



Let's Go!

Tenant Board Member

Candidate Pack



At Watford Community Housing we believe in working in partnership to transform our communities and change lives for the better.

Our business is evolving rapidly as we find new ways to deliver great homes, improved services and much-needed new housing for our customers.

And you could be part of our story...

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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining Watford Community Housing's Group Board. As part of our Group succession planning, we are now recruiting for a Tenant Board Member to ensure we remain a community-focused organisation.

This candidate pack includes information on the role, so please read it carefully to find out more about what it involves – I hope that after reading you will decide to apply.

Successful candidates will join an energetic and ambitious Group, working to ensure that we successfully navigate the challenging operating environment to achieve our ambitious goals.

As a Community Gateway housing association, we're committed to putting our customers at the

heart of our work and giving tenants a voice.

In line with this, we have dedicated positions on our Group Board for tenants, so this is a great opportunity for you to play a critical role in helping us to shape, develop and deliver our vision, making a lasting difference to our communities, our current and future residents and our employees.

We are looking for exceptional candidates who share our passion for making a real difference.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Cheshire'.

Chris Cheshire, Chair of the Group Board

Our journey

We've come a long way since our formation in 2007. We deliver a range of high-quality housing management and property services that our customers rely on. We are also a trusted partner to other organisations – we manage homes for other housing providers, we develop much-needed new homes both independently and in partnership, and we run community hubs that help people to get more out of life.

But we're just getting started – we have even bigger plans for the future.

Let's go!

In September 2020, we launched our 2020-2025 Business Plan and a suite of accompanying strategies which set out our ambitious goals for the years ahead. At the heart of our work is our new Customer Promise, which showcases our five key service priorities. It was created in consultation with residents, so it reflects what matters most to our customers.

[Click here to find out more at www.wcht.org.uk](http://www.wcht.org.uk)

Changing lives – our Communities Strategy

Our Communities Strategy sets out our vision for how strong, cohesive and prosperous communities can provide the foundations for people to live better lives. By investing in local initiatives, we can help people to connect and access services that can be vital to their wellbeing.

[Click here to read our Communities Strategy.](#)

Focused on South-West Hertfordshire

Although our roots are in Watford, we have a presence across six local authority areas in South-West Hertfordshire, where we look to deliver friendlier communities that help to improve lives.

Putting people first

As a Community Gateway housing association, we put people at the heart of our work. Our customers are invited to become members, and staff, stakeholders and local residents can become associate members. Because members have voting rights, they are empowered to play a central role in our decision-making.

Delivering new homes

We are committed to delivering desperately needed homes through our construction programme – we will complete 1,580 new homes by March 2025.

We have the highest ratings for viability and governance
V1/G1

We will invest **£1 million** into our communities

We own and manage more than **6,800** homes and associated assets

[Click here to read our financial statements and annual report at wcht.org.uk](#)

80% of customers are satisfied with our services



Our vision

“Better homes, friendlier communities – together”

Our values



Professional

We are honest, open and respectful. People trust us to keep our promises.



Forward-thinking

We have a ‘can-do’ attitude and embrace opportunities to improve and innovate.



Collaborative

We work together as one team and build lasting partnerships to get results.



Diversity & inclusion

Just as we strive to make our communities friendly and open to everyone, we are committed to ensuring that we have a diverse and inclusive workforce who feel comfortable to be who they are in the workplace.

We have a dedicated *Equality, Diversity & Inclusion* group, that champions diversity and drives inclusion by removing barriers and helping us to build a vibrant culture.

[Click here to find out more about our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.](#)

Role profile:

Tenant Board Member

About the Group Board

The Group Board is responsible for the overall control of the Group and the monitoring of its performance in delivering our growth agenda, as we strive to deliver much-needed social, affordable, and shared ownership homes in accordance with our status as a Community Gateway housing association.

We are currently looking to recruit a new Tenant Board Member. Please read the following information carefully to ensure you understand what the role involves.

Joining the Group Board

As a Member of the Group Board, you will use your lived experience, expertise, and insight to help us achieve our ambitious goals. You will be accountable to the Chair of the Group Board.

Supporting you in your role

During your time as a Tenant Board Member, there will be ample opportunities for you to learn, develop and grow. You can expect to undergo high-level training and attend conferences – the cost of which will be covered by Watford Community Housing.

As a Tenant Board Member, you will also be provided with IT equipment and a dedicated mentor, who you can contact at any time, to help you find your feet and settle into the role.

