



Board members

Recruitment Pack

April 2025



Homes & Enterprise

Supporting BME Communities
and Multi-Cultural Neighbourhoods



Thank you very much for your interest in these Board member posts at Unity Housing Association. On the following pages, you will find details of the role and the selection process to assist you in completing and tailoring your application.

You will no doubt do your own due diligence but do read this pack carefully as it will provide you with a good overview of the organisation and roles. After you have done that, please feel free to get in touch with me, so that we can talk through your offer and get a sense of how that aligns to what Unity Housing Association is seeking.

To apply, we will need the following from you:

- A CV. Make sure this confirms your current/most recent roles (you can sum up earlier roles, say before the last 15 years), tell us about your achievements so we get a picture of your skills and experience, and try to keep it to two pages or three at most;
- A personal statement. We want to hear about your motivation, why this role/ organisation, and you will also want to evidence how relevant your offer is to the role specification; again ideally in two to three pages; and
- The declaration form, which is accessible via the role page on our website and includes space to indicate if you cannot attend any of the interview dates.

Please submit your completed application documents using the online form, which is accessible via our jobs page: www.campbelltickell.com/jobs. You will receive an email confirmation and see an onscreen confirmation message after submitting your application, but if you have any issues, you can call 020 3434 0990.

The roles close at 9am, Tuesday 6th May 2025. Please ensure we receive your application in good time.

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.

Kind regards,

Isabella Ajilore

Isabella Ajilore
Search Consultant, Campbell Tickell
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Welcome to Unity

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Board Member of Unity Housing Association. We are a successful, independent, and ambitious organization with a social purpose to fight inequality by empowering BME people and regenerating their communities. We are proud to call ourselves a BME organisation because we are committed to tackling racial inequality and believe this is as important today as it was when Unity was founded 30 years ago. We have a diverse workforce and board that aims to represent the people we serve, and we operate primarily in Leeds, but have a growing interest in Kirklees.

We seek to have a broad impact in the communities we serve. In addition to our main business, Unity Housing Association (UHA), our principal subsidiary Unity Enterprise operates to create economic opportunities that enable underserved people to improve their life chances. In a nutshell our social purpose is to bring opportunity to people whose talent would otherwise not be seen or heard. This is a tall order for a small organisation, so we are proud to be seen as punching above our weight.

Now is an exciting time to join Unity. A robust 30-year business plan is in place, and good service performance, and we have the highest G1/V1 rating for governance and viability from the Social Housing Regulator. In addition to recruiting several new Board members, you will see that we are also recruiting for a new Chair of the board (who we hope will be involved in the selection process for these Board roles), and so this is an opportunity to join a refreshed Board and contribute to setting and developing the new culture and ways of working as new colleagues come into the business.

For these Board member roles we are seeking the following skillsets:

- Strategic HR/ People. For this role, you will bring senior experience gained in a People/ HR role. For this position we are open to the sector in which your experience was gained.
- Housing Management. You will bring senior experience in a housing leadership role gained in the social housing sector. Additionally, experience of regeneration would be beneficial.
- Finance. A qualified accountant, you will have senior experience gained in the social housing sector, and in addition to being a UH board member, be ready to bring your expertise to our Audit and Risk Committee.

For these Board roles, ideally you will bring some previous Board experience however that is not an essential requirement. We are looking for Board members who share our passion and drive to help people create a better future for themselves and their communities. Your ability to demonstrate that you share our absolute passion for what we do and are committed to our social purpose is every bit as important as your skill set.

Joining the Board of Unity Homes offers a fantastic opportunity to shape and support the organisation's vital work and make a real difference to the lives of people in our local community. If you are as excited about our future as we are and want to be part of a highly committed and supportive board, then we look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

Philip Taylor

Philip Taylor | Interim Chair

About Us

Our background

Unity was formed in 1987 with the aim of building a strong, BME-led, community housing association to meet the urgent housing needs of Black and minority ethnic communities throughout Leeds. Our initial focus was on the Chapeltown area. Unity has expanded to become the leading BME housing association in Leeds, delivering a range of housing and regeneration services as well as playing an important strategic role in the city.

