



BOARD MEMBER RECRUITMENT INFORMATION

May 2019



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Chairman's welcome

I am delighted that you are interested in joining the Board of Westfield Housing. We are proud of our history and what we have achieved so far. We were recognised nationally as "landlord of the year" in 2012 and our Footsteps Nursery has recently been rated "outstanding" for the third successive time, which demonstrates the excellent reputation that we have. Not that we want to sit back and relax. With strong finances and great team, we aim to do even more in the future.

Our purpose is to enhance the lives of our tenants and our communities. We currently provide over 600 homes that are affordable to local people and an outstanding community nursery for over 100 children, but we want to provide more homes and even better services.

Some of our current Board members will be retiring over the next two years and we need you to ensure we continue to thrive and grow. We are looking for people who understand and are passionate about the communities in West Cumbria, who value people and the delivery of services that meet the needs of each individual. As a community-based organisation we particularly value having tenants as Board members. We are seeking people who have relevant business knowledge and experience, especially in property management, finance, corporate governance and risk management. We do not expect every Board member to possess all these, but to be an effective team we need as wide a range of skills as possible.

The role is voluntary, but we meet expenses so that no-one is out of pocket. What the role does offer is the opportunity to contribute to your local communities, to make a real difference to the services that people receive, to gain new skills and to have fun.

If this excites you and you want to find out more, please read the attached information, call Lynda Coid, Operations Manager, for an informal chat if you wish, and then send in your application.

Best regards



Peter Bales

Chairman of the Board



About Westfield Housing

We are a small charitable housing association based in Workington, West Cumbria. Rooted in, and growing from, our community base, we are committed to improving the services we deliver. We are delighted that we consistently achieve high levels of satisfaction with our landlord services.

While the Association's origins lie in the provision of homes for key workers in the local iron and steel industry in the 1950's, we have diversified our services while retaining our Allerdale focus. Our office is in the Minto Centre on the Westfield Estate, formerly a primary school which we purchased and converted as a community resource. The Centre now accommodates the housing staff, Footsteps Nursery, which is owned by the Association and provides childcare for up to 108 children, and Workington Sure Start Children's Centre (run by Barnardo's).

Over the last five years, the Association has grown at the rate of around 13 properties per annum with the current development programme focused on Section 106 purchases from developers and buying back properties on the Westfield Estate previously sold through the Right-to-Buy. Currently we have 609 properties in ownership.

We are a community and tenant-centred association and our approach to service delivery is shaped by this.

Our main objectives over the next two years are to:

- increase the number and enhance the quality of stock in ownership and management;
- improve business efficiency and effectiveness;
- develop and improve services, through partnership working where appropriate; and
- ensure continuing compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

The Board shall be reviewing our objectives and the strategy for achieving them during this year.



Our approach to ensuring a quality and improving service is not driven by the adoption of rigid and inflexible standards and procedures. Instead we focus on doing what matters by listening to each and every customer and clearly understanding what matters to them as individuals. We encourage our staff to make decisions and meet those customer needs as they understand them, using their own common-sense and initiative. Our systems are designed to focus our work on what adds value to our customers, increasing effectiveness and reducing wasteful activities. In other words, we try to shape our work to meet customer demands recognising that, as those demands change, we need to change.

Further information is available on our website:

Annual Report 2018: https://www.westfieldha.org.uk/images/pdf/_annual_report_2018.pdf

Annual Accounts 2018: <https://www.westfieldha.org.uk/images/pdf/statutory-accounts.pdf>

Footsteps Nursery: <https://www.footstepsnurseryworkington.com/>



About the Board

The Board is made up of between five and twelve people. We currently have eight Board members, two of whom are tenants. They are:

Peter Bales (Chairman)

Kevin Foley (Vice-Chairman)

Susan Carmichael

Carol French

Carni McCarron-Holmes

Bob Stroulger

Philip Tibble

Karen Wilson

The Board meets six times each year, on the last Thursday in alternate months. There is also an Audit Committee, that meets at least twice a year and a Remuneration Committee that meets once a year. Meetings are currently held at 5.30 p.m. in our offices at the Minto Centre, Westfield. We also have an annual Board Awayday, to consider longer-term planning and strategy.

Pages 13 to 15 have details of the Board dates for 2019 and the matters that are likely to be discussed at each Board meeting.

Board members are elected at each Annual General Meeting by our shareholders, most of whom are tenants. The election is for a three-year term and Board members may serve for up to three full terms (i.e. nine years in total).

The Board operates under an agreed formal Code of Conduct (page 10) and has also agreed a less formal Board Team Charter that sets out the behaviours expected of Board members (page 11).

No-one is permitted to be a Board member who:

- is disqualified from acting as a director of a company for any reason; or
- has been convicted of an indictable offence within the last five years.

The recruitment process

We want to ensure that you are able to decide whether Board membership is right for you as well as us being able to assess whether you are the right person for Westfield Housing.

