

VOLUNTARY BOARD MEMBER

Recruitment Pack

Bridgewater Housing Association Limited

India of Inchinnan, Greenock Road
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Thank you for your interest in Bridgewater Housing Association. This pack explains who we are, what we need from new Board Members and what you need to do to apply.

About Us

Bridgewater Housing Association is a well-respected organisation within the social housing sector, providing housing and a range of services across Renfrewshire. We were established in 1998 as a result of a stock transfer from Scottish Homes. We continue to demonstrate strong performance as a Community Anchor Organisation providing, high quality, affordable housing and services to our tenants and customers in Erskine and beyond.

Bridgewater is well connected in the sector, through our membership and work with FLAIR, SFHA and the Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum. This helps us to keep up to date with developments in the sector and enables us to ensure that our voice is heard.

Our geographic focus enables us to be part of the conversation in Erskine and Renfrewshire more widely, working closely with our tenants and residents, the wider community, stakeholders, and local business. Renfrewshire is considered one of the most deprived areas in Scotland with one of the highest levels of child poverty, While we mainly serve residents of Erskine, Bridgewater has an important role to play in the wider area.

We manage around 850 social rented properties, together with 500 lock up garages and provide a factoring service to nearly 2700 owner occupiers, including looking after the equivalent of 40 full size football pitches in common environmental maintenance. We also offer a management service to tenants of other organisations living out with Erskine.

The Association provides a range of accommodation and services for families, single people, older people, and disabled people. We provide, under contract to Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils, the Care and Repair Service for all three of these local authorities and we provide, under contract to Renfrewshire Council a Housing Support Service to 95 sheltered tenants.

Care and Repair

Bridgewater has been the managing agent for Care & Repair since 2001 in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire with the Inverclyde Care & Repair Service transferring to The Association in 2019. This makes Bridgewater the largest provider of Care and Repair Services in Scotland, now covering a fully integrated service throughout the three Local Authority areas.

About the Board

Our Board has the important responsibility of directing and controlling the Association. As a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and a charity, it is vital that we have people with the right skills and experience to carry out this role.

The Association must have the optimum mix of people, skills, and knowledge to ensure its continued success.

We must:

- Have a clear mix of skills, experience, and knowledge of the local area necessary for our Board to operate effectively
- Provide structured training and development programmes for the Board as a whole and/or for individual Board Members.
- Support the work of the Board through organisational measures to make the most of the contributions made by voluntary Board members

The Role of a Board Member

1. Board Members shall carry out their role:

The key role of every Board Member is to work as part of the Board in performance of its key functions as described in our Governance Policy Documents. This includes:

- **Leading the organisation** – Upholding the vision of the Association and participating in the development objectives that accord with these. – Promoting the Association through contact with communities, any relevant authorities, and other bodies.
- **Acting as a guardian of the organisation** – Ensuring that the organisation acts in accordance with its vision and values, Rules, Governance Policies, and the relevant legal and regulatory frameworks.
- **Making decisions about policy and strategy** – Regularly attending Board and relevant Sub-Committee meetings and participating in discussions and decision-making to achieve the organisation's objectives. – Exercising sound financial and risk management to ensure no variance from the core values of the organisation.
- **Monitoring, supervision, and control** – Monitoring the organisation's performance in relation to its objectives, plans, budgets, controls and decisions.
- **Other tasks** – From time to time attending functions, training sessions and other meetings in the interest of the organisation.

2. Board Members should possess the ability to:

- Make use of provided IT equipment to review documentation and attend meetings
- Apply their own specialist knowledge appropriately.
- Analyse significant amounts of complex information, debating and challenging, as necessary.
- Assess the risks of proposed courses of action.
- Make independent and critical judgments, whilst recognising the need to reach consensus based on compromise.
- Develop and maintain relationships with others.

3. Board Members should be people:

- With vision, generating new ideas and perspectives
- With good IT and analytical skills
- Who govern rather than manage.
- Who are up to date with relevant issues.
- Who work as part of a team.

4. Board Members must be:

- Honest, trustworthy, and reliable.
- Committed to the values of the organisation and the housing sector.
- Willing to devote the necessary time to their duties.

