

BOARD MEMBER

RECRUITMENT PACK



AUGUST 2022

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INFORMATION

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AND PERSON
SPECIFICATION

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YOUR APPLICATION

Thank you very much for your interest in this post. On the following pages, you will find details of the role and the selection process to assist you in completing and tailoring your application.

To apply you should submit:

- An up-to-date CV which shows your full career history – we recommend that this is no longer than three pages;
- A supporting statement explaining why you are interested in this role, detailing how you are a good candidate for this post and how you fulfil the person specification – we recommend that this is no longer than three pages;
- The diversity form – completion of the diversity form is not mandatory, this is requested for monitoring purposes in line with our commitment to equality and diversity; and
- Indicate in your email if you cannot attend any of the interview dates.

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

Applications must be received by midday Tuesday 20th September 2022.

Please ensure we receive your application in good time.

If you wish to have an informal discussion about the role and organisation, or if you have any other questions you would like answered to help you decide whether to apply, please do call me for a confidential discussion.

Kind regards,
Susan Bernard
Head of HR and Corporate Services
020 8749 7112





WELCOME TO WOMEN'S PIONEER HOUSING

I am delighted that you are considering joining our Board. This pack has been prepared to provide further information about us and the role of Board Member – hopefully the information will stimulate you to apply.

Women's Pioneer Housing has an extraordinary legacy, we were founded in 1920 by women and men who understood the link between providing women with good quality affordable accommodation and the wider fight for women's equality. We have always held true to this mission and after a 100 years since our formation, gender inequality remains a huge issue. The need for an organisation that understands and champions women's housing needs has never been more relevant.

A safe home is the foundation in supporting our residents' independence. A women's life is a journey and we need to be able to support our residents along the way. We do this in many ways. We house women of all ages and we are the largest provider of sheltered housing in Kensington and Chelsea. We work closely with our residents to review and continuously improve our homes and services. We have an ambitious development programme, including our largest scheme at Wood Lane which will deliver 80 new high quality homes. We also aim to be the leading voice on women's housing issues raising awareness of gender inequality and intersecting inequalities linked to race, sexuality, disability, age etc. In 2022 the need to address women's diverse housing needs is perhaps even greater than it was in 1920.

We have a strong management team and in Tracey Downie, our chief executive, we have an inspirational leader who has infused energy into our organisation and inspired our people to embrace change. Our Board is incredibly committed and we have a robust governance structure in place, essential as we undertake new opportunities and tackle the uncertainty in the housing market.

As a Board Member you will support and contribute to what is an exciting period of change and growth for us. Your professional or work experience could be drawn from any field or sector, what matters is your ability to demonstrate confident leadership in achieving collective strategic decisions and working creatively with others. Ideally you will have had some experience of working with boards or committees and we especially welcome interest from candidates with lived experience of or a personal connection to our founding purpose and values.

If what we say and do inspires you, we hope you apply.

Yours sincerely,

Kim Vernau

Chair of the Board



ABOUT US



Women's Pioneer Housing own almost 1000 properties in eight boroughs in west and north-west London: Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham, Camden, Ealing, Wandsworth, Hillingdon, Harrow, and Westminster. 80% are studio and one-bedroom flats, mostly in converted Victorian buildings, many of which are listed or in conservation areas. There are also 90 leasehold flats, and a small but growing number of higher rental investment properties that fund our future development plans.

Our sheltered housing for single women over 60 is located in Kensington & Chelsea, where we are the largest sheltered housing provider. We have 178 flats for women over 60 who wish to live independently in their own home but with added security and back-up support on site and on call.

Our vision

Making a positive difference to women's lives.

Our mission

We provide homes and services which offer a springboard to independent women to achieve their potential. We aim to influence others to do the same.

Our values

- **Positivity** We are proud about our history and positive about our future. Like our founders we have a "can do" attitude. We are innovative, bold and solution focused.
- **Integrity** We are open, honest and transparent. We respect each other and our residents.
- **One Team** We work collaboratively with each other, our residents and our partners as One Team.
- **Never Forgetting the Customer** We take a customer centred approach. In everything we do we consider what is best for existing and future residents.
- **Equality** We champion equality and diversity and, in particular the role that women's housing plays in tackling gender inequality.
- **Empowerment** Our homes and services empower our residents to live independent lives. Staff and residents are empowered to contribute to the development of our homes and services.
- **Responsibility** We are each accountable for delivering excellence. We welcome scrutiny and challenge, always seeking to improve. We are clear about our responsibilities and those of our residents.



