

Candidate Pack

Non-Executive Board Members

gentoo


nigel wright
GROUP

Welcome from Emily Cox MBE

Hello and welcome to our search for new Members to join our Group Board.

Thank you for taking an interest in this opportunity. Gentoo is currently recruiting for Non-Executive Board Members to widen skills and to support with Board succession.



We are a customer centric organisation with a strong sense of social purpose. We ensure that the customer voice is at the heart of the Board's decision making and that customers are intrinsic to everything we do.

We are particularly interested in health and safety/building safety compliance or leadership skills to provide constructive challenge, expert advice and support to the Board and the Group's Executive Team.

Gentoo was formed in 2001 with the transfer of Sunderland City Council's housing stock to form Sunderland Housing Group. In total, 36,356 properties were transferred, generating a receipt of £200 million for Sunderland City Council. This remains the largest transfer of properties in England to date. At the time, £450 million of loans were secured to purchase the stock and to commence a major programme of modernisation and improvement works.

As a not-for-profit housing association, Gentoo is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing and has the highest G1 Governance Rating. Achieving this rating represented a significant undertaking, following a three-year journey of recovery from a downgrade in 2017. At the time of writing, we are still awaiting our revised ratings from the Regulator, following a recent routine planned inspection.

Gentoo operates in a national policy environment and there was a renewed sector focus on health and safety, along with customer engagement, in the Social Housing White Paper published in 2020. The challenge of social housing decarbonisation is a key issue which concerns both the sector as a whole and Gentoo, alongside the changes in the decent homes standard. The impact of the cost of living crisis on Gentoo's customers is also naturally at the forefront of the Group's thinking. The new Government made manifesto commitments in relation to housing and we await their detailed policy announcements.

The Group's Board Members play a key role in supporting the organisation to deliver the strategy. We are operating in an environment with housing and policy related challenges to overcome both locally and nationally. The Group refreshed its Corporate Strategy in 2023, which sets out the roadmap for the organisation up to 2025 and outlines the key performance indicators expected by the Board.

Gentoo operates a co-terminous board structure and Gentoo Group Board Members are also Company Directors of Gentoo Homes Limited. Gentoo Homes is a profit for purpose commercial subsidiary of the Group and a house builder that sells new homes privately.

The candidates will be pivotal in helping to shape and protect the Group, by applying their skills and knowledge at our Board and Committees. This is a fantastic opportunity to join an organisation with a deep underlying social purpose, and a commitment to deliver truly safe and secure affordable housing for the people of Sunderland.

Emily Cox, MBE
Gentoo Group Chair

About us

We're a housing association with a social purpose that provides more than 60,000 people in Sunderland with a place they can call home.

We're a values driven organisation, with a clear vision and a commitment to investing in people, place and property.

We believe everyone has the right to live in a good quality home they can afford. We invest millions of pounds every year in keeping our existing homes safe, secure and compliant.

Working with us

At Gentoo we employ more than 1,000 people in more than 200 different job roles. Each one is rewarding and challenging. We are proud to make a difference in our communities and to our customers lives.

We are one of the largest employers in Sunderland, and a leading provider of social housing in the North East.

The health and wellbeing of our colleagues is our priority. We acknowledge a healthy and happy workforce contributes to a positive working culture.



Who we are

Our vision

Our vision is to provide great homes, strong communities and inspired people for Sunderland.

Our values

Our values are what we stand for and what we want to be known for. They are what make us, us.

We care about people.



We take accountability.



We shape the future.



We bring leadership.



We deliver.



Our priorities

The safety of our customers and colleagues will always be our number one priority.

We have identified six further priorities which will guide the delivery of our services. We live our values in everything we do from the board room to the front room, to deliver our priorities for our customers.

- We know our customers
- We provide great homes
- We help communities to thrive
- We are a great place to work
- We spend our money wisely
- We are well governed

Our performance

You can read our annual documents [here](#).



About Gentoo

28,500
homes



60,000
customers



1,000+
colleagues



75%
live in Sunderland

Stock Condition Data

98%
completed

85%
in the past 5 years



78%
overall customer satisfaction
(TSM measures)



405 new homes for
private sale by 2029

738 new affordable
homes by 2029

£3 million

in additional benefits and discount to
customers



£6.8 million

social value

>£1 million

a week invested in existing properties



75%
of homes are EPC C or above

22.3%

overall operating margin

£177 million

turnover

25.1%

SHL operating margin

£12.1 million

surplus



About the role

Gentoo is seeking new Board Members with current or recent experience gained at a senior level. We are particularly interested in candidates with experience as an executive or senior leader within health and safety/building safety compliance or with leadership skills who are committed to social purpose and have a commercial mindset.

The candidate will have an understanding of the Group Board's commitment to increasing the Board's diversity, across all underrepresented groups and ensure a diversity of thought and lived experiences.

The successful candidate will demonstrate interest in social purpose, be aligned with the Group's values, be a strategic thinker, with the ability to assimilate and analyse complex information and provide independent and constructive challenge.