So, if you would like to discuss the role and the information in this recruitment pack, please get in touch with Lynda Coid, Operations Manager on:

Phone: 01900 602906
E-mail: lynda.coid@westfieldha.org.uk

How to apply

We need to know some information about you, so please provide:

1. Details of:

How to contact you, including:

- Full name and address
- Telephone number and when is the best time to contact you
- Email address

Your skills, experience and training, including:

- current and previous employment
- voluntary roles
- other relevant responsibilities that you have had
- training, education and professional qualifications

If you have a CV that contains this information, please send us your CV.

2. A short statement (no more than two pages) telling us why you are interested in becoming a Board member and why you are who we are looking for (see pages 9 and 10).
3. A declaration that you are eligible under the Rules of Westfield Housing to be a Board member and a declaration of any potential conflicts of interest. Please complete and return the form that can be downloaded from our website here: https://westfieldha.org.uk/images/pdf/Word/Declarations_of_eligibility_and_interests_form.docx. Having a potential conflict of interest does not prevent you being considered for the role but must be disclosed.

It would help us monitor our commitment to be a fair organisation accessible to all, if you would please also complete the Equality & Diversity Monitoring Form, which can be downloaded from our website here:

https://westfieldha.org.uk/images/pdf/Word/Equality_and_Diversity_Monitoring_Form.docx.

This will not form part of the recruitment selection process.

Please email your application to lynda.coid@westfieldha.org.uk.

The selection process

We will review all applications and will let you know whether we would like to meet you to discuss your application further.

If we do, we will invite you for an informal interview. Interviews can be arranged for evenings if required. Interviews will be conducted by a panel of current Board members.

After your interview we will let you know whether we would like you to join the Board. If we do, we will invite you to attend one of our Board meetings so that you can decide whether joining the Board is the right thing for you. This will be your opportunity to meet the Board and see how the Board operates.

After the Board meeting, we will jointly decide whether to confirm your invitation to join the Board and you can make a final decision on whether you wish to join. If you do, you will be nominated for formal election to the Board at our Annual General Meeting in September. Election is initially for a three-year term.

Our Privacy Notice for Applicants, detailing how we use and retain the information you provide during this recruitment process, can be found on our web-site:

https://westfieldha.org.uk/images/pdf/Word/Privacy_Note_for_Job_Applicants.pdf.

What we will need you to do: the role of the board

1. The Board has overall control of the activities of the Association but delegates day-to-day responsibility for carrying out those activities to the Chief Executive.
2. The Board shall:
 - i. Establish and approve the strategic direction of the Association, including its vision and values, strategic objectives and financial business plan.
 - ii. Ensure compliance with the Association's objects, in particular that the Association maintains its strong community and tenant focus;
 - iii. Ensure appropriate systems of control exist to ensure the health and safety of tenants, other customers, staff, Board members and those working in partnership with the Association;
 - iv. Ensure a risk management framework and appropriate systems of control exist to protect the assets and reputation of the Association;
 - v. Ensure appropriate systems of control and reporting exist to enable the Board to evaluate whether the Association is operating effectively, efficiently and economically;
 - vi. Ensure appropriate systems of control and reporting exist to enable the Board to approve the Annual Accounts prior to publication;
 - vii. Appoint, direct and, if necessary, dismiss the Chief Executive;
 - viii. Review the Association's Governance Regulations at least every two years and approve amendments to them as necessary.

Who we are looking for: the qualities, skills and experience we need

Firstly, we need all our Board members to behave in a way that reflects our values and enables the Board to operate as an effective team. Our Code of Conduct and Board Team Charter set out the behaviour we expect.

We also need all Board members to:

- Have high standards of integrity and business ethics
- Have good communication skills
- Commit time and effort to do the role
- Be competent in the use of information and communication technology (ICT)

Secondly, to be successful, we need Board members who have a range of skills and experience. No one person can have all these, but together:

The Board must:

- Understand and relate to the local community and to all stakeholders (e.g. tenants, residents, applicants for housing, nursery parents, the local authority, funders and partner agencies)
- Focus on outcomes for tenants, nursery parents, communities and the Association
- Think strategically and be able to establish policy and long-term strategy
- Exercise critical reasoning and problem-solving skills
- Understand and be able to interpret financial information
- Understand and oversee the management of the risks that face the Association
- Understand the role of technology in service delivery

And together:

The Board must have experience of:

- Community influence and connections
- Social housing issues
- Corporate governance in a regulated business sector
- Housing and property management
- Property development
- Business management, including finance and funding

Board Code of Conduct

In fulfilling the duties of a Board member, each individual shall:

- ◆ *uphold the values and objectives of the Association;*
- ◆ *uphold the Association's core policies including this Code of Conduct;*
- ◆ *ensure the Association operates in accordance with its own Rules and within relevant laws and regulations;*
- ◆ *act in good faith at all times, observe high standards of probity, not seek personal gain from their role as Board member and not damage the reputation of the Association, its tenants or communities;*
- ◆ *declare any relevant interests and activities undertaken outside their role as a Board member; avoid conflicts of interest and actions that might reasonably be perceived as creating a conflict of interest;*
- ◆ *report reasonable and honest suspicions of wrong-doing within the Association;*
- ◆ *respect confidentiality of information and comply with relevant data protection legislation;*
- ◆ *act with fairness so as not to unjustly discriminate against individuals, groups or interests; promote equality and diversity in all that they do and that the Association does;*
- ◆ *treat others with respect and courtesy;*
- ◆ *contribute to and share responsibility for the board's decisions, including its duty to exercise reasonable care, skill and independent judgement;*
- ◆ *seek to develop their skills, knowledge and learning, including preparing adequately for Board meetings and participating in training events and in collective and individual performance reviews;*