Key responsibilities

- Defining and ensuring compliance with the values and objectives of the Group.
- Advising and supporting the organisation, via the Group Board, on matters affecting the running of the organisation.
- Being an active member of our Customer Experience Committee.
- Working with our key staff members across the business on a range of matters, and reviewing our Business Plan.
- Establishing and approving key policies, plans and strategies to achieve the Group's objectives.
- Approving each year's accounts prior to publication and approving each year's budget, alongside the rest of the Group Board.
- Taking an active role in decision-making on policies which affect the organisation and our customers.
- Ensuring the Group Board adheres to high standards of corporate governance, in full compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements, including financial viability.
- Participating in appraisal for self-development.
- Engaging in high-quality debate and well-informed decision-making that is owned by the Group Board as a collective.
- Acting as an ambassador for the Watford Community Housing Group to support our profile and brand.



Role profile:

What we're looking for

There are opportunities to develop a variety of skills and experience as a Tenant Board Member, but we do encourage applications from candidates who have the following:

- A commitment to social and affordable housing, and being a community business.
- The ability to work well as part of a team and to think strategically.
- The ability to communicate effectively with all stakeholders.
- The ability to represent and promote the Group to other organisations.
- Experience using Microsoft Office software, such as Word and Outlook.
- The ability to absorb, comment upon and make decisions about formal reports presented to the Group Board, such as policies, performance information and budget reports.
- Good negotiating skills and the ability to work towards a common goal.
- A desire to understand the different roles of the non-executive and executive directors.

Other requirements

- The ability to champion and encourage equality, diversity and inclusion, while being aware of unconscious bias.
- Attendance at 85% of Board and allocated committee meetings, or other activities.
- A commitment to being a Tenant Group Board member for at least three years.
- A willingness to attend training courses, seminars and conferences to gain knowledge and skills appropriate to the role.



Frequently asked questions

What provisions or expenses will I receive as a Tenant Board Member?

You will be provided with IT equipment to help you perform your role as a Tenant Board Member, as well as free access to high-quality training and conferences. You will also have access to a dedicated mentor.

What's in it for me?

As a Tenant Board Member, you will not only receive an annual salary of £4,500 and have access to the provisions and expenses mentioned above, but you will also have the opportunity to grow and develop your current skills and career prospects. You will develop a variety of skills by working collaboratively with other Group Board Members, making critical decisions and debating on matters that affect the wider residents and staff of Watford Community Housing.

If I currently receive help with my housing costs, will the payment

of £4,500 that I receive affect my welfare benefits or Universal Credit claim?

Yes you will need to declare this income to DWP, but our Financial Inclusion Team can help support you through the process.

Will I be exposed to sensitive and confidential information during my time as Tenant Board Member?

Yes, you will have exposure to a variety of information relating to our staff and customers, as well as business-sensitive information relating to our organisation. We would need you to handle this information with confidentiality.

Will I get to meet with other tenants who are Board Members for other housing associations?

Yes – we can provide opportunities for you to network with others in a similar role and to attend national tenant participation events and conferences.

How will I report issues and deal with my tenancy as a Tenant Board Member?

Nothing changes in that respect. You can still speak to your housing officer, or report any issues to our Customer Services team as usual.



Let's hear from...

Marsha Thompson

Marsha is a current Tenant Board Member and has been working with Watford Community Housing for six years. This is what she had to say about her experience...

What do you enjoy most about being a Tenant Board Member?

Networking, gaining exposure and insight into the inner workings of Watford Community Housing, and learning and influencing the business strategies of the organisation.

What have you gained in terms of professional experience and development since becoming a Tenant Board Member?