Unity Today

Unity Homes & Enterprise is a Registered Provider (RP) of social housing. Our headquarters is still in Chapeltown in Leeds, but we currently operate across Leeds and Kirklees, with stock concentrations particularly in our core areas of Chapeltown and Holbeck/Beeston. Our Enterprise arm operates three successful enterprise centers fostering small businesses, one of which has very recently undergone a major refurbishment. We aim for a steady development pipeline of new homes and excellent relationships with Leeds and Kirklees Councils. Our Group turnover is £6.8m and our annual investment in new and existing homes is around £6.5m. We continue to be committed to supporting BME communities and to having a workforce that reflects those communities, but we don't compromise on quality and we will always ensure we appoint the right person for the job at the time.

Our Mission: "Provide housing choice, improve life opportunities, and address inequalities."

Unity Housing Association (UHA)

The principal activity is the management, maintenance, and development of social housing. We own 1386 homes, and directly manage 1350 of them, including ten of them brought by leaseholders. The remainder are sublet to specialist supported housing and care providers and used to house a variety of people with support needs. We employ 40 staff of which 22 are wholly involved in the provision of housing and maintenance services.

UHA addresses housing inequalities and helps to regenerate communities. It also produces the surpluses that support other aspects of our social purpose. Hence tenants are our priority and providing them with an excellent service is a prerequisite for everything else we do. We want all tenants to experience excellent customer service that treats them with respect, is responsive to their needs and ensures they are involved and consulted about key issues that affect them. Customer satisfaction is the best measure of a service, and that is why we aim to have one of the highest levels of satisfaction in our region.

The business also depends on several operational activities taking place consistently month after month. The best-known ones are Rent Collection, Repairs, Estate Maintenance Services and Void turnaround. These have Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and performance is benchmarked with other providers.

Equally critical to the business are various backroom activities. These include managing our finances and producing monthly management accounts, maintaining IT systems, ensuring the health and safety of residents, the operations of systems to guarantee proper regulatory and governance control, and producing the performance data that tells us how we are doing.

“From day one, Adrian always made a point of meeting everyone and getting to know each business and how he could best support us. Adrian has always been very understanding of what issues and worries small business owners might face and he has organised many events such as breakfast meetings, one to one coaching with business advisers and presentations from guest speakers.”

Unity Business Centre tenant testimonial, January 2025

In 2000 Unity took its first steps outside the provision of residential housing services when we brought properties for use as commercial business units and established a subsidiary company, Unity Enterprise. It is a not-for-profit company committed to contributing to the economic wellbeing of local communities and to the regeneration of inner-city neighbourhoods, through the provision of excellent quality, affordable offices, and workspaces in the Leeds area. It offers business tenants a responsive and prominent level of customer service. What makes Unity Enterprise unique is being more than just a provider of managed offices and workspaces. As a not-for-profit social enterprise it has, for over twenty years, provided a secure and friendly environment in its business centers which has enabled inner city enterprises and voluntary sector organisations to grow, prosper and develop.

“Being at Unity Business Centre has been a very special adventure for 12 years, full of special memories. I do hope many future tenants can benefit from the same kind of support I received from Adrian and his team.”

Unity Business Centre tenant testimonial, January 2025

Next, we set up the employment service in 2005. The Team provides opportunities for people in three ways. Firstly, they support people into employment. Their clients range from the people who are “job ready” to those requiring extensive support to overcome barriers before they can take up employment. Secondly the team encourages people to take up training and employment opportunities to increase their chances of employment or to improve their job and career prospects. Lastly, they encourage people with skills to devote those skills to doing voluntary work in their community. For some of these people volunteering is sometimes a gateway into paid employment.

UE has its own Board, and its Chair is a board member of UHA.

“In a society where many small businesses are struggling, especially in the early years, places like Unity are invaluable, but they can only be as strong as their management teams. I think it is important to recognise what an asset Mr. Green is to Unity.”

Unity Business Centre tenant testimonial, January 2025

Further reading:

Our [Corporate Plan](#) sets out the direction for Unity until the end of 2026. More detail can be found in our [Annual Accounts](#) and [Annual Report to Tenants](#) on our [website](#).

We are excited to have been shortlisted in two areas in the [Northern Housing Awards 2025](#): Unity Enterprise for the SME of the Year, and Unity Homes & Enterprise for Best Customer Experience.



