



BOARD MEMBER RECRUITMENT PACK

OCTOBER 2024



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WELCOME LETTER

October 2024

Dear Applicant

Thank you for expressing an interest in Wirral Methodist Housing Association and our Board Member vacancies.

We are a small vibrant Housing Association managing some 900 homes across Wirral and in Ellesmere Port. With 20 staff and a £5m turnover, we are financially robust and our surpluses are re-invested to help ensure long-term financial viability and future sustainability in our communities. We are passionate about providing high quality services to our residents including support services for older people, and people with physical and learning disabilities.

We are an actively developing Association and have delivered new homes over the last year, we have a project on site now and some ambitious plans for the future.

In an organisation like ours the Board plays an important role in providing clear guidance and direction and in ensuring good governance is achieved. We are planning for the future and we will have some gaps in our skills in areas such as Finance, Housing Management and Community Development and we wish to strengthen this. We are really interested in applications that will increase the range of diverse backgrounds and experiences on our Board.

If you think that this aligns with your ambitions, I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely

John Donnellon
Chair

ABOUT WIRRAL METHODIST HOUSING ASSOCIATION

It was at a Methodist Circuit Meeting in 1963, that a young teacher told of the appalling housing conditions which one of his pupils and his family had to endure.

The appeal was so touching that a group of eight individuals from that meeting pledged to help and combat those housing conditions. The group was subsequently gathered together at the home of William T Frost in Conway Street, Birkenhead and became "Birkenhead (Methodist) Housing Aid Society Limited". They resolved that night, to purchase four houses, for letting at 'reasonable' rents to applicants, "irrespective of colour, class or creed". An appeal was then launched for money needed to fund these purchases and the necessary repairs. This was innovative thinking, three years before the historic television play "Cathy Come Home".

By 1970 the stock had increased to over 30 properties. In order to control the management, rent collection and service better office accommodation at 112 Claughton Road was acquired, and a part-time rent collector appointed.

The Housing Act of 1974 considerably extended the role of The Housing Corporation and also made provision for the distribution of the newly available "Housing Association Grant", through both Housing Corporation and Local Authority. This led the Association in common with many others, to embark upon a considerable increase in activity and register as, WIRRAL METHODIST HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED.

During the 1980's the staff team was developed to match its stock growth and three sheltered housing schemes for the elderly were developed. In response to the challenges posed by the 1988 Housing Act, a new post, that of Chief Executive, was created and Alun Hughes was appointed in January 1989, at which point the Association's stock stood at 398.

The financial standing and development potential of the Association was recognised enabling it to continue expansion with grant funding from The Housing Corporation and then the Homes & Communities Agency and others. Most recently this has been achieved under a development arrangement with Great Places Housing Group.

The Association now has over 850 units of new build and rehabilitated accommodation, within Wirral and principally in central Birkenhead. The Association is particularly proud of the leading part it has played in the Hamilton Quarter of Birkenhead. There is also some stock in New Brighton, Seacombe, Bebington, Woodchurch, Hoylake and Ellesmere Port. In addition, it now works increasingly in partnership with a number of other agencies to provide accommodation for victims of domestic violence as well as people with learning and other disabilities, including a small programme of home ownership for people with a long-term disability.

The Association has been an active participant in the Community Housing Associations (North West) Group since its inception enabling it to benefit from a range of 'Value For Money' initiatives in partnership with its peers. The Association scores well against other local housing associations in measures designed to demonstrate Value For Money.

The Association has worked hard to make its assets work for the delivery of new schemes to meet a variety of housing needs in recent years and this has led to a range of innovative borrowing solutions such as with securing £9m of borrowing from Warrington Council. A new CEO, Paul Carhart, was appointed to lead the staff team in August 2018.

WIRRAL METHODIST HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

OUR VISION

Wirral Methodist Housing Association Ltd is dedicated to working in the community to provide homes and services that improve the quality of life.

OUR VALUES

Our vision will be sustained by the promotion of the individual as a person through the following values:

Committed.

Technologically aware

Efficient

Customer Focussed

Dynamic and Adaptable

Team Player

Community Focussed

Planning and Organising

OUR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

To be a provider of excellent services

To be financially strong and compliant

To become an excellent association

Building thriving communities

To be environmentally responsible

LEADERSHIP

BOARD & EXECUTIVE TEAM PROFILES

BOARD

The Board consists of up to 12 Members. The Board has the following sub-committees.

