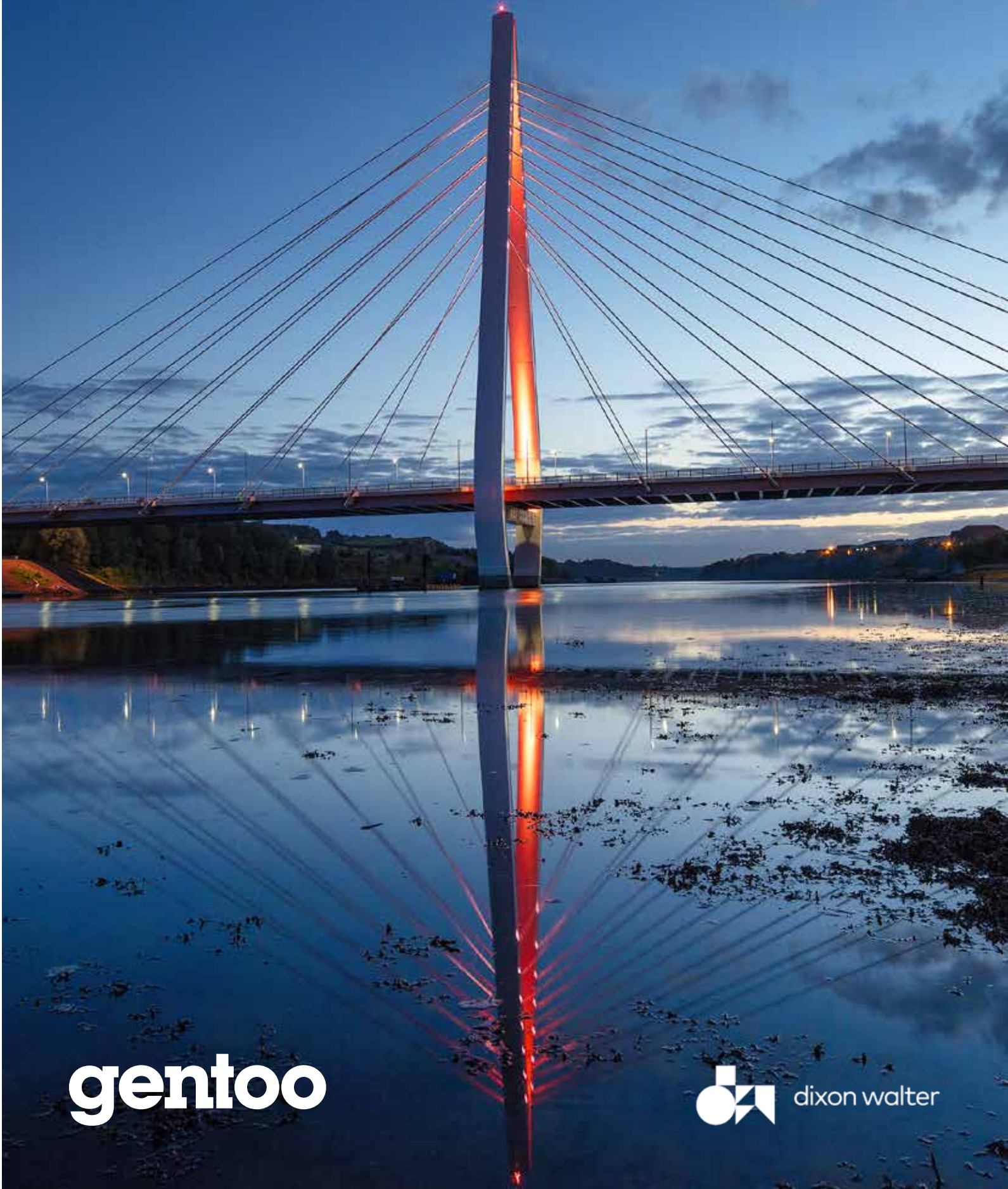


Board Member Recruitment Pack



gentoo



dixon walter

Welcome from our Chair

Thank you for expressing an interest in this exciting opportunity. We are looking for a new Group Board Member to complement our existing board members, provide constructive challenge and support to our Executive Team.

I thought you might find a little history and background to our organisation helpful. 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 the council. This remains the largest transfer of properties in England to date. At the time, £450 million of loans were secured in order to purchase the stock and to commence a major programme of modernisation and improvement works.

In 2017, we were issued with a downgrade from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) for weak governance, something which we have taken extremely seriously. This downgrade sparked the start of transformational change throughout the business and over the past 18 months, the board has focussed on delivering the requirements of the Voluntary Undertaking and taking the business back to its core function of being an excellent provider of social housing in Sunderland. This included the appointment of our current Chief Executive Officer, Nigel Wilson, in January 2019.