Our Values



Rooted in Reality

Paying attention to the here and now, seeking to understand the struggles people face, we communicate clearly what can be done and hold ourselves accountable for delivering on our promises

Having the courage to care

Being brave enough to listen carefully, unlocking potential by exploring opportunities across departmental and organisational boundaries, and always determined to get things right



Laying Sound Foundations

Investing time and effort in our skills, knowledge, systems and processes to enable us to do what we do well by making the most of our resources

Going Boldly

Not settling for ordinary when better is possible, we actively experiment embracing innovation and harnessing creativity to explore where others may fear to go

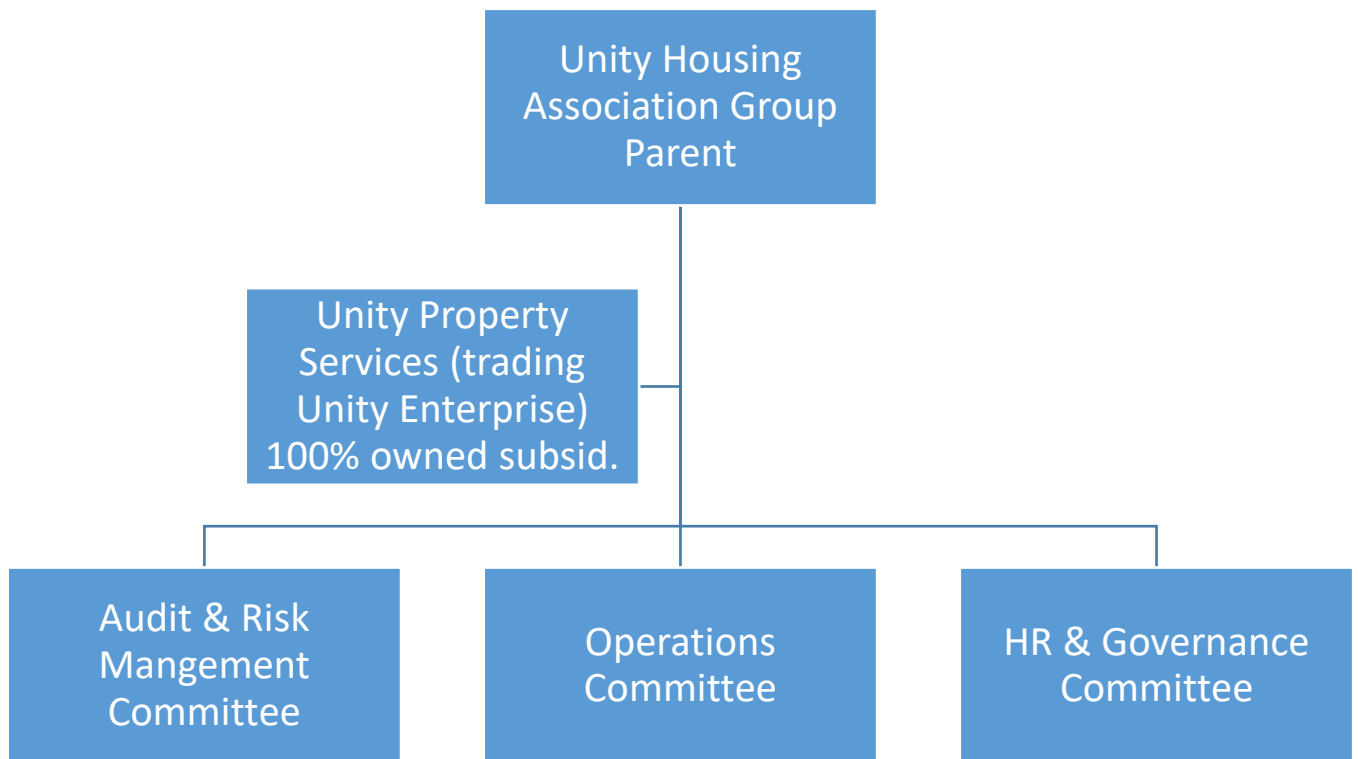


Full Lives Well Lived

We cooperate generously sharing our skills and time to help one another flourish and effectively support individuals and families across all of our services, we appreciate that many different things matter and every individual is so much more than the circumstances in which they find themselves



Unity Homes and Enterprise Group Committee Structure



In addition, there is a VAT saving subsidiary Unity Housing Development Services Limited which delivers design and build housing for Unity Housing Association.



