



Recruitment Pack

Board member

September 2017

Your application

Dear Applicant

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. In order 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 declaration form – but completion of the equalities section is not mandatory, this is requested for monitoring purposes in line with our commitment to equality and diversity; and
- Indicate on the declaration form if you cannot attend any of the interview dates.

Please note that applications can only be considered if all the documentation is complete. Please send your application, preferably in MS Word format by email to:

howardcottage@campbelltickell.com.

Applications must be received by Monday 23rd October 2017 (12 noon)

You will receive an acknowledgement within 24 hours of receipt and we suggest that if after that time you have not heard from us, you telephone the office (0203 434 0990) to ensure that it has arrived. Using a secure email address and putting the job title/organisation in the subject line reduces the chances of any email going into spam.

Please do 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. You can contact me on 0794 897 880 or 020 3434 0990.

Kind regards

Mary Hope

Mary Hope
Associate Consultant Campbell Tickell

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Welcome letter

Welcome to our recruitment pack. We are currently looking for one Board member but our Chair stands down in September and so we are looking ahead at the recruitment to that role which will start in January.

Howard Cottage is justifiably proud of its history: over 100 years old, founded by Ebenezer Howard originator of the Garden City Movement, used as the national blueprint for the development of large-scale local authority housing, and with a long tradition of providing excellent services and high quality homes. Our history influences all that we do: we are committed to building more homes but put quality of design before quantity, some of our original stock are now listed buildings, the stock we lease from the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation has special historical conditions attached; we always try to remain true to the spirit of our founders. But our activities are also strongly influenced by listening to our residents. So, we build two bed homes for older people – because that's what our residents told us want. In 2011 we became smallest and oldest housing association ever to be accredited by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS). We continue to work with residents and listen to them, but external pressures caused by the 1% rent reduction and removal of development grants mean we have to adapt our offering and in dialogue with our residents we have developed our new strategic plan 2017-22.

We have two goals to be THE recognised affordable housing provider in Letchworth, the world's first Garden City, and to develop partnerships which maximise value for our residents. So, we are focussing on our heartlands and we are working more with others to deliver the non-housing community support services. We have started to charge for non-core services such as mutual exchanges. Having renewed the leases on our properties to 125 years we going to the market to borrow enough funds to double our development programme. We are a small association with some 1700 homes and that constrains what we can do but within those constraints we are ambitious and exciting.

We have also reviewed our governance, we have a small and talented Board and have reduced the committees down to two (Audit and Remuneration), so as a Board Member you will be fully involved in all our strategic decision making. When our Chair vacancy is advertised in January, you will also have the opportunity to either put yourself forward or influence the choice we make.

We are unique, our heritage makes us so, but we are far from stuck in the past. We are driven by our social purpose and to fulfil it we must flex and change what we do. This is a really exciting time to join us, please read further and speak to Mary Hope on 0798978804 for more information.

Best regards

John Welch

John Welch, Chief Executive

About us

Who Are We:

Howard Cottage was one of the UK's first housing associations and we take our name from Sir Ebenezer Howard, the founder of the Garden City movement. It was set up in 1911 to create affordable homes for the workers who had migrated from the cities to take up employment in Letchworth, the world's first Garden City.

Since then, we have played an important role in Letchworth Garden City's history, particularly after the First World War, when our designs provided the national blueprint for the development of large-scale local authority housing.

We now have over 1,600 homes, including more than 300 rural homes that we built in partnership with local authorities in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. All our rural homes are occupied by local people who would otherwise have been unable to afford their own home

Howard Cottage is a non-profit making organisation. This means that we use our rental income to maintain our homes and to provide high-quality services to our residents.

We employ more than 40 people. We are governed by a skilled Board that includes many local people and Howard Cottage residents.

The Board has overall control of Howard Cottage. It is a group comprising up to two HCHA resident members and up to eight skilled individuals from all sections of the community. The Board meets regularly during the year and reports on the year's performance at the annual general meeting. This is also when Board members are elected. The Board's role is to:

- Ensure that we follow the procedures and guidelines laid down by our regulator, the Homes and Communities Agency
- Lead our housing association and determine our strategic objectives
- Control our housing association's affairs
- Ensure that we comply with all legal requirements



Where Do We Operate:

We are based in Letchworth Garden City, North Hertfordshire and operate in both Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.

Our Values:

Howard Cottage has a strong focus on its roots: we are a locally minded organisation that works for the benefit of our residents and the local community. At our core we are a sub-market housing provider that also supports activities in areas like financial inclusion, wellbeing and social care. We are an important member of the local community and have strong relationships locally. Over the next five years we expect to strengthen these relationships with our key partners, to encourage a joined-up approach to a number of local issues.