Having worked closely with the RSH and addressing all of the issues identified by them, we were delighted that Gentoo was awarded a compliant governance rating of G2 in September 2019. The core business now has a turnover of £177.1 million and has generated a surplus of £13 million whilst our development subsidiary, Gentoo Homes, celebrated a record breaking year in 2018-19 with 199 sales.

We have commenced our ambitious affordable homes plan, which will see the creation of 900 new homes for rent in Sunderland by 2024 through a £117 million investment.



The affordable homes plan forms part of our Group-wide business plan, which will see £417 million invested in improving our homes, including more than £22 million to install replacement double glazing to 9,000 properties.

You will help to shape our business by applying your skills and experience gained at board, committee or senior executive level in an organisation of comparable scale and complexity. We are particularly keen to speak to individuals whose current experience and professional expertise is in housing development.

If you would like a confidential conversation about this role, don't hesitate to get in touch with Jim Allcroft, from Dixon Walter, whose contact details are enclosed in this pack. I wish you all the best in your application.

Keith Loraine OBE
Chair of the Board

Our vision and values

Our Vision

Great Homes. Strong Communities. Inspired People. For Sunderland.

Our Values



Do the Right Thing



Give All You've Got



Keep Learning



Make a Difference



Work Together

Our Strategy

Place



People



Partnerships



Pride



Perform



About Gentoo

Gentoo is a housing association and new homes developer, managing over 28,000 properties and housing more than 60,000 customers. This makes us one of the biggest landlords in the North East. We're also one of the largest employers in Sunderland with over 1,200 staff.

We are focused on delivering an outstanding service to our tenants and as a responsible business, we pride ourselves on inspiring people to make a difference.

We collaborate with key partners and other housing associations to influence things that affect our colleagues, tenants and society.

What makes us special?

Gentoo's uniqueness and strength come from the dedication, skill, and energy of our colleagues; they live our values daily and work to deliver Gentoo's vision. We are very proud of our colleagues and the work they do for our tenants, customers and communities.

Our priorities for 2019 – 2024

Gentoo's priorities centre around five key themes which support our vision and values and include some of the following:

- **Place**
To invest £300 million in improving existing homes and neighbourhoods and £117 million to develop an additional 900 homes for affordable rent.
- **People**
To strengthen our tenant voice and improve the services and digital offer we provide them with.
To invest in our colleagues and recognise and reward them fairly.
- **Partnerships**
To work with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to achieve a G1 compliant governance assessment.
To forge and maintain effective relationships with local and national sector partners.
- **Pride**
To achieve Investors in People (IiP) Platinum status (currently Gold).
To continue investing in our communities and supporting the most vulnerable.
- **Perform**
To continue mitigating the risks from Welfare Reform and the full roll out of Universal Credit.
To maintain the four star NHBC customer rating with our new home developer arm.

Current executive structure

Our executive structure is as follows:



Chief Executive Officer
Nigel Wilson



Executive Director
(Corporate Services)
Louise Bassett



Executive Director
(Operations)
Michelle Meldrum



Executive Director
(Finance)
Peter Lenehan

The board

Gentoo's governance structure is made up of a Group Board and a number of subsidiary board and committees. The membership is comprised of independent non-executive directors, tenant and council members. They all play a key role in the leadership and decision-making processes of the Group, providing direction, valuable challenge and scrutiny.

Current Group Board structure



Keith Loraine Group Chair

Keith has 40 years' experience in the housing sector, the last 24 as Chief Executive Officer of Isos Housing Group. He retired in December 2016 and was awarded an OBE in recognition of his services to housing and the North East.

Keith joined the board in February 2017 to continue his career in the sector, in a non-executive capacity. He brings a wealth of knowledge of the local area and has a strong understanding of the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing.



Alison Fellows

Alison Fellows is the Investment Director at Tees Valley Combined Authority where she manages extensive funds to deliver transformational change. She has vast experience working in the public sector, as Executive Director of Commercial Development for Sunderland City Council and as Assistant Director of Capital Investment for Newcastle City Council.

Alison currently works as Commercial & Delivery Director at Tees Valley Combined Authority where she leads on significant projects and programmes to deliver transformational change for people and organisations in that region. She also spent eight years as non-executive director with the North East Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust.'



Brian Spears

Brian Spears brings considerable experience, with a career spanning 40 years in local government (housing and regeneration) including a previous role as Chair of the Northern Housing Consortium and a member of the North East Housing board.