OUR CORPORATE PLAN

1. Providing high quality homes and services



We will consistently work with our residents to understand and meet their needs, setting high standards for our homes and services. We will hold ourselves accountable for our services with systems in place to monitor our performance, customer feedback and complaints.

2. Supporting our residents' independence and wellbeing



We will engage and learn from our residents, and develop our homes and services to support residents' independence and wellbeing. We will work with external providers and partners to meet our customers' diverse needs. We will enable our residents to provide mutual support and to foster communities.

3. Growing locally to provide more homes



We will aim to provide more homes to meet women's housing needs in London. We will grow our organisation by 15% over the next five years. We will prioritise homes for single women, who face particular disadvantages in the housing market.

4. Being a leading voice for women's housing



Over a hundred years after our formation we highlight the continuing importance of our work. We will influence others to recognise the importance of housing for women. Our residents will play a part in making the case for women's housing.

5. Developing our organisational strength



We will seek to ensure that our staff have a common purpose and know the contribution they make. Staff are engaged, empowered and supported to do their jobs well. Our residents are engaged and positive about us. We will have strong governance and will stay financially robust.

We have over a hundred years of experience and a strong portfolio of assets which we can use to lever in funds to support the development of our homes and services. Building on our own strengths and working in partnership with our residents and others wherever possible, utilising new technology effectively we are confident we can meet these challenges.

In addition to increasing and continuously improving our own homes and services, we will continue to highlight women's ongoing housing needs to influence local and central government and other housing providers to do more in this area.

We aim to be small enough to be nimble, agile and responsive and bold enough to stand up to inequalities of the world. Central to achieving this impact is realising our desire to work in partnership with our residents to develop our services and to highlight best practice and its impact on women's lives.

BOARD MEMBERS

Kim Vernau – Chair of the Board

Kim is a non-executive director of Women's Pioneer Housing and the Housing Association Property Mutual.

She is also Chair of acumen7, a network of senior executives and independent consultants who offer their skills and experience to help businesses and other organisations solve the challenges of development and change.

In addition, Kim is a Trustee of Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse (STADA) and is currently providing consultancy for a legal guide to residential construction law.



Louise Wolfson – Vice Chair and Chair of Remuneration and Nominations Committee

Louise is a senior corporate lawyer, currently working on a freelance basis. She also sits as a Tribunal Judge hearing social security and immigration appeals.

She previously worked for international law firm Allen & Overy, spending time in New York, as well as being seconded to British conglomerate Virgin and financial services specialists Merrill Lynch.

Yemi Aladerun

Yemi is a chartered architect specialising in residential developments. She is a development manager at Meridian Water. She is co-founder of Paradigm Network, a professional network for architects passionate about increasing Black and Asian representation within the industry, and is a committee member of Part W, an action group campaigning for gender parity.

Her other advisory position is as a trustee for Olmec, a social enterprise which champions race equality through economic and social justice.



BOARD MEMBERS

Ruth Buckingham

Ruth is a successful Strategic Planner and Project Management Office Lead with a background in planning, performance monitoring, project management and business improvement.

She has a track record of successfully delivering corporate transformation programmes, service reviews and business improvement projects.

Judith Page

Judith has over 20 years' experience working in property-related roles in social housing and local government. She has 15 years' experience as a senior manager at Executive/Director level.

Her achievements include designing and delivering a restructure which delivered £500,000 worth of savings, putting in place action plans to improve service delivery for a repairs service and producing a procurement strategy (including IT plan) for contract procurement.

Mike Reed

Mike is an experienced finance and internal audit professional who, prior to retirement, held a number of corporate and policy roles in the Senior Civil Service.

He now works part-time conducting specialist reviews for the Government Internal Audit Agency and governance seminars for private and public sector organisations.



ROLE PROFILE

The Board is collectively responsible for ensuring the success of Women's Pioneer Housing by setting and monitoring the strategic direction of the organisation and ensuring its compliance with all legal and regulatory obligations .

On an individual basis, you will be expected to contribute using your skills and experience to challenge and support the Board come to the best decisions. Your ability to work well with others is a key Board skill and will make the role fulfilling and productive.

BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership and governance:

- Uphold and promote the values and objectives of Women's Pioneer Housing.
- Contribute to and share responsibility for decisions of the Board and/or any Committee or Working Party of the Board of which you are a member.
- Work with other Board members and staff constructively and collegiately.
- Provide support and challenge to the executive staff.
- Uphold the National Housing Federation Code of Excellence in Governance and Code of Conduct and ensure adherence to the Regulator of Social Housing's regulatory requirements.
- Work to the highest levels of probity, and governance, including declaring conflicts of interests.
- Prepare well for Board meetings, proactively seek out information and engage with learning and development opportunities and keep abreast of key issues in the housing sector.