Key terms and conditions

Remuneration

£3,423 per annum

Location

A hybrid approach is currently operating with all Board meetings and away days being held in person, and committee meetings usually being held online, via MS Teams. Meetings normally start at around 5.30pm.

In person meetings take place at our offices at Unity Homes and Enterprise, 113-117 Chapeltown Road, Leeds, LS7 3HY.

Time commitment

The UHA Board meets five times a year and the Unity Enterprise board four times. All Board members are expected to sit on at least one Committee so we will require a commitment to attend a minimum of nine meetings per year. In addition to reading, preparation for and attendance at these meetings, other time commitments include:

- Annual General Meeting and any Special General Meetings
- Appropriate working groups and occasional panels
- Annual strategic planning away events (may be evenings and/or weekends)
- Training and development as identified by the annual appraisal process
- Team building

Board members are expected to attend scheduled meetings and events regularly and persistent (as defined by the Rules) non-attendance will result in removal as a board member. Appointments will be made on a three-year term basis, with a maximum period of two terms (six years) as the Association moves to reduce from the current three term basis.

The next Unity Housing Association Meeting will be held on the 25th June 2025.



Key dates and the selection process

Closing date: Tuesday 6th May 2025 | 9am

We will be in touch to let you know the outcome of your application on Friday 16th May.

First interviews: Tuesday 20th, Wednesday 21st or Thursday 22nd May 2025 | via Teams

Longlisted candidates will be interviewed by a Campbell Tickell panel.

We will be in touch to let you know the outcome of the interview by the end of the following week.

Final interviews: Tuesday 10th, Wednesday 11th or Thursday 12th June 2025 | in-person | at Unity office

There will be a final panel interview, led by Moreen Pascal, Chair of HR & Governance; and two other Board members. Campbell Tickell will also be in attendance.

If you are unable to participate on any of the identified dates for interviews or other sessions, please do speak to Campbell Tickell before making an application.

Role profile – Board member

[this applies to all board members; Committee Chairs/Board Chair have additional responsibilities to this]

Introduction

Unity Housing Association expects all Board members to ensure that the Association complies with the 9 principles of good governance set out in the Excellence in Governance produced by the National Housing Federation and which are reproduced below. We are working to support and uphold the Code and believe that the foundation of good governance is a talented diverse and effective Board working as a team in partnership with the Chair of the Board

The principles of good governance are:

Ethics

It operates according to high ethical standards, explicit values and the Federation's codes of governance and conduct.

Accountability

There is proper accountability to, and involvement of, all the organisation's stakeholders, primarily its residents.

Customer First

Organisations should put the needs of their existing and potential service users at the heart of business decisions and strategy.

Openness

There is a spirit of openness, making full disclosure of governance matters and other information.

Diversity and inclusion

There is fairness and equality of opportunity and a recognition of diversity in all aspects of the organisation's governance.

Review and renewal

There are formal and open processes for the periodic review of the board's own performance, and to ensure its renewal on an ongoing basis.

Clarity

There is clarity of roles and responsibilities between the organisation's board members, paid staff and Shareholders.

Control

There are effective systems for internal delegation, audit, risk management and control. The board receives adequate and timely reports and advice to inform its decisions. The board has an effective relationship with internal auditors, external auditors and regulators.

Structures

There are effective staffing and committee structures to support the board's work.

Each Board member has a general duty to act in the interests of Unity Housing Association and its subsidiaries, being committed to the corporate objectives and core values, a duty to ensure that Unity Housing Association and its subsidiaries observes the Rules of the organisation, a duty to govern Unity Housing Association and its subsidiaries with proper skill and care, contributing to, abiding by and assuming collective responsibility for board decisions.

In addition, there are essential functions laid out in the NHF Code of Governance 2020. A copy of the Code will be provided for all board members.