Remuneration

£10,000 per annum

Commitment

Approximately two days per month including seven Board meetings (excluding Strategy Days) and four to six Committee Meetings per annum.

Closing date

Monday 16 September 2024 - 12 noon

Please apply as soon as possible to enable our recruiters to contact you before the shortlisting panel meet on 19 September 2024.

Interview dates

8 October 2024

Purpose

Board Members provide leadership to the Group and contribute by setting the strategic vision and direction of the organisation. All activity should be in line with regulatory requirements and the Group's objectives, ensuring good governance and effective strategic planning.

Behaviours

- Acts with integrity and actively promotes Gentoo and the services it provides.
- Is committed to accountability, openness, and transparency.
- Demonstrates commitment to equality and diversity.
- Possesses excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Embraces learning and development and promotes this across the Group.
- Inspires others through an open, engaging and enthusiastic leadership style.
- Exhibits personal and professional credibility, commanding confidence in the business and with stakeholders.
- Has the ability to interpret and analyse complex information and reports in a timely manner.

Experience and knowledge

- Senior experience – extensive experience of operating at a senior level
- (ideally as an executive and/or non-executive) within an organisation of similar scale and complexity.
- Governance understanding – knowledge of good practice in one or more sectors.
- Risk management – possess sound financial reasoning and the ability to assess risk without being risk averse.

Key accountabilities

Skills and abilities

- Strong strategic planning skills.
- The ability to challenge appropriately and hold themselves and others accountable.
- Able to work collaboratively and take collective responsibility for decisions made.
- Strong negotiating skills and the ability to work with others effectively.

Strategic leadership

- Provide leadership regarding the direction and control of the Group.
- Contribute to setting the vision and values of the business, ensuring that customers are put at the heart of decision making.
- Set objectives for the business and determine the strategic aims and required outcomes.
- Promote continuous improvement and set challenging targets for improving services, and customer outcomes.
- Contribute to the effective governance of the business through membership of internal committees, panels or subsidiary boards.

Effective governance

- Ensure compliance with the Group's Financial Regulations, Standing Orders Delegated Authorities, the Regulator of Social Housing's Regulatory Framework and the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance.

Risk management

- Contribute to the evaluation of opportunities, threats and risks across the Group's external environment and strengths and weaknesses in the internal environment, to ensure effective strategic decision-making.
- Review the Risk Management Framework and Corporate Risk Register and obtain assurance the Group has a robust and prudent approach to business planning, risk identification and control.

Relationships

- Build and maintain effective working relationships with the Chair, Executive Team, senior staff and other Board Members.
- Participate in the board appraisal process and where appropriate, in the appraisal of the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Directors and other Board Members.

Board performance

- Ensure the Board's business is conducted efficiently and effectively through a framework of delegation and systems of internal control.
- Contribute to overseeing organisational performance, ensuring the organisation is managed efficiently and effectively.
- Scrutinise and review performance against agreed targets and budgets.
- Read reports and contribute to the appropriate debate of key issues.
- Act as an ambassador for the organisation, upholding the reputation of Gentoo and its values and principles. Network and promote the achievements of the business.
- Build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including the regulator, key local authorities, funders and residents.

