



APPLICANT BRIEF

Independent Member – Audit Committee

OCTOBER 2021

BERNOCIA

Foreword



John Johnston
Chief Executive,
Bernicia

Bernicia has developed an enviable reputation as one of the North East's largest and most successful housing providers; building, renting, selling and managing homes, and providing specialist care and support services to over 60,000 customers.

We value our customers, work together and respect each other, encourage innovation and operate with the highest levels of accountability and integrity. We deliver what we say we will, something our residents and partners can rely on. This is all part of the engaging, exciting and infectious 'Bernicia Way' of doing business.

Our ambitious corporate strategy, Housing People, Helping People is focused upon:

- Delivering an exceptional housing service
- Investing in homes, neighbourhoods and communities
- Building an effective organisation
- Helping to deliver the regional agenda

This current commitment provides for investment of £200m in existing and new homes across a wide spectrum of property types and tenures, re-defining the range and impact of our services and extending our digital offer to make more services just a few clicks away for customers.

What we do makes a difference to people's lives. People are front and centre in all our strategies and our staff truly care about that; consistently delivering excellent results to make the biggest impact possible.

Bernicia is unashamedly a performance driven business and were looking for the most exceptional talent out there to help us achieve our ambitions – 'The Bernicia Way'.

This is a great time to be part of Bernicia.

John Johnston

About Us

Bernicia was formed in 2008 as the parent company for its two subsidiary housing association's Cheviot and Wansbeck Homes, and its commercial company KPS.

In 2016 Bernicia merged with the Four Housing Group, bringing two further housing associations, Three Rivers and Berwick into the group.

In 2017 we simplified our group structure, with the four operational subsidiaries and the group parent now combined into a single, strong regional housing association, creating the ideal organisational structure to support the delivery of our ambitious corporate strategy, Housing People, Helping People.

The amalgamation of our group structure generated significant savings that have further increased our financial resilience and capacity to fund growth, and we are putting our financial capacity and shared skills and expertise to work to deliver more value for the communities of the North East.

Bernicia owns and manages over 14,000 properties and has a continuous pipeline of new homes development, across a range of property types and tenures. We provide housing and services for single people, couples, families and older residents and for people who need a bit more support to enjoy the independence of living in their own home.

We directly employ over 550 people and recognise that our staff have, and will, continue to be central to our success as a dynamic, modern and forward-thinking organisation.

Our operations are managed from Bernicia's 4 primary offices in Ashington, Durham, Newcastle and Berwick and are underpinned by our continued investment in technology and staff training and development.

Our commercial trading companies operate from our Newcastle offices; Kingston provides property and block management, estate services and facilities management to the private residential and commercial sectors. Living spaces provides services and advice relating to property development, sales and the residential private rented sector.

Both our social and commercial companies remain high performing businesses and provide a solid foundation for future growth. Development of the Group has brought financial strength and an even greater ability to invest in our staff, systems and services; meaning we go forward as a strong business well positioned to meet the opportunities and challenges ahead.

The Bernicia Group is governed by a single board, chaired by John Holmes. John is supported by professional and skilled Board members who bring a wealth of expertise and experience to direct and oversee the success of Bernicia.

In summary Bernicia is a North East Housing Association that believes in great homes and services, we have ambitious plans, an experienced and skilled board and great staff who really care about what they do.

About Us

Independent Member – Audit Committee

Bernicia Group, Northumberland

Remuneration: £2,400 pa due for review

Bernicia is high performing, values driven housing provider, with a mission to invest in homes, services and people, and to make a positive impact on communities across the North East.

We build, rent, sell and manage homes, and provide specialist care and support services to over 60,000 customers. We have an annual turnover of £75m and employ over 550 people, predominately from our four primary offices in Berwick, Ashington, Newcastle and Durham.

Our Housing People, Helping People corporate strategy is our most ambitious yet, and will see us invest over £200m across the North East by 2023, targeted to existing and new homes across a wide spectrum of property types and tenures, re-defining the range and impact of our service offer and implementing a digital agenda that will make those services just a few clicks away for our customers.

We value our customers, work together and respect each other, encourage innovation and operate with the highest levels of accountability and integrity. We deliver what we say we will, something that our tenants, customers and partners can rely on, which is all part of the engaging, exciting and infectious ‘Bernicia Way’ of doing business.

With a progressive attitude to learning and innovation we have a stated commitment for staff to develop with us, recognised by our Investors in People gold standard accreditation and award-winning apprenticeship and training programmes.

Whilst predominantly a housing association, we also have a successful commercial division, Kingston; a leading provider of block and estate management and estate agency services. Their ethical operating model sees their profits gifted to Bernicia, and used to support social value initiatives across our region.



The Person

Independent Member – Audit Committee

Bernicia operate a Board and committee structure to retain focus in specific business areas:

Bernicia Group Board

Board Committees

- Audit and Risk (Group)
- Investment
- Customer Services
- Reward and Remuneration (Group)

Bernicia Commercial Board

- Kingston (Block and estate management)
- Living Spaces (Estate Agency)

We are seeking an independent member to join our group audit committee, with experience of finance, audit, risk management, compliance, and assurance.

If you have substantial senior management and preferably board level experience in this field, gained within a large and complex organisation, we can offer an exceptional opportunity to use your talents to make a positive difference to the lives of people in your community.

You will share our values and have the ability to focus on strategy. You will also have the credibility to constructively challenge and work collaboratively with committee members to help develop and deliver our strategic plans.

Prior experience of the Housing Sector is desirable but not essential as we will consider applicants from any industry sector.

For practical purposes, we would prefer applicants to be resident in the North East.



How to Apply

Bernicia will be supported in this appointment process by the executive search firm Dixon Walter who will support the appointing panel in the discharge of its duties, both to assist in the assessment of candidates against the requirements of the role and to identify the widest possible field of qualified candidates.



Closing date for applications: Friday 26th November

Scheduled interview dates: w/c 3rd January

The first meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee is at 2 pm on 25th January 2022.

Covid-19: With the continually developing situation we will endeavour to interview face to face where possible.

There will be the opportunity for shortlisted candidates to meet the Chief Executive in December prior to the formal interviews.

Further information, and details on how to apply, please contact our Recruitment Partner Dixon Walter as follows:

Microsite:

<https://www.dixonwalter.co.uk/opportunities/bernicia-independent-member-audit-committee>

Jim Allcroft:

email: jim@dixonwalter.co.uk

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Diversity is valued at both Dixon Walter and Bernicia and we welcome applications from all sections of the community.





dixon walter



<https://www.bernicia.com/>

Created by Dixon Walter

BERNICIA

Housing People, Helping People