Leadership

Share accountability for the direction and control of the Association within the agreed strategy, policy and planning framework, reviewing that framework as necessary. Ensure that obligations to stakeholders are understood and reflected in strategy and implementation. Establish a strong and positive working relationship between the board, the Chief Executive and other senior staff. Support the Chair in his/her role of providing strategic leadership and creating positive board climate. In conjunction with the board as a whole, appoint and if necessary, dismiss/remove the Chief Executive and/or the Chair of the Board.

Strategy

Set objectives for the Association in the context of the Association's aims, strategy and policy and determine the strategic aims and outcomes required. Review and evaluate current and future external opportunities, threats and risks together with current and future internal strengths and weaknesses to ensure effective decision making. In conjunction with the board as a whole, be accountable for the quality and effectiveness of the Business Plan in contributing to delivering long term sustainability for the Association.

Performance monitoring

Ensure there are agreed budgets for both revenue and capital expenditure that drive the outcomes set in the Business Plan. Review and monitor the performance of the Association against the Business Plan and ensure that the management information provided to the Board is of the nature and quality required. Monitor the Association's performance in the light of customer feedback and the performance of comparable associations.

Risk

Ensure that there are systems in place to identify, manage and report risk to safeguard the Association's assets. Agree policies and take decisions on all matters that might create significant financial or other risk to the Association. Ensure the climate is monitored and appropriate actions taken to deliver a positive climate for staff and board members.

Governance

Ensure that the Association complies with all legal and statutory obligations and that all regulatory requirements are met. In conjunction with the board as a whole, establish and review a Code of Conduct for all board and committee members and staff. Assess how the Association follows the recommendations of the NHF Code of Governance (2020) and state compliance or non-compliance in the Association's annual review and accounts.

Personal Development

Be both well informed (undertake appropriate background reading, develop and maintain an appreciation of the key challenges faced by the Association) and contribute specialist knowledge, expertise and/or experience to the board. Contribute to creating and sustaining the "learning board" by participating in or leading board induction and development activities.

Representation

Promote the reputation and image of the Association by representing the Association as an ambassador at key events and interlaces with tenants, stakeholders, staff etc., both internally and externally.

Role specification

The board should possess the qualities required to lead the Association and its subsidiaries and control their affairs. Through bi-annual individual and collective appraisal, the board will ensure that members have relevant skills and experience to lead the Association.

Knowledge (to be covered by the collective board):

- Understanding of current issues in affordable/social housing
- Understanding of the social, economic and/or political context in which the Association operates
- Understanding of the regulatory and compliance framework within which the Association operates
- Knowledge of residents' needs and concerns and of the wider communities served by the Association

Experience:

- Experience of working with or for not for profit, public sector, private sector and/or social enterprise
- Experience of customer care and service delivery
- Experience of operating in a climate of significant change and challenge
- Experience of working as part of a team

Abilities:

- Ability to make a constructive contribution to meetings through preparation and understanding
- Ability to understand complex issues, including financial information
- Ability to take an active part in collective debate and decision-making
- Ability to attend Board meetings, training and development events and other corporate activities which may be held in the evening and at weekends

Skills:

- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Committee/meeting skills
- Good problem solving skills

Personal qualities:

- Commitment to the vision and values of Unity Housing Association
- Commitment to equality and diversity in employment and service delivery
- High standards of personal and professional integrity
- From time to time the Board will require members with specific expertise

Board Member Competencies

Unity Housing Association has reviewed the competencies needed by board members to ensure that the Association is well governed and effective. The following list the competencies expected of each board member.

Leadership

- Inspires confidence in key stakeholders, the Association's executive team and staff members.
- Leads by example and inspires loyalty and commitment to the Association's success.
- Demonstrates commitment to the Association's values.
- Creates an expectation of high performance against ambitious standards.
- Delegates responsibility appropriately.

Strategy

- Ensures all the business implications are researched and considered when considering plans or actions.
- Understands the Association's wider operating environment and emerging trends across the social housing domain.
- Recognises the need to balance obligations to residents, staff, and the wider communities within which the Association operates.
- Considers the longer-term needs of the Association and identifies risks and opportunities that arise.

Performance monitoring

- Keeps a strong focus on performance against the Business Plan, scrutinising, monitoring, and providing feedback on performance against financial and nonfinancial measures.
- Challenges underlying evidence, information, and assumptions before drawing conclusions
- Offers appropriate and relevant comparisons or parallels.
- Ensures the customer perspective is considered in assessing performance against targets.
- Keeps to the required (strategic) level of detail.

