

Zebra Housing Association: Board Member Recruitment Information Pack

November 2024

Board Member Opportunity

Zebra is currently seeking additional board members. In particular we are looking for the following skills:

- Finance and accounting
- Potential ability to Chair our Audit and Risk Committee
- Student Accommodation
- Charity sector experience

Ideal candidates will provide strategic leadership, support the organisation's governance, and contribute to ongoing efforts to expand Zebra's services and student accommodation portfolio.

We have an active board and members work closely with the executive team to make a real and valuable contribution to the effectiveness and governance of the organisation. It is a friendly and collegiate environment, where members are supported to learn and develop skills and knowledge across a range of areas and expertise.

This is an exciting time to join us. We are looking forward to growing our business and expanding our portfolio so that we can continue to provide good quality homes and excellent services. For an informal discussion about this opportunity, please contact our CEO, Matt Townsend, on recruitment@zebrahousing.com

Rebecca Coxhead & Paul Van Driessche

Co-Chairs of the Board, Zebra Housing

About us

Zebra Housing Association is an international postgraduate student accommodation provider based in central London. With over 60 years of experience, Zebra offers a supportive, high-quality living environment across five locations, accommodating 134 students, their partners, and families.

We are a not-for-profit, which means all of our income goes into providing services for our students and continually improving our accommodation. We have been operating for over 60 years and pride ourselves in offering a friendly and supportive environment to those who stay and work with us. We are dedicated to providing responsive support for our residents, ensuring efficient and effective housing services, achieving our sustainability objectives, and adapting to meet the needs of both current and future residents.

Zebra Housing Association is registered with the Regulator of Social Housing and Housing Ombudsman, although we provide no social housing. We are currently reviewing whether a change of corporate structure may be appropriate, including a potential change to our regulatory regime, and are also seeking opportunities to use our financial strength and potential partnerships with universities to maximise our charitable impact.



Our Mission:

To provide high quality postgraduate international student accommodation. We will create safe, secure and supportive environments for our residents and their families. We aim to bring people and cultures together and help our student residents connect with London and to thrive in their studies.



Our Values:

Customer driven - We understand the needs of students. We provide excellent tailored customer services with attention to detail, so residents feel a strong sense of care from Zebra.

Inclusive - We encourage respect for each other while promoting equality and diversity. We're open, honest and fair.

Responsive – As a small organisation we are aware of the changing needs of students and movements in market conditions and upgrade and invest accordingly.

Responsible – We empower our teams to carry out excellent work and create an environment to allow residents, their families and staff to feel both physically and emotionally secure.

Innovative - We're ambitious for our organisation, our staff and our students. We encourage innovation and new ways of thinking and seek opportunities to grow.

Our Board and Committees

Our board currently comprises of six non-executive members. The board has ultimate legal responsibility for the control and conduct of Zebra Housing Association's affairs.

Our committees	
<p>Audit and Risk</p> <p>Oversees risk management strategy, financial and other internal controls systems, standards of probity and external audit.</p>	<p>Development and Building Sustainability</p> <p>Oversees development and major works programmes and leads on the association's decarbonization policy & implementation.</p>

Benefits of Joining the Zebra Board

Professional Growth: Gain non-executive director governance experience, expanding strategic decision-making skills and understanding organisational dynamics.

Impactful Work: Shape a supportive community for international students, making a meaningful contribution to their UK experience.

Networking: Work alongside a talented, diverse team of professionals from varied backgrounds.

Training: Comprehensive induction and ongoing professional development.

Role Profile and Responsibilities

As a Board member, you will:

- Uphold Zebra's Vision and Values, ensuring good governance, strategic direction, and compliance with relevant regulations.
- Attend quarterly Board meetings, an annual strategy day, and twice-yearly Audit and Risk Committee meetings (if applicable).
- Provide leadership by contributing to strategic planning and meaningful scrutiny.
- Maintain effective relationships with the Chair, CEO, and fellow Board members.

Board members must act in Zebra's best interests and avoid conflicts of interest. We expect you to bring integrity, professionalism, and a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Further details can be seen at Appendix 2: Board Member Responsibilities and Committee Duties.

Audit and Risk Committee Members:

Candidates with finance and audit experience may serve on this committee, which oversees Zebra's financial health, risk management, and internal control systems.



Person Specification

Skills and Attributes:

- Knowledge of governance best practices and non-executive roles.
- Strategic thinking, aligning Zebra's capacity with long-term goals.
- Financial expertise, ideally with formal qualifications in finance or audit.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, promoting collaboration.
- An understanding of the dynamics and challenges of small organisations
- Understanding of risk management and treasury practices.
- Proven expertise in business planning with a solid foundation in financial planning, scenario analysis, and sensitivity analysis.
- Extensive commercial insight and strong business acumen.
- Deep commitment to Zebra's mission, values, and educational and cultural diversity.
- Experience in the housing or student accommodation sectors.



Key Terms and Conditions

Remuneration:

Non-executive board members serve on a voluntary, unpaid basis. However, reasonable expenses incurred while attending Zebra Housing board or committee meetings, or while conducting official Association business, can be reimbursed.