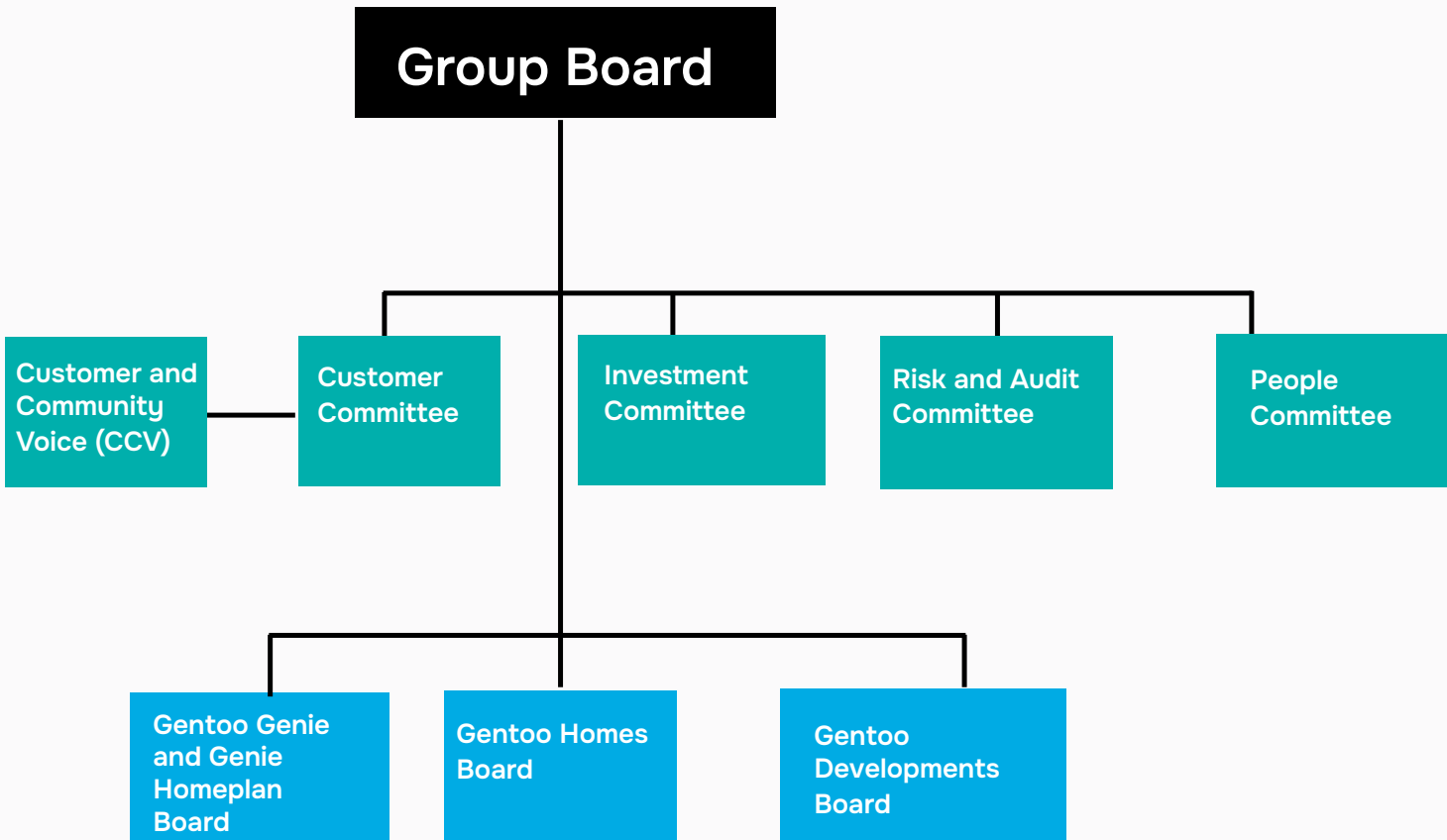
Adding value

- Apply personal expertise, skills and knowledge with due regard to the business and its social purpose.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of, and keep up to date with sector issues.
- Be a role model for good governance practices and behaviours.
- Attend and provide constructive challenge at board meetings.
- Actively participate in board events and training.

Our Governance structure

Gentoo's governance structure comprises of the Group Board and a number of subsidiary boards and committees. The membership is made up of Independent, Customer and Council Members.

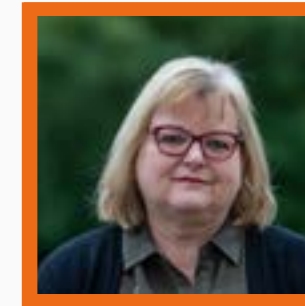
All Members play a key role in the leadership and decision making processes of the Group and set the strategic vision and direction of the organisation. Board and Committee Members support the Group's Executive Team with valuable challenge and scrutiny and seek assurance on how the Group is run.



Group Board



Emily Cox MBE
Chair of Group Board and
Customer Committee
Investment Committee



Alison Fellows
Group Board
Customer Committee
Investment Committee



Hannah Pollard
Group Board
Investment Committee



Brenda Naisby
Customer Group
Board Member
People Committee
Customer Committee



Claire Long
Group Board
Chair of Risk and
Audit Committee



Graeme Miller
Group Board
Risk and Audit
Committee



Ellen Thinesen
Group Board
People Committee



Andrew Lister
Group Board
Chair of Investment
Committee
Risk and Audit
Committee



Morven Smith
Group Board
Chair of People
Committee



Nick Forbes
Co-opted Member
of Group Board
Investment Committee

How to apply

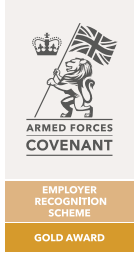
Nigel Wright Recruitment is acting as our retained consultancy for Gentoo on this non-executive recruitment. Candidates should apply with an up to date CV which shows your career history (no longer than 3 pages please) and a supporting statement (no longer than 1 page please) explaining why you are interested in this role and how you fulfil the person specification. Please send this to sue.ormerod@nigelwright.com

For further information or an informal discussion about the role and Gentoo please contact Sue Ormerod, Regional Director at Nigel Wright on her mobile: **0791 873 3904** or email: sue.ormerod@nigelwright.com

The closing date for applications is 12 noon on Monday 16 September 2024



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Further information on our current vacancies can be found at www.gentoo.com/careers

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Doxford International
Business Park
Sunderland, SR3 3XR

www.gentoo.com



Gentoo Group Limited is a charitable community benefit society, registration number 7302

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Great homes
Strong communities
Inspired people
for Sunderland

Emperor House