSO, members will be required on appointment to adhere to a commitment to the seven principles of public life.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion are fundamental to the way we work. We are committed to maintaining an inclusive culture where our employees receive the support they need to perform at their best. It is also essential that our employees represent and understand the diverse community we serve.

We are a Disability Confident organisation playing a role in changing attitudes for the better. We make sure that disabled people and people with long term health conditions have the opportunities to fulfil their potential in the workplace.

## External interests

You should note particularly the requirement to declare any conflicts of interest that arise in the course of PHSO business and the need to declare any relevant business interests, positions of authority or other connections with commercial, voluntary, academic or public bodies.

Candidates may be able to combine board membership with an existing position in a public or private sector organisation, or with an existing non-executive portfolio. As the Ombudsman's jurisdiction includes a wide range of UK Government organisations and the National Health Service, successful candidates will need to be particularly alert to actual or perceived interest. You must also confirm that you understand the standards of probity required by public appointees outlined in the "Seven Principles of Public Life". These principles are set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

## The seven principles of public life

You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct. All applicants for public appointments are expected to demonstrate a commitment to, and an understanding of, the value and importance of the principles of public service:

### 1. Selflessness:

holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest

### 2. Integrity:

holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

### 3. Objectivity:

holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### 4. Accountability:

holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

### 5. Openness:

holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so.

### 6. Honesty:

holders of public office should be truthful

### 7. Leadership:

holders of public office should exhibit these seven principles in their own behaviour - they should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

# How to apply

Closing date: 23 September 2024 at 9:00 am

For more information on how to apply, please visit our [careers site](#).

To apply for this exciting opportunity, you will need to submit the following:

- a copy of your CV or equivalent biographical information, setting out your work history, responsibilities and achievements
- a covering letter (maximum 2 sides) explaining why this role is important to you and the value you would add to the Board at PHSO
- the names and contact details of two referees (who would be contacted if you are shortlisted for interview).

You will be required to download and complete the 'equal opportunities monitoring questionnaire' and the 'applicant declaration form'. The information you provide will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes only. The form will not be treated as part of your application.

Please send your application and the completed forms to [BoardMemberRecruitment@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:BoardMemberRecruitment@ombudsman.org.uk) by no later than 9:00am on 23 September 2024

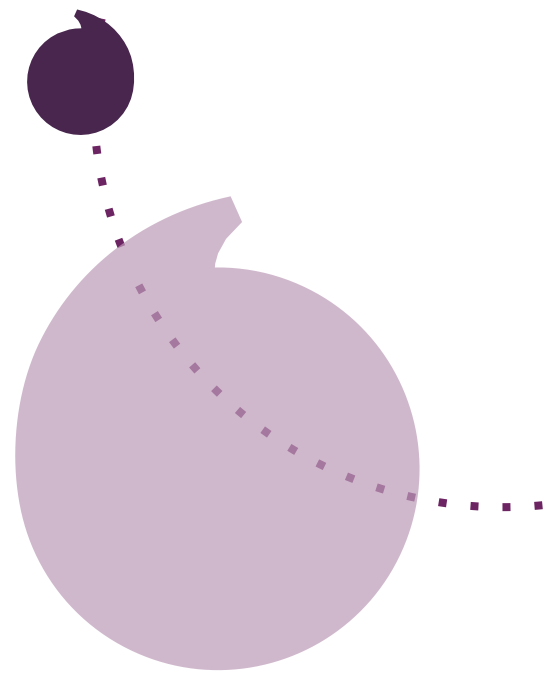
## Fit and Proper Person

All applicants will be required to provide information in line with PHSO's Fit and Proper Person Assessment which forms part of the application process.

## Disability Confidentiality

We are a Disability Confident organisation playing a role in changing attitudes for the better. We make sure that disabled people and people with long term health conditions have the opportunities to fulfil their potential in the workplace. If you wish to apply for this role under the Disability Confident Scheme, please advise of this in your supporting statement.





# Recruitment process

## Timetable

- **Closing date:** 23 September at 9:00 am
- **Shortlisting:** 25 September - 14 October 2024
- **Interview:** 28 October - 15 November 2024

# The selection panel

The selection panel will be:

- Rebecca Hilsenrath, Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
- Polly Curtis, Non-Executive Board Member
- Colin Douglas, Independent Panel Member

# Find out more about our work

Browse our [website](#)

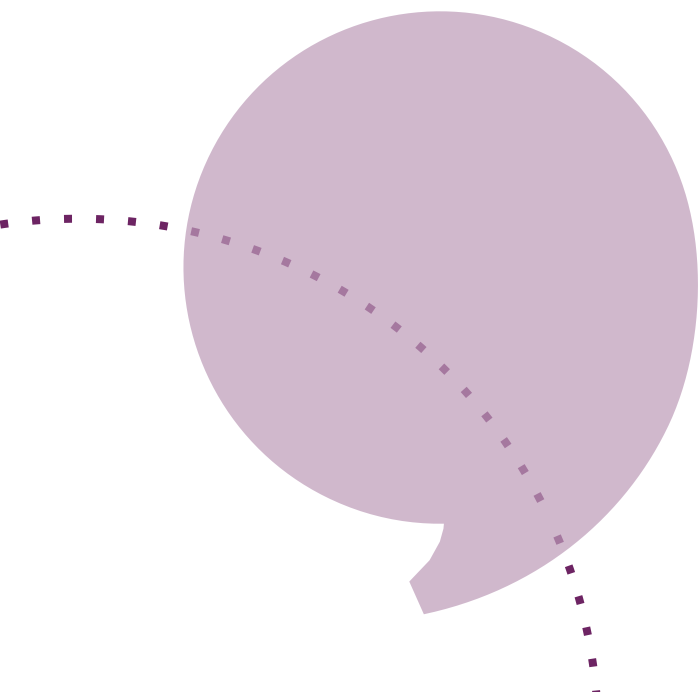
Read our [Corporate Strategy](#)


Read our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2020 to 2024](#)

Read our [Annual report and accounts 2023 to 2024](#)

Read our [Governance Framework](#)







## Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Citygate  
Mosley  
Street  
Manchester  
M2 3HQ  
United Kingdom

Telephone: 0345 015 4033

[www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)