Length of Service:

Board members commit to a minimum service period of three years, with a typical maximum of six years, or two three-year terms. Under certain circumstances beneficial to the Association, service may be extended up to a maximum of nine years.

While the standard term is two three-year terms, we understand that some candidates may not be able to commit to the full six-year period. We are open to considering shorter, flexible terms for individuals who are otherwise well-qualified and interested.

Continuation on the board after each term depends on an evaluation of the member's performance, skills, and the evolving needs of the board.

Induction and Training

New board members will undergo a thorough induction tailored to their existing skills and knowledge, aimed at providing a deep understanding of the organisation and its operational landscape. Ongoing, customized training and support will also be available, including access to conferences and formal training as relevant needs and opportunities arise.

Time Commitment:

The minimum time commitment is approximately one day per quarter, covering preparation and attendance at board and committee meetings, as well as learning, development, networking, and conference attendance.

Board meetings are held quarterly, with an additional half-day strategic planning session annually. The Audit & Risk Committee convenes twice per year.

Application Process

Please submit:

- An up-to-date CV, no longer than three pages, outlining your full career history. We understand that personal and professional gaps may occur, so a strict timeline is not required.
- A supporting statement of up to two pages, explaining your interest in the role, how you meet the “ideal candidate” profile, and how you fulfil the person specification.
- Full contact details (name, job title, organisation, phone number, and email) for two referees, including your current employer, if applicable. References will only be contacted with your prior consent.
- The recruitment monitoring form in Appendix 1. Completion is optional and used solely for monitoring purposes in support of our commitment to equality and diversity. All information will be confidentially disposed of after six months.

Send applications to recruitment@zebrahousing.com If you do not receive confirmation within two working days, call 07496 688 722.

Recruitment Timeline

- Closing Date: 16th January 2025 5pm
- Shortlisting complete: 20th January 2025
- Interviews: Week commencing 23rd January 2025

For more information or an informal discussion about the role, please contact our CEO, Matt Townsend, at recruitment@zebrahousing.com

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Recruitment Monitoring Form
- Appendix 2: Board Member Responsibilities and Committee Duties

Appendix 1

RECRUITMENT MONITORING FORM

Name			
Date of Birth			
Sex and Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Non-binary <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
How would you describe your ethnicity?	<input type="checkbox"/> White, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, Irish, English, British <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy, Irish Traveller, Roma <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British	<input type="checkbox"/> Black, African, Caribbean or Black British <input type="checkbox"/> Arab <input type="checkbox"/> Other Ethnic Group <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual/Straight <input type="checkbox"/> Gay or Lesbian <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	If yes, you can provide further details here:	
What is your religion or belief?	<input type="checkbox"/> No Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):	

Declaration:

I declare that the information given on this form is correct. I understand that if my circumstances change, I will update the information I have provided you with. I agree that you will use the information I have given for the purposes set out in this form.

Signed:	Date:
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Appendix 2

Key responsibilities of Board members

1. Ensure that the board and committees are abiding by their obligations as stated in terms of reference and always operating within the best interests of the organisation.
2. Meet the expectations of board members.
3. Abide by the code of conduct.
4. Build and maintain effective working relationships with the Chair, Chief Executive, staff and other board members.
5. Apply personal expertise, skills and knowledge to their work with the organisation with due regard to the business and its social purpose.
6. Develop and keep up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the organisation, the locality, the sector, and customers' views and feedback.
7. Be a role model for good governance practices and behaviours.
8. Actively participate and provide constructive challenge.
9. Act as an ambassador for the organisation.
10. Ensure the Board has the capacity, commitment and experience to control the Association.
11. Ensure the Chief Executive has the capacity, commitment, skills and experience to implement the Board decisions effectively.
12. Plan the succession of, appoint and where necessary remove, the Chief Executive.
13. Determine the appropriate level of remuneration including benefits and term of employment of the Chief Executive and appraise their performance.
14. Determine the extent to which authority is to be delegated to the Chief Executive and monitor decisions taken under that delegated authority.
15. Undertake any activity reserved for board members in the rules or required of board members by statute or regulation including witnessing of the use of the Associations seal.
16. Participate in Board reviews, assessments and self-assessment.
17. Review the Association's compliance with its Code of Governance.
18. Approve and monitor major capital programmes.
19. Approve expenditure outside of the approved delegated financial authorities document.

Main duties and responsibilities of the Audit and Risk Committee

1. To oversee Zebra's borrowing and long-term financial planning, recommending strategies and actions to the Board.
2. To review accounting policies and ensure compliance with standards.
3. To advise the board on whether there are appropriate systems and a culture of control throughout the organisation.
4. To ensure that the board receives adequate financial and management reports.
5. To oversee the systems of delegation and internal control and review.
6. To review, agree and monitor the programme of work with the External Auditor.
7. To approve the annual accounts and recommend them to the Board for approval.
8. To review the risk management strategy, risk map and business continuity plan and report to the Board.
9. To review the adequacy of the arrangements for staff and contractors to whistleblow in confidence about possible wrongdoing in financial reporting or other matters.
10. To monitor and review the adequacy and effectiveness of controls to prevent and detect fraud, bribery, and money laundering.
11. To recommend to the Board the appointment of external auditors and financial advisers