What we need

We are looking for individuals to serve on the Board who can demonstrate the following:

- A commitment to supporting the local communities that Bridgewater engages with or the needs of our service users through the provision and development of high-quality housing and housing-related services, and
- A willingness to work as a member of a team that has responsibility for directing the work of the organisation.

Ideally, prospective members should have knowledge, skills, and experience in at least one of the three areas listed below.

1. **Local Knowledge:** for example, awareness of the housing needs in the areas we work in, knowledge of local issues in Erskine and Renfrewshire, and the people who live here, awareness of concerns facing the Association's customers, familiarity with Renfrewshire Council's plans, priorities, and practices.
2. **Business Skills and Knowledge:** for example, strategic and business planning, personnel or Human Resource issues, financial planning, and control, monitoring and control of performance, corporate management/administration, or legal experience.
3. **Specialist Housing Knowledge:** for example, knowledge of housing management and maintenance, housing-related legislation, Regulatory Framework for Scottish RSL's, OSCR's requirements, housing finance, equalities.

We do not expect that members will be an 'expert' in all or even most of these areas. We are looking primarily for those who feel they have a contribution to make to the work of the Association and who can offer relevant knowledge and/or experience; we will ensure that Board Members have the opportunity to enhance their existing skills and knowledge through development and training.

See the separate Board Member Role Description for more information.

What we can offer

As a voluntary organisation, we cannot provide payment to members of the Board. However, that does not mean to say that Board Members get nothing in return for their time and commitment. Amongst the rewards from being a Board member are:

- The satisfaction of helping improve the lives of local people.
- The opportunity to develop knowledge and personal skills.
- The opportunity to work in a stimulating and mutually supportive environment.
- The chance to socialise with others with a shared commitment.
- The opportunity to stand for one of the office bearers positions.
- The knowledge that members are contributing to an organisation committed to improving the quality of life of its customers and communities.

Key Terms and Conditions

1. Position - Board Member

2. Time Commitment - We normally have eight Board Meetings per year which usually take place on a Wednesday evening approximately every six weeks from 5.30 p.m. - 7.30 p.m.

In addition to this, Board Members must join either the Finance and Corporate Services Sub-Committee or the Housing, Land, and Property Services Sub-Committee both of which usually meets on a quarterly basis. Sub-Committee Meetings are typically scheduled on Wednesdays at 5.30 p.m.

We also hold Board Strategy Days once during the year. These are normally held in October/November each year.

3. Location - Board Meetings will normally be held at our head office: India of Inchinnan, Greenock Road, Inchinnan, Renfrew PA4 9LH or via MS Teams. Other meetings or events may be held at different locations.

4. Remuneration - The position is unremunerated; however, we pay all associated expenses subject to presentation of evidence of actual payment.

5. Appraisal - The performance of the Board as a whole, that of its Sub-Committees, and your individual performance as a Board Member, will be appraised annually.

6. Training - In-house and external training will be organised as and when required. Board Members will also have the opportunity to attend The FLAIR Academy Training Programme and other sector conferences as appropriate.

Your application

For your application to be considered you need to provide the following:

- A completed membership application form (if not already a share member) with the relevant £1 fee
- A Board application form including a supporting statement explaining why you are interested and qualified for the role
- Where possible an up-to-date CV
- A completed Equality and Diversity form

Please note that applications can only be considered if all the documentation is complete.

Completion of the equalities form is not mandatory; this is requested for monitoring purposes in line with our commitment to equality and diversity. We welcome applications from all individuals, irrespective of age, gender, racial origin, sexual orientation, and disability. We are particularly keen to provide opportunities for involvement to individuals who are under-represented in public life or who are currently under-represented on our Board. This however will not take precedence over the need to have people with the right skills and experience.

Our culture is welcoming and inclusive and we are committed to diversifying our leadership and governance structure and to building a Board that understands the different communities we serve and represents people from a wide range of backgrounds and with different life experiences to share.

Please contact me if you wish to have an informal discussion about the role and organisation, or if you have any other questions to help you decide whether to apply.

Kind regards

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