Risk

- Demonstrates clarity of thought and objectivity in actively evaluating risks to the Association
- Ensure UE identifies and manages risks in a focused and cost-effective manner
- Demonstrates perceptiveness and intuition, focusing on the essentials and how they may impact on different aspects of the Association's business
- UE Identifies when external, independent professional advice is required
- Demonstrates clarity of thought and objectivity in actively evaluating risks to the Association
- Ensures that identified risks are managed in a focused and cost-effective manner
- Demonstrates perceptiveness and intuition, focusing on the essentials and how they may impact on distinct aspects of the Association's business
- Identifies when external, independent professional advice is required

Governance

- Adheres to relevant financial, legal and domain regulation
- Ensures highest standards of probity and integrity are maintained throughout the Association.
- Demonstrates and supports renewal and succession planning for the board

- Demonstrates a sound understanding of individual and collective responsibility for decision making.

Personal Development

- Conducts relevant reading and preparatory work to ensure effective participation in board and other meetings.
- Participates in regular board development and training sessions.
- Maintains an understanding of the wider political, environmental, social, and technological environments in which the Association operates.
- Applies specialist knowledge appropriately in a range of contexts and ensures that the knowledge base is maintained and remains current.

Representation

- Acts as an ambassador for the Association, seeking opportunities to influence external agencies or individuals who can contribute to the Association's success.
- Makes the most of opportunities to advance the Association's interests, promote its activities and enhance its image.
- Effectively lobbies key people in the interests of the Association.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Unity recognises that there is no place for discrimination or harassment within its business. We are eager to promote an understanding of the importance of equality and diversity amongst our staff and Board members and encourage good practice from our partner organisations. The commitments in our equality framework reflect our key aim of operating in a fair, open, and accountable manner. We are working to foster a culture of respect based on understanding the equal value and worth of individuals so they can fulfil their potential. We have also made a commitment to ensure that our services are equally accessible to all our customers, and that all our customers have an opportunity to put their views forward.

Bi-annual appraisals of Board Members

Board Members are appraised in relation to the

- Role Profile
- Role Specification
- Competencies



Chair of the Board

£7,107 per annum

Board members x3

£3,423 per annum

Leeds/ Hybrid

Are you passionate about transforming lives through affordable housing and community development? Unity Homes and Enterprise is looking for dedicated individuals to join our Board and play a key role in guiding our strategic direction.

We are a successful, independent, and ambitious registered provider of social housing with c. 1,400 homes in Leeds and Kirklees. In addition to the provision of high-quality homes and services our social purpose also encompasses our aims to help improve the life chances and economic success of our tenants and of the communities within which we work, and to fight inequality and empower BME communities.

Chair of Unity Homes and Enterprise Group: We are seeking a Chair who understands what great Board culture looks like and has the ability to harness and maximise the effectiveness of our Board, to maintain our high standards of governance. Previous non-executive board level experience, and experience chairing in some capacity are important, but we are open to this being your first full Board Chair role, and an understanding of the housing sector would be beneficial, but not essential.

Board members for Unity Housing: For these roles, ideally you will bring some previous Board experience however that is not an essential requirement. We are seeking the following:

- Strategic HR/ People. For this role, you will bring senior experience gained in a People/ HR role. We are open to the sector background in which it was gained.
- Housing Management. You will bring senior experience in a housing leadership role gained in the social housing sector. Additionally, experience of regeneration would be beneficial.
- Finance. A qualified accountant, you will have senior experience gained in the social housing sector, and be ready to bring your expertise to our Audit and Risk Committee.

We are looking for Board members who share our passion and drive to help people create a better future for themselves and their communities. Your readiness to engage, ability to demonstrate that you share our absolute passion for what we do, and commitment to our social purpose are every bit as important as your skill set.

You can download a job pack at

www.campbelltickell.com/jobs

Email Isabella Ajilore, at Campbell Tickell, to book a call for further discussion.

Isabella.Ajilore@campbelltickell.com | 07572 166417

Closes: Tuesday 6th May 2025 | 9am



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