- Tenants and Communications Sub Committee
- Governance and Internal Controls Sub Committee

John Donnellon (Chair)

Skills: Housing, Regeneration, Executive management

John is currently Chief Executive of Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH) responsible for 5000 properties and a wide range of support services. Prior to joining BCH John was the Council's lead director for the built environment and regeneration and has over 20 years senior regeneration experience.

Outside of work, he enjoys playing a very slow version of football, running and walking. John also volunteers with a local environmental charity, sits as a Trustee on a youth homelessness charity and on the board of the local credit union.

John is committed to the principle that good quality, affordable and secure housing is a vital building block to allow individuals and families to thrive.

Bryan McPaul FCIPD

Skills: Housing, Youth work, HR and Executive Management

Bryan works in senior management recruitment, assessment and development, building leadership, employee engagement and organisational change. With over 15 years experience in NED and Trustee experience and is currently a non-executive director of Procure Plus.

With an earlier career in HR, Bryan progressed to Board level roles in sales and marketing before consultancy. A qualified leadership coach, Chartered Fellow of the CIPD and Principal Practitioner with the Association of Business Psychologists.

Married with four adult children and enjoys sport, hill walking here and in Europe and regular trips to the cinema.

Tom Sault CPFA

Skills: Housing, Finance, Audit

Tom, a qualified accountant, enjoyed a career spanning 44 years at Wirral BC. This included 15 years involvement with housing finance before taking up a senior finance position before retirement in 2017.

Born on Wirral Tom has been involved with many local initiatives and is a Board Member of Tam O'Shanter Urban Farm. In addition, Tom is a keen football historian and was involved at New Brighton FC and remains a supporter of the West Cheshire League.

Claire Fouracre

Skills: Housing, Income Management and Customer Service

After leaving grammar school, Claire became a parent at the age of eighteen. She enjoyed a brief spell in the aviation industry before joining Manchester City Council as a Council Tax Officer.

Claire discovered her passion for social housing after joining City West Housing Trust, now ForHousing as an income officer. Claire has worked hard to develop her career in housing and moved into management after two years in the role.

Following CWHT Claire has worked for Guinness Housing Partnership before re-joining Manchester City Council heading up council tax administration, and most recently RBH.

Maggie Cornall

Skills: Housing Management, Supported Housing, Repairs & Maintenance, Asset Management

Maggie has extensive social housing experience and began her career at Preston Council before moving to North British HA and later taking a role at West Lancashire DC. Maggie then worked with the Anchor Trust as part of the Liverpool Housing Action Trust before moving to Blackpool where she has spent most of her career.

Since 2015 Maggie has been employed as Director of Operations for Blackpool Coastal Housing and has overall responsibility for housing management, repairs and maintenance and supported housing.

Maggie has previously been Chair of Blackpool Home Start and a non-executive director of Generation Rent.

Sandra Simmons MBE (Honorary Secretary)

Skills: HR, Management, Finance, Community Support.

For the past twenty years, Sandra has worked as Chair of Governors at two local schools, leading and supporting the Governing Body, Headteachers and staff. In 2007 she was awarded an MBE for Services to Education. She has also worked with local charities to empower people and to help anyone struggling against unequal odds.

In earlier years she worked within Adult Basic Education with Hamilton Square Adult Literacy Centre which gave her insight in to the life struggles that many people experience and worked to enable people to engage with modern life and gain the skills they needed to thrive.

She likes to spend my spare time with my family and also gardening, walking and enjoying the local area.

Kerry Scott

Skills: Housing Development, Sustaining Growth

Kerry has over 25 years of residential property experience with a social purpose. As Director and Founder of K&Co Homes, she provides professional consultancy services to the housing industry, assisting contractors and developers to drive forward their ambitious housing growth plans. Over recent years she has become experienced member of senior leadership teams ensuring that the strategic vision, values and culture is embedded into all organisations.

Kerry is a busy working Mum with two boys so spends a lot of weekends on the side of a football or rugby pitch. She enjoys keeping fit and getting out running when she can.

Originally from the Wirral, growing up in Bebington, she is delighted to be back working on the Wirral.