We work in some of the most deprived areas in North Hertfordshire, particularly when it comes to skills and education. We recognise that one of the major building blocks to tackle this is the provision of good-quality affordable housing in the areas where people aspire to live and work. As well as underpinning communities by providing housing, we do retain a will to work in our communities to facilitate improvements in skills and education. Despite reduced income we have remained both a catalyst for change in our communities and a direct financial provider of highly valued resources, such as our Kingfisher Dementia Clubs and enhanced resident support services.

Our Vision:

This year we have refocused our mission to ensure it reflects our ambitions and the new environment. Our mission is to provide good services in all that we do:

- In the ways that we work
- In the homes we build and maintain
- In the communities in which we operate.

Through our commitments we will:

- Know, care for and respect our residents as individuals
- Create and deliver high-quality, sustainable solutions to housing issues
- Be actively involved in the wellbeing of our communities
- Be a dynamic and innovative organisation
- Deliver these commitments efficiently and effectively

We will continue to provide good-quality housing services to the residents in our existing homes across Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. We will also maintain our commitment to develop new sub-market rented homes, primarily in Letchworth Garden City, Stotfold and Biggleswade but also in the towns and villages that surround them.

We want to build communities, not just buildings, so we aspire to create homes that are properly supported in terms of infrastructure. They must be affordable to the people who so desperately need them. And, last but not least, echoing the ‘TownCountry’ of Sir Ebenezer Howard’s ‘Three Magnets’, we continue to place a premium on design. Raymond Unwin, one of our early architects who was made famous in the early days of the Garden City movement, said that without achieving a “beautiful home for all” we will “fail utterly”. We can achieve that beauty in our development – we always prefer to build fewer of the right homes than more of the wrong ones.

Future Strategy:

Our key strategic priorities for 2017-22 are to:

- Maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders
- Achieve financial independence and value for money
- Implement innovative solutions for older and disabled people
- Develop new sub-market rented housing to meet local need
- Sustain good performance.

Moving forward, we will retain social housing management as our primary focus. We have had to rationalise some of our offer in light of the financial constraints of our operating environment – we have done this by emphasising the cost of our services rather than always attempting to exceed resident expectations. Our base level is a good service for all.



Leadership team

Chief Executive - John Welch



**Finance and Resources
Director
Michelle Cross**



**Operations Director
Alan Dulson**



**Head of Resident Services
Richard Scammell**



**Community Investment
Manager
Helen Cairns**



**Housing Manager
Allison Blunt**



Finance Manager – Vacant Post

Maintenance Manager – Vacant Post

Board members

Gary Grindall - Chairman

Gary works as a Business and Performance Manager. He is also an experienced, long serving elected NHDC Councillor with strong links to the local community and experience in Planning, Housing and Community Services. Gary is committed to ensuring the HCHA continues to provide good service to its residents and working to provide desperately needed new local affordable housing.

Gareth Hillier - Vice Chair

Gareth is a law graduate with extensive experience in the social care and housing sectors; including business, policy, compliance and operations.

Steve Henning - Audit Chairman

Steve is a retired Chief Executive of a Hertfordshire Housing Association. He has a building/surveying background and has held a number of senior executive posts in both local authorities and housing associations over the past 20 years

Barry Moss – Remuneration Committee Chairman

Barry joined the Board as a resident Board member after a number of years being involved in various resident involvement activities and groups. He has a background in marketing and teaching

Jim Briscoe - Board Member

Jim has worked in housing and property for over three decades, specialising in the private sector residential development and finance.

Carol Rooker - Board Member

Carol is a senior manager within the housing department at Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC). She works in the area of retained Council housing with CBC. She has responsibility for a large budget and manages a team of around 50 staff.

Carol has both housing management and asset management experience and is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

Shaun Mclean - Board Member

Shaun has been Resources Director at Thrive Homes (a Housing Association based near Watford) since September 2014. Prior to that he was Deputy Finance Director at Family Mosaic Housing Association in London for three years. These were Shaun's first roles in social housing, having worked in senior roles at a number of multi-national companies for 13 years before joining the housing sector in 2011.

Job description

Job title: Board member

Job purpose: A Board Member of Howard Cottage Housing Association has responsibility, as a member of the Board, to direct the Association's work and determine strategic direction and policy.

Key Responsibilities

- Support and uphold the aims, values, objectives and policies of the Association.
- As a member of the Board, take ultimate responsibility for the strategic direction and policy of the Association.
- Make policy and decide upon all matters of significant financial importance or risk to the Association and other matters of material principle.
- Contribute to and share responsibility for decisions and actions with other Board members.
- Establish and monitor a system of delegated authority to ensure proper control and execution of the Association's work, monitor performance of the Association and recommend necessary remedial action.
- Require appropriate legal and professional advice to be obtained to ensure that the Association's work is lawfully and properly conducted.
- Review on an annual basis the work of the Board and publish a report for public circulation and for shareholding members prior to the AGM.
- Approve the annual Budget and Business Plan and arrange proper approval of the final accounts prior to publication.
- Appoint (or if necessary, dismiss) the Chief Executive and be represented in the appointment of second tier officers.
- On an annual basis review the skills and experience available to the Board and consider steps needed to strengthen or broaden the Board.
- Act only in the interests of the Association and not on behalf of any particular interest group.