Learning how to manoeuvre in new uncharted environments and gaining

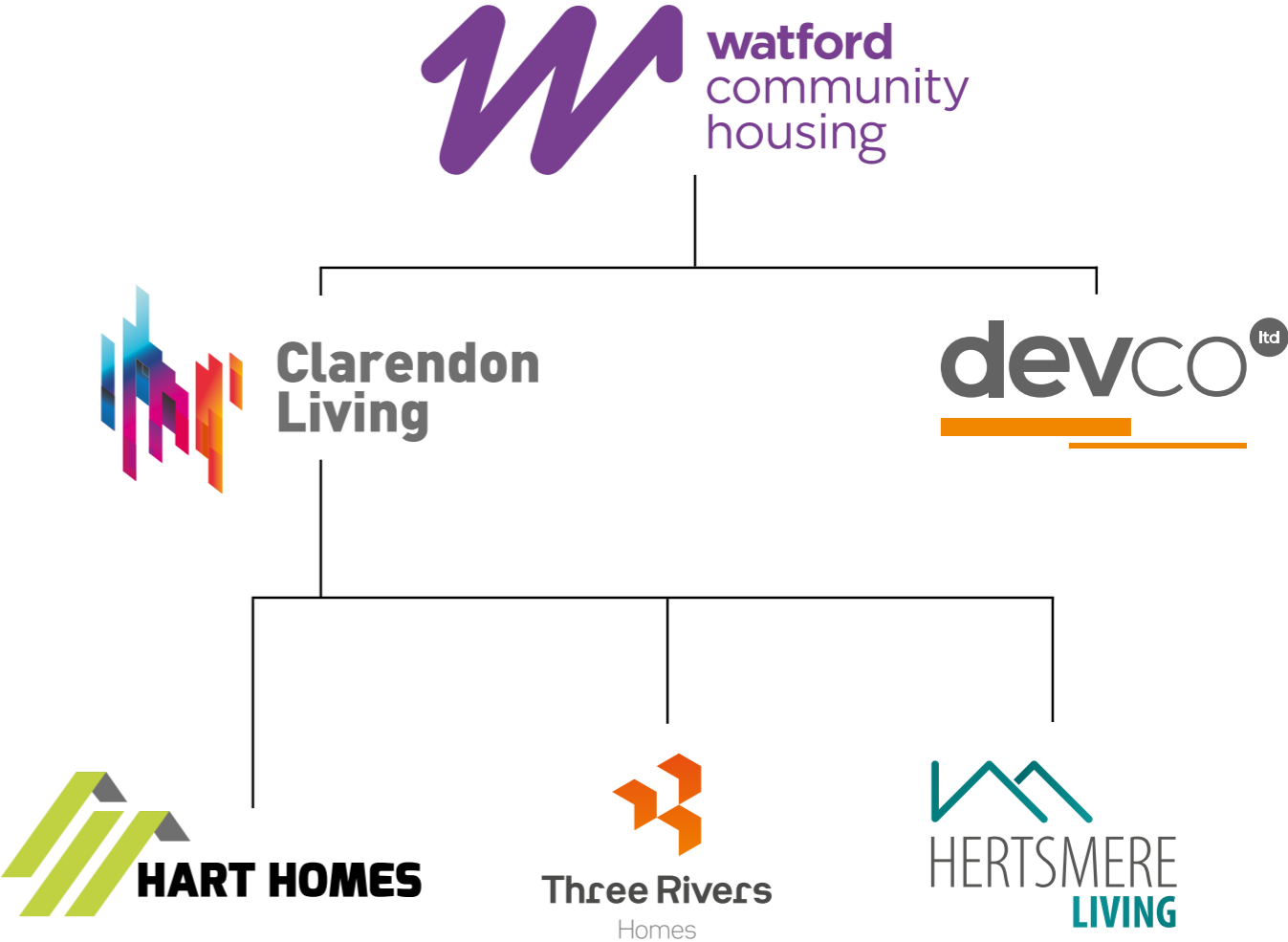
confidence to express myself outside of my comfort zone.

What advice would you give to someone interested in applying for the role?

You have nothing to lose but something to gain, so just do it and apply!



Governance structure



Group structure

Meet the team

Our Executive Management Team:



Tina Barnard
Chief Executive

Tina has been Chief

Executive since we were formed in 2007. She is a qualified accountant who has been in the housing sector for 30 years, working as a Finance Director in three housing organisations – CHP, Worthing Homes and New Era – as well as having been a financial analyst at the Regulator.

Tina has also been a Non-Executive Director for a number of housing and charitable organisations, and is currently on the Board of the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

As Chief Executive, Tina has overall responsibility for delivering Watford Community Housing's Business Plan by working closely with directors, managers and staff, including the Marketing and Communications team, who report directly to her.



Paul Richmond
Deputy Chief Executive

Paul is a qualified accountant

who worked in the financial services sector for 15 years. As Deputy Chief Executive, he is responsible for ensuring we have the right resources to meet our ambitious goals. This includes delivering strong financial performance and ensuring we have the treasury facilities in place to support our growth, as well as leading our IT and HR teams.



Helen Town
Group Director of Partnerships

Helen has 30 years' experience

across the voluntary, public and private sectors. She will join us as Group Director of Partnerships in February 2022 after more than six years at Northampton Partnership Homes, where she holds lead responsibility for development and asset management.

Our Group Board:



Chris Cheshire
Chair

Chris is a Chartered Construction Manager with 37 years' experience. He has been a Director of Asset Management for a large housing provider in London, as well as owning and managing his own businesses for the last 25 years. He has been involved with the Group since 2016, initially as a Board Co-optee and Chair of Clarendon Living, before becoming Chair in 2021.



Nigel Benjamin

Nigel is a business consultant and coach, with over 35 years' experience in human resources and organisational development. He has been a member of a number of executive teams and boards as an executive director. Nigel is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and is a Chartered Director.