Craig Sparrow BA Hons (Deputy Chair)

Skills: Property development, Housing and Executive Leadership

Craig currently works as the Executive Director of Development for North Wales based housing association, Clwyd Alyn, and has spent the last 30 years securing land and delivering affordable homes across the region. He is the Chair of the Strategic Delivery Group for Future Homes in Wales and has worked closely with Government to help deliver the housing programme.

Craig has been responsible for a large number of general housing projects but also specialist schemes for older people, supported accommodation, autism, dementia and more recently, low carbon development.

Craig lives in North Wales and has two daughters, enjoys power boating, amateur archaeology and traveling.

John Morgan (Chair of Governance and Internal Control Committee)

Skills: Finance, Corporate Strategy

John joined the Board of Wirral Methodist Housing Association in June 2022. After 20 years of working in senior finance roles John is growing his own accounting business serving small to medium sized business across the UK. John is an Associate member of CIMA (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants) and Certified Member in Practice.

Coupled with his strength in finance is John's passion in developing high performing teams. By helping to develop the corporate strategy at Wirral Methodist HA John is keen to make a positive difference to the wider communities WMHA impacts.

Away from work John really enjoys an active role in Caldy Rugby Club, getting time to play golf and enjoy precious moments with his young family

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Paul Carhart – Chief Executive

Paul joined Wirral Methodist HA in Summer 2018 and has 30 years' experience in the social housing sector. Paul has worked for a range of different housing organisations at a senior level and in recent years was an Executive Director at the ForViva Group. Paul has also held Non-Executive roles at Your Housing Group and Tung Sing Housing Association. With a background in Housing Management and improving organisational performance, Paul is passionate about providing great customer service and supporting the needs of vulnerable customers.

Mark Lowe – Director of Finance and Resources

Wirral born Mark is a Chartered Certified Accountant (FCCA), with extensive experience across all areas of finance, and is a member of the Audit and Assurance Committee with a large diverse North-West Registered Social Landlord. With over 20 years' experience working in a variety of interim and permanent senior finance and project management roles with several housing associations across England, Mark is a key member of the Associations' Executive Team.

Chris Page BA Hons, MSc, MCIH – Director of Operations

Chris has 35 years of experience in Housing from establishing a housing co-operative to being part of the leadership group of a medium sized housing association. This experience has taken in most aspects of housing and management including housing for the elderly, students, and leaseholders on behalf of Housing Associations, Co-operatives, Universities as well as the private sector. Achievements have included establishing 3 completely new organisations (Sensible Housing Co-operative, Manchester Students Homes and Netlet Holdings Limited) as well as driving improvement and growth in established organisations. Until last year he was also leading the drive for Community Led Housing across Greater Manchester as the Chief Executive of Greater Manchester Community Led Homes.

BOARD MEMBER – ROLE PROFILE

Responsible to: The Chair of the Board

Purpose

Board Members at Wirral Methodist Housing Association are responsible for working collectively to ensure there is adequate direction for the Association and that measures are in place to ensure it is solvent, well run and meets legal and regulatory requirements.

Term of Office

Board Members are currently appointed to a term of 3 years, which may be renewed.

Remuneration

The role of a Board Member at Wirral Methodist Housing Association is remunerated at £3000pa. Reasonable travel expenses will be covered and in addition support is provided for training and networking events.

Key Tasks

Board Members are expected to work together to ensure there is an adequate and appropriate Business Plan in place. They are expected to monitor the risks facing the Association and ensure there is an appropriate system of control in place. Board Members will ensure performance is reviewed regularly and also ensure that strategies and policies are in place to ensure WMHA delivers its strategies and achieves excellent customer service.

Board Members are expected to ensure the principles and aims of the Association are maintained. The Board will be responsible for agreeing the recruitment and remuneration of the Senior Officer.

Specifically, Board Members are expected to:

- Always act in the best interest of WMHA;
- Uphold the purpose objectives and policies of the Association;
- Uphold the values of the organisation through high standards of conduct and behaviour and by complying with the Associations code of conduct, rules, standing orders and financial regulations;
- Work in partnership with the Chief Executive and Executive Management Team;
- Contribute to, and share responsibility for, the Boards decisions, including its duty to exercise reasonable care, skill and independent judgement;
- Prepare for and attend meetings;
- Provide vision and guidance to the senior officers;
- Become members of a Board Sub-Committee or Working Group;

- Participate in reviews of Board performance and measures designed to develop the Board capacity and effectiveness;
- Establish objectives and plans for the senior officers to deliver the Boards agreed strategies.
- Declare any relevant interests, and avoid any conflicts of interest;
- Respect the confidentiality of information;
- Ensure that their own skills are kept up to date and participate in training sessions;
- Comply with all aspects of Charity law in addition to comply with Company Law and any other relevant legal or regulatory requirements.