- Comply with the Association's Governance Policy and Code of Conduct and conduct oneself in ways which are accountable and consistent with publicly acceptable standards.
- Attend meetings, training sessions and other events and prepare for these as appropriate and represent the Association on occasion.
- Contribute to Association Committees and working groups as appropriate.

Person specification

Essentials

- Board members of Howard Cottage Housing Association should collectively possess the skills, qualities and experience to effectively perform their role of strategic direction of the Association, but all Board members should demonstrate:
- A commitment to equality and diversity in particular in relation to gender, race, age and disability.
- A commitment to good customer service.
- Openness, integrity, accountability and respect for confidentiality.
- Non-discriminatory behaviour and a willingness to challenge inappropriate behaviour.
- Strategic Management – ability to look ahead, anticipate issues and challenges and find solutions to ensure the long term prosperity of the organisation.
- Financial Management - the ability to understand complex financial information and make balanced decisions using sound judgement on financial issues.
- Excellent interpersonal skills – able to work collaboratively with others and reach agreement, to challenge and support colleagues/staff, to listen and understand the views of others.
- On a collective basis the Board should possess a range of skills, knowledge and experience, in this instance we are looking for skills in either:
 - treasury management,
 - asset management or
 - commissioning services for older people
- The Board should also be balanced and reflect diversity in terms of gender, race and disability.

Principal terms and conditions

Position:

Board member

Remuneration Package:

£2,000 per annum, plus expenses

Location:

Howard Cottage Housing Association, Pioneer House, Norton Way South, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, SG6 1N

Time Commitment:

Board members are expected to accept the following workload:

- 8 board meetings a year, normally held at Pioneer House, Letchworth Garden City during the early evening, and 2-4 meetings of relevant committees.
- Attendance at the Board strategy forum event usually held on a weekday in June
- Attendance at the annual 2 day strategic event which will normally involve a residential stay from Thursday to Friday in early November
- Reading and preparation for board meetings
- Reading and responding to email communications from the Chief Executive, Chairman and other Board and committee members.
- Attendance at any required training/briefings, conferences
- and other events.

Terms of Office:

The tenure length for a Board member is three years.

Key dates and selection process

Closing Date:

Monday 23rd October 2017

The client meeting to agree longlisted candidates will take place on 27 October. Successful candidates will be informed the following day 28 October. All unsuccessful candidates will be offered feedback by Campbell Tickell.

First Interviews:

Monday 6th November 2017

Longlisted candidates will be interviewed by a Campbell Tickell panel. On the same day there will be an opportunity to meet with John Welch Chief Executive, for a separate discussion session.

Interviews will be held at the Campbell Tickell, Olympic House, Fulton Road, Wembley

Final Interviews:

Thursday 23rd November 2017 TBC

The Final Panel will be John Welch, Chief Executive, Gary Grindall, Chair and a further Board Member.

Interviews will be held at Pioneer House, Letchworth Garden City.

Supplementary Information

The following can be downloaded from the Howard Cottage website:

[Corporate Plan 2017-2022](#)

[Howard Cottage Annual report 2015/16](#)

To find out more please visit the Howard Cottage website:

[Howard Cottage website](#)

Media Advertisement



**howard
hc
cottage**
housing association

Board Member

Letchworth, Herts / £2k pa+expenses



With a 100 + year history, Howard Cottage has always responded positively to changing times and new challenges – now is no exception. We have thought through our new strategic plan and offering. We plan to push ahead and extend our borrowing so that we can provide the much needed homes in this time of housing crisis and act as a catalyst and facilitator for community development. Our Board are leading our organisation to provide high quality homes in the garden city and services which make a real

difference to our local communities and are looking to recruit an additional Member. We are looking for a talented individual with excellent interpersonal skills, shrewd financial judgement and experience in a senior strategic role in a complex organisation. You will have skills in either treasury management, asset management or commissioning service for older people. You will need to appreciate our uniqueness and support our ambition to punch above our 1700 home weight. Our future

is bright and you will join us as we implement our new strategic plan and as we go out to recruit a new Chair for the organisation (for September 2018 when our current Chair stands down.) If you are interested in joining our team now, please talk to Mary Hope at Campbell Tickell on 07948 978 804/020 3434 0990 or see further information at www.campbelltickell.com/jobs
Closing: Monday 23rd October 2017, 12 noon





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