Board Team Charter

- We fulfil our Board member role by being:
 - o Open-minded.
 - o Honest.
 - o Positive.
 - o Fun and having a sense of humour.
 - o Committed to the success of Westfield Housing.
- We demonstrate respect for each other as individuals in what we say and what we do.
- We respect each other's opinions, even if we disagree with them.
- We ensure that everyone feels secure enough to speak openly without fear of any adverse reaction.
- We strive to get the best out of each other and ourselves.
- We are respectful of our customers and staff, consult tenants and nursery parents and demonstrate that we have taken their views and feedback into consideration.
- We come to meetings well prepared and start them on time. We will send apologies in advance if we are going to be absent. Meetings will take as long as they need to and will not be restricted.
- We stick to the subject in hand and do not pursue personal agendas.
- We all take our fair share of the workload and responsibilities.
- We all commit, support and deliver a consistent message on all decisions made.
- We are mindful of how others perceive us.
- We are ambassadors of Westfield Housing, including Footsteps Nursery, at all times.

Expenses incurred in performing Board duties

Board membership is a voluntary role for which no remuneration is made.

However, the Association does not wish Board members or other volunteers to be out of pocket as a result of their contribution to the Association's activities. Expenses incurred in carrying out approved duties may be claimed as follows:

- a. *Travel to Meetings:* Reasonable travel costs will be reimbursed. Mileage is reimbursed at Approved Mileage Allowance Payment (AMAP) rates. Taxis may be used when there is no alternative. In addition, the cost of other ancillary and essential costs incurred, such as parking expenses may be claimed.
- b. *Meals and refreshments:* Reasonable expenses may be claimed for refreshment if none is provided and the member is away from home over three hours.
- c. *Caring responsibilities:* Board or committee members who incur child care or other care costs to enable them to carry out approved duties will be entitled to have reasonable costs reimbursed subject to the prior agreement of the Chairman.
- d. *Conferences and Training:* Course and conference fees and accommodation booked by the Association will be paid direct. Otherwise they may be claimed on production of a booking form or receipt. Travelling expenses for such events will also be met.

Board meeting plan 2019

	Month	Standard for Information	Financial	Footsteps and Housing Performance	Risk	Policy and Strategy	Governance
Board →	31 st January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Plan Progress • Internal Audit Report • CEO Report • Membership • Development Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent and Service Charges • Nursery Fees • Salary Review/Pay Awards 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board recruitment
Audit Committee →	4 th March		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and External Audit Plan 				
Remuneration Committee →	11 th March		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO appraisal / pay review 				
Board →	28 th March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Plan Progress • Internal Audit Report • CEO Report • Membership • Development Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Update 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory Standards Compliance • Assets and Liabilities Register



	Month	Standard for Information	Financial	Footsteps and Housing Performance	Risk	Policy and Strategy	Governance
Board →	30 th May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Plan Progress • Internal Audit Report • CEO Report • Membership • Development Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for Money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Training Plan and Appraisal Feedback • Regulatory Returns
Away Day →	29 th June					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Planning 	
Audit Committee →	15 th July		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Accounts and Internal Controls Assurance 				
Board →	25 th July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Plan Progress • Internal Audit Report • CEO Report • Membership • Development Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Accounts 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Nominations for AGM



	Month	Standard for Information	Financial	Footsteps and Housing Performance	Risk	Policy and Strategy	Governance
AGM →	19 th September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive Annual Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt Financial Statements Appoint Auditors 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elect Members of the Board
Board →	27 th September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Plan Progress Internal Audit Report CEO Report Membership Development Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Appraisal Assumptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarter 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Assessment and Risk Management Strategy 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting Schedule Chairman and Vice-Chairman
Board →	28 th November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Plan Progress Internal Audit Report CEO Report Membership Development Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Plan Principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarter 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and Asset Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Training



Employment of Disabled People Policy Statement



1. It is the Association's policy that disabled people should have full and fair consideration for all job vacancies for which they are suitable applicants. This means that all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy will be interviewed and considered on their abilities.
2. The Association will continue to maintain in employment, wherever practicable, employees who become disabled during their working life and will help with their rehabilitation and retraining.
3. The Association wishes to help disabled people to realise their full potential by ensuring that they receive equal consideration for career development and promotional opportunities.
4. Wherever practicable, the Association will modify job requirements, procedures or equipment to make full use of an individual's ability.
5. In order to make this policy work effectively, close links will be maintained with the local Disability Employment Adviser and other specialist voluntary bodies, where appropriate.