Person Specification

Knowledge and Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous Executive or Non-Executive experience • Good governance experience • An understanding of housing, property development and commerce • An understanding of the history, ethos and Methodist principles of the Association • Previous experience of customer focused service delivery and of working with stakeholders and communities • Knowledge of corporate governance
Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic and Business Planning • Ability to assess and manage risk • Ability to understand a wide range of complex issues • Problem solving through challenging and discussion • Competent in a range of IT skills
Personal Attributes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment to the code of conduct • A commitment to the Methodist ethos of the Association • Able to act confidentially, respecting the business interest of the Association • A team player with strong corporate responsibility
Time Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Meetings take place approximately 9 times per year • Committees meet quarterly – currently during the day • There is an annual Board Away Day • Board meetings are on Tuesday early evenings in Birkenhead or remotely

Governance Arrangements

WMHA Board

The WMHA Board provides overall strategic direction. Board Members are appointed on a skills-based assessment.

The Board has a membership of no more than 12 Members.

Committees

There are currently two subcommittees of the Board. Governance and Internal Control Sub Committee, Tenants and Communications Sub Committee.

The sub committees report to the Board. Membership of the Committees is reviewed annually.

Management Arrangements

Our management arrangements have been carefully developed in order to facilitate the best possible structure for the delivery of all stated objectives:

The Executive Management Team comprises:

Chief Executive

Director of Finance and Resources

Director of Operations

The Delegated Framework

There is a Delegated Framework in place which consists of:

Constitutions and Rules;

Scheme of Delegation/Standing Orders; and

Operational Strategies, Policies and Procedures.

The Standing Orders set out formally how the Board will delegate responsibility to the Committees and to Members of staff to ensure that the Association behaves in accordance with its core vision and values and achieves the goals set by the Board.

The Standing Orders deal with the operation of Board and Committees and address the delegation of executive authority to staff via the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is required in the Standing Orders to implement a series of operational strategies, policies and procedures, which will regulate the operation of the Association and provide detailed guidance for staff.

External Requirements

The Association is, of course, subject to external requirements from a number of sources, including general legislation, funders' requirements and regulation by the Regulator of Social Housing.

RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

Closing Date	- 5pm on Friday 15 th November 2024
First Interview	- Friday 29 th November 2024
Final Interview	- TBC if required

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for the Board Member position at Wirral Methodist Housing Association please submit the items below electronically to the following email address - **jobs@wmhaltd.org.uk**

- A C.V. of no more than 2 sides listing details of your current and previous positions held.
- A supporting statement of no more than 2 sides explaining your reasons for seeking the position and explaining the examples of how you meet the main areas described in the Role Profile.
- Full contact details for two referees.
- Completed Equal Opportunities Questionnaire



Board Member

Location: Birkenhead

Board Members are remunerated for their services at £3,000 pa

We are a small vibrant Housing Association managing some 900 homes across Wirral and in Ellesmere Port. With 20 staff and a £5m turnover, we are financially robust and our surpluses are re-invested to help ensure long term financial viability and future sustainability in our communities. We are passionate about providing high quality services to our residents including support services for older people, and people with physical and learning disabilities.

We have an active development programme and are preparing our improvement plans for existing homes using our updated stock condition information.

Our Board has a broad range of skills and following retirements, we are seeking to appoint two Board members and are particularly interested in applicants with proven experience in Housing Management, Community Development, and Finance. We are particularly interested in applications from people in those areas where we are underrepresented.

The Board meets most months with a blend of virtual and face to face meetings. We have a small committee structure also.

To apply, please submit an up-to-date CV, and a brief supporting statement explaining why you are interested in joining our Board and how you meet our requirements together with the equalities and declaration forms. For further information please visit our website at www.wmhaltd.org.uk or email jobs@wmhaltd.org.uk for a recruitment pack.

**Deadline for applications:
5pm Friday 15th November 2024
Interviews to be held on Friday 29th November 2024**