Business and performance:

- Contribute to establishing strategic plans to achieve organisational goals.
- Approve the annual business plan, budget and accounts, and key policies.
- Establish and oversee robust frameworks and systems for delegation, risk management and mitigation, business assurance and control.
- Make decisions on matters that might create significant financial or other risk to the company or which raise material issues of principle.
- Monitor organisational performance, using benchmarking and other data.
- Be satisfied that the company's affairs are conducted lawfully and in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Representation and promotion:

- Represent Women's Pioneer Housing as required, positively promoting its work and values.
- Act as an ambassador for Women's Pioneer Housing with external stakeholders.
- Engage with residents and attend resident events to ensure a connection to frontline services.
- Ensure that the Board takes professional advice when it needs to.
- Maintain company confidentiality.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Leadership - has a successful track record of leadership having operated and contributed effectively at a senior level in either the private/public, voluntary or community sectors.
- Communication - able to listen and make reasoned contributions to debate.
- Strategic thinking - understands the organisation's overall strategy, able to assess implications before making decisions.
- Judgement - proven track record of providing clear, balanced advice and guidance with the ability to challenge constructively.
- Influence - demonstrates effective skills in persuasion and negotiation to influence others.
- Team working - experience of working in collaboration with others, working towards common goals and shared objectives.

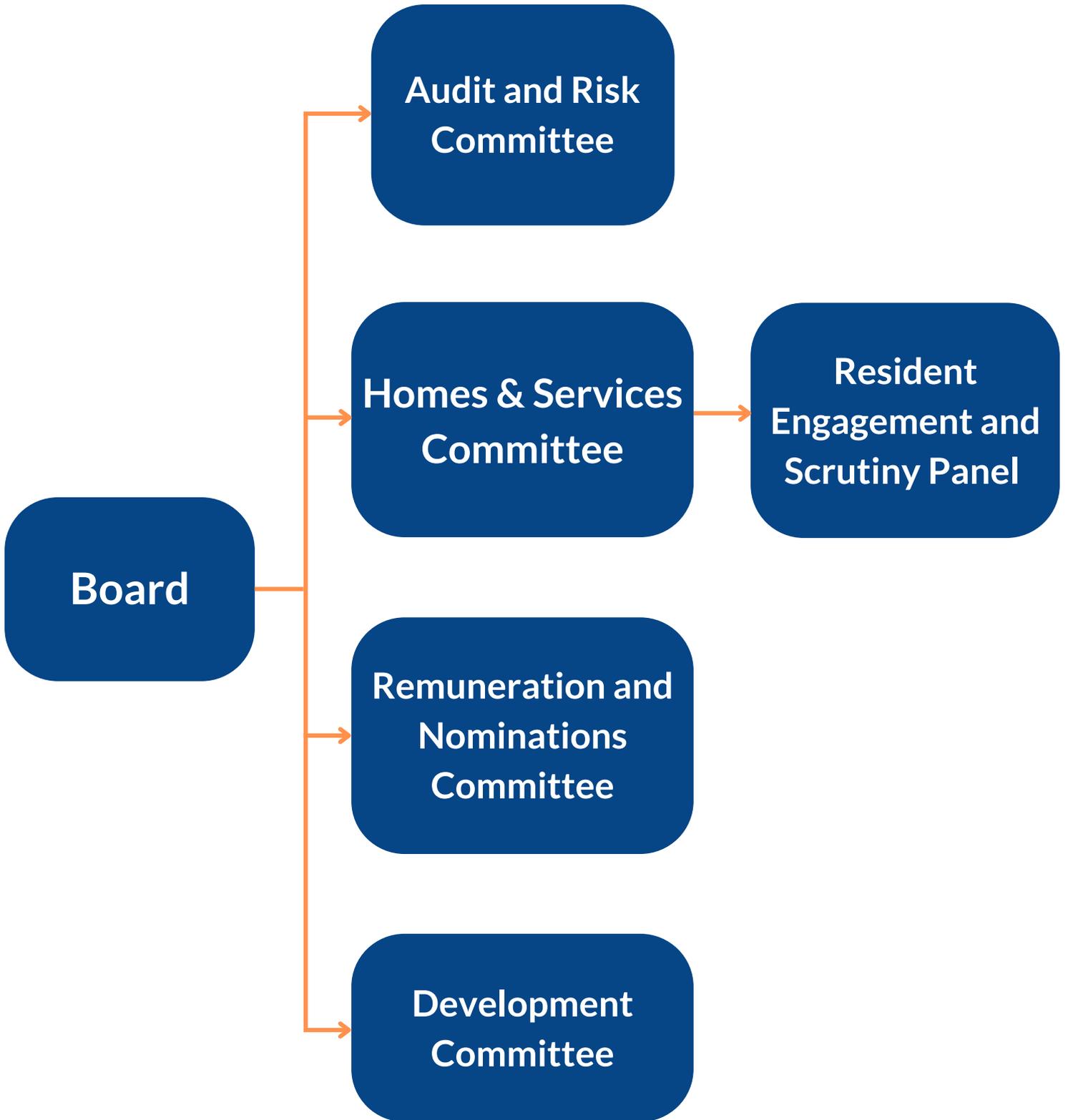
ABILITIES, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:

- Prior experience of Board or committee membership would be an advantage, but not essential.
- Knowledge of good governance.
- Track record of managing performance.
- Able to assess risk and promote risk awareness without being risk averse.
- Able to apply creative and imaginative solutions, exercising good judgement.
- Able to participate fully and effectively as a member of the Board.
- Demonstrate a strong and clear commitment to equality and diversity.
- Able to inspire others, builds trust and respect from staff and Board colleagues.
- Comfortable with handling, analysing and prioritising data and information.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- Shares the vision, values and commitments of Women's Pioneer Housing.
- Has credibility and enthusiasm; an effective decision maker.
- Able to work as a member of a team, likes working with people, thinks corporately with a collaborative style and accepts collective responsibility for decisions.
- Keeps up to date and informed with relevant issues in the social housing sector and is open to training and personal development.
- Has the time and energy needed to discharge the responsibilities of the post. Ability to contribute to the corporate management of the organisation, contributing to issues and decisions affecting the whole organisation.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



KEY TERMS AND CONDITIONS

REMUNERATION

The role is unremunerated. However, all reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of a Board Member will be reimbursed.

LOCATION

Board meetings take place primarily on MS Teams but may occasionally be at our office at 227 Wood Lane, London W12 0EX.

COMMITMENT

The role is a fixed 3-year term renewable for a further 3-year term (6 years in total). The commitment required is not expected to exceed more than 10 days a year. There are 4 Board meetings a year which are held in the evenings, and 2 away days held in central London. Board members are expected to serve on at least one committee, with the remaining time taken up in attending events, induction and the reading of papers and minutes.

KEY DATES AND THE SELECTION PROCESS

Closing date: Tuesday 20th September 2022 midday

Preliminary discussion will be held on Tuesday 18th October 2022.

These interviews will be held via Microsoft Teams and likely to be held during the afternoon or early evening.

Final interviews with Kim Vernau, Ruth Buckingham and Louise Wolfson: Tuesday 25 October 2022.

Final interviews will be held at the offices of Women's Pioneer Housing: 227 Wood Lane, London, W12 0EX.

If you are likely to be unavailable for any of the relevant interview dates specified above, please contact Susan Bernard

RECRUITMENT TO THE BOARD OF WOMEN'S PIONEER HOUSING

Women's Pioneer Housing was founded in 1920 by women and men who understood the challenges faced by women trying to secure affordable, safe and independent housing at the time. Today, the need for safe, secure, affordable housing is as great as ever and we remain committed to making a positive difference to women's lives by providing high quality homes and services.

Our vision is to make a positive difference to women's lives. Our mission is to provide homes and services which offer a springboard to independent women to achieve their potential and influence others to do the same. Our values, co-created with our staff and residents, reflect both our history and our future: Positivity, Integrity, One team, Never forgetting the customer, Equality, Empowerment and Responsibility.

WPH is currently recruiting to fill vacancies on our Board. New members will join a skilled and stimulating group that provides leadership to the association's professional staff and supports our work. We are particularly looking for people with knowledge and/or experience of one or more of the following areas:

- Commercial real estate/development
- Law

We also welcome interest from candidates with lived experience or a personal connection to our founding purpose and values.

The Board may also choose to co-opt further members and wants to attract wide range of applicants, so even if you do not obviously fit the above profile, if you are interested in our work, we will be very pleased to consider you.

More details of the association and how to apply are available on www.womenspioneer.co.uk.

If you would like an initial discussion to find out more about this role, please contact Susan Bernard - Head of Corporate Services (Susan.Bernard@womenspioneer.co.uk) or Tracey Downie - Chief Executive (Tracey.Downie@womenspioneer.co.uk).

Closing Date: Tuesday 20th September 2022 @ noon

WOMEN'S PIONEER HOUSING

Contact us



020 8749 7112



info@womenspioneer.co.uk



<https://womenspioneer.co.uk/>



Women's Pioneer Housing, 227 Wood Lane,
London W12 0EX United Kingdom