Brian has vast experience in business planning, risk assessment and financial planning. He has a background in leading change, including the successful restructure of Durham City Council, bringing efficiencies and improving customer access to services.

Current Group Board structure



Carol Long

Carol has considerable experience of working in the social care sector with a career spanning 35 years in local government, the private sector and charities. She is currently a researcher at Durham University.

She has experience of serving on a number of boards and committees including for the YMCA, as an executive for the NSPCC and also as vice chair of governors of a large secondary school.



Chris Watson

Chris Watson was a civil engineer and previously a Head of Strategic Asset Planning and Economic Regulation at Northumbria Water Ltd.

He brings strong health and safety understanding through his management of Northumbrian Water's capital plan and as a previous Director of Constructing Excellence in the North East.



David Murtagh

David Murtagh joined the board as Chair of Risk and Audit Committee. A Chartered Accountant since 1989, he has held senior finance roles within the engineering and manufacturing sectors.

David is currently a Finance Director within a major multinational company but in addition he has nine years' experience on the board of Teesside-based Thirteen Group. He has a strong understanding of risk, particularly in the context of social housing.



Emily Cox

Emily is the Group Head of Colleague Relations at Lloyds Banking Group and was previously the Director of Public Affairs at Virgin Money. She is the Chair of the CBI North East Regional Council and is also a member of the Board at the Sage Gateshead, an international music venue.

She was awarded an MBE in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours for services to gender diversity in the financial services sector.

Current Group Board structure



Les Herbert

Former policeman Les Herbert is the tenant member of Group Board. He brings extensive experience and is also familiar with the Group's housing management and operational issues.

Les has experience of chairing his local residents' association and the staffing committee of a local school of which he was a governor. He has also served as a mentor and governor at various local schools and was formerly the secretary of the Sunderland Police Welfare Club for 15 years.



Michael Essl

Councillor Michael Essl is one of Sunderland City Council's nominees appointed to Group Board. He has been a Sunderland City Councillor since May 2010 and is currently a member for the Ryhope Ward.

Michael is a Governor at Plains Farm Academy and Green Terrace Primary School Trust, whilst also holding positions on Sunderland City Council's Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, East Sunderland Area Committee, the Adults Services Complaints Panel and the Tyne and Wear Anti-Fascist Association. In his professional career, Michael works in the transport industry and owns and operates a number of Hackney carriage licences in Sunderland.



Philip Tye

Councillor Philip Tye is one of Sunderland City Council's nominees appointed to Group Board.

Philip was elected as a Ward Councillor for Silksworth in May 2006. He is currently an Operations Manager for a large North East manufacturing and construction company covering all operational matters for the business. He has been a school governor for over 20 years as well as being Chair of a local charity Youth Almighty Project (YAP).

Role Profile



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.

Key accountabilities

Strategic leadership

- Provide leadership regarding the direction and control of the Group.
- Contribute to setting the vision and values of the business, ensuring that obligations to stakeholders are understood and reflected in strategy and policies.
- Set objectives for the business and determine the strategic aims and required outcomes.

- Promote continuous improvement and set challenging targets for improving services.
- 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 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.

Role Profile

- 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, Group Executive, 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 prepared by employees and advisors and contribute to appropriate debate of key issues.

Representing the Group

- 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.

Person specification

Gentoo is seeking a new board member with development skills, gained at executive or non-executive level. Please use your supporting statement to detail your experience.

Development

Recent experience of residential property development, including affordable housing provision and private sale.

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.

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.



Terms and conditions

Position	Group Board Member
Remuneration	£10,000 per annum
Commitment	Nine board meetings and four to six committee meetings per annum
Term	Three years (with the potential to be extended subject to performance and business needs)

Recruitment timetable

Project stage	Timescale
Closing date	Friday 22nd May 2020
Final interviews	TBC depending upon availability of the Interview Panel

If you are likely to be unavailable for interview dates around this time, please contact Jim Allcroft, at Dixon Walter, whose contact details are enclosed in this pack.

Further information



How to apply

To apply you should submit the following on separate documents:

1. A letter of application setting out your interest in the role and details of how you match the person specification (no more than 3 pages of A4)
2. A comprehensive CV
3. Details of three referees (Referees will not be contacted without your permission)
4. A completed Equal Opportunities Form (accessed via the campaign microsite address)

Applications must be received by **Friday 22 May 2020** via email to **Jim@dixonwalter.co.uk**.

For an informal discussion about this role please contact Jim Allcroft, Executive Search Consultant at Dixon Walter on **07388 642 631** or email **jim@dixonwalter.co.uk**. You can also visit our campaign microsite at **<http://www.dixonwalter.co.uk/housing-infrastructure-property/opportunities/gentoo/>**