Tracey Connage

Tracey Connage is an experienced and successful HR Director with a strong track record in high-profile roles leading the people agenda. In March 2020, she joined Harrow Council as Director of HR. She is an experienced voluntary board member including former roles in a large FE college and a national credit union.



Raz Hussain

Raz has over 8 years' experience working within the target-driven world of corporate business for large global companies, and has gained a wealth of experience both in banking and product development. She regularly undertakes voluntary jobs for charities and thrives on making a difference to people who need it the most. Raz is Chair of our Customer Experience Committee and aims to utilise both her skills and life experience to help Watford Community Housing meet its objectives.



John Lavers

John has had a long career in the private sector, specialising in Corporate Treasury and the financing of large projects. Before joining Watford Community Housing he had 17 years' experience as a Board member of other housing associations. He is passionate about contributing to Watford Community Housing's ability to finance its growth while continuing to improve the quality of services to residents.



Jamie Ratcliff

Jamie is Executive Director of Business Performance and Partnerships for Network Homes. He has almost 15 years' experience in housing.

In that time, he has overseen the completion of over 50,000 affordable homes, established multi-billion pound investment programmes, and developed and implemented statutory housing strategies.



Kennedy Rodrigues

Kennedy has 30 years of business experience, working mainly in senior Commercial Finance roles. His Board level experience has been in retail, telecoms and recruitment, with his last role being Commercial Finance Director for an international recruitment company. Kennedy's family first came to Watford in 1973, so he has a close affinity to the local area and its residents. He plays an active part in the community through his voluntary work as the treasurer and caseworker for the SVP charity in Watford.



Michael Suarez

Michael works as a Consultant Director with one of the UK's top four consultancy and audit firms, which has offices in Watford. His area of expertise covers the not-for-profit sector including housing associations and other registered social landlords, as well as local and regional government and health industries. Michael has had a range of experience as a non-executive director, including with one

of the public sector's leading financial management accountancy bodies. He joined the Group Board in 2021 and is also Chair of our Audit & Risk Committee.



Marsha Thompson

Marsha is a BA Hons Politics and Sociology graduate currently working as a careers advisor for young people. Marsha has co-ordinated and developed a Social Action Campaign targeting youth unemployment and she has independently organised and delivered educational events that encourage young people to engage in their local communities. One of Marsha's greatest passions is helping people find solutions that meet their specific needs and goals.



Tim Willcocks

Tim is a Chartered Planning and Development surveyor with over 25 years' experience in the property world, including sales and marketing, development, consultancy and housing policy. He joined the affordable housing sector in 2007, leading successful sales and development teams, and working on national housing policy at the Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England). Tim is currently Director of Public Sector Engagement at Heylo Housing.

Remuneration

Tenant Board Member

Fee: £4,500 per annum

The term of office would be three years, with possible renewal for a second three-year term.

Attendance requirements

Group Board meetings in 2022/23 are scheduled for:

- 7-8 October 2022 (Group Board Awayday)
- 31 October 2022
- 30 January 2023
- 20 March 2023
- May 2023 (date TBD)

Meetings are generally held late afternoons/early evenings, usually finishing no later than 20:00.

Meetings will be held in person at our Gateway House office wherever possible, and otherwise virtually. You will also be required to attend training sessions held throughout year and other Group events.



Making your application

Now you know all about us and the role, it's time for us to hear more about you and how you would help turn our plans into reality. Here's a reminder and a few instructions about what to do next.

1

Make sure you've gone through this pack carefully:
Read the pack and review our plans, as set out in [our Business Plan – Let's Go!](#)

2

Review your CV:
Tailor your CV so that it aligns your achievements to the goals and aims set out in our Let's Go! Business Plan and associated strategies. Make sure it clearly tells us what you can bring to us and it's no longer than three pages.

3

Provide a supporting statement:
You should provide a statement of no more than 500 words on why you want to become a Tenant Board Member and how you feel you meet the requirements as set out in the role profile.

4

Send your CV into us – before the deadline:
Send your CV – along with a completed [Equal Opportunities form](#) and [Declaration form](#) – to governance@wcht.org.uk by 9am on Thursday 7 July 2022.

The key dates

Closing date and time for applications	9am on Thursday 7 July 2022
Review and shortlisting	Friday 8 July 2022
Interviews (to be held in person)	Thursday 14 July 2022
Ratified by Group Board	Monday 18 July 2022
Appointment starts	Monday 12 September 2022



watford
community
housing

Watford Community Housing
59 Clarendon Road
Watford, Hertfordshire
WD17 1LA

T: 0800 218 2247
E: enquiries@wcht.org.uk
www.wcht.org.uk