

Recruitment pack



Non-Executive Board Members

Welcome from our Chair

Hello, and thank you for your interest in joining Gentoo's Group Board.

We're proud to be a housing association with a strong social purpose, rooted in Sunderland and the North East. At Gentoo, we believe that everyone deserves a great home – one that's warm, safe, and part of a thriving community. That belief drives everything we do.

We're currently looking for new Board Members to help us deliver on our ambitions. This is an exciting time to join us. Our refreshed Corporate Strategy sets out a bold vision: to become the best provider of social homes in the country. We're investing £600 million in our existing homes, building more new homes than ever before, and working closely with our customers and partners to help communities thrive.

But we know that great homes are just the start. We're also embracing innovation, using technology and data to improve services, and making sure our customers feel heard, respected, and supported. Our Board plays a vital role in shaping this journey – providing challenge, support, and strategic direction.

We're particularly keen to hear from people with experience in growth, regeneration, or commercial leadership. If you bring a fresh perspective, a collaborative mindset, and a passion for social impact, you could help us go even further.

This is a fantastic opportunity to be part of something meaningful – to help shape the future of housing in our region and make a real difference in people's lives.

Thank you again for considering this opportunity. I hope you'll be inspired to join us.

Emily Cox, MBE
Gentoo Group Chair



Welcome from our CEO

Hello, and thank you for your interest in joining Gentoo's Group Board.

At Gentoo, we're proud to be more than just a housing provider. We're a values-led organisation with a deep commitment to people, place, and purpose. Our customers are at the heart of everything we do – and we're ambitious about the future we're building together.



As CEO, I see every day the impact that safe, warm, and affordable homes can have on people's lives. But we know that a great home is just the beginning. That's why our Corporate Strategy is focused not only on delivering exceptional services and investing in our homes, but also on helping our communities thrive.

We're tackling big challenges – from the cost of living crisis to the need for more social homes – and we're doing it with creativity, care, and collaboration. We're embracing technology, building strong partnerships, and finding new ways to grow sustainably. And we're doing it all while staying true to our social purpose.

Our Board plays a vital role in this journey. We're looking for people who bring fresh thinking, commercial insight, and a passion for making a difference. Whether your background is in growth, regeneration, innovation, or leadership, your voice could help shape the future of housing in Sunderland and the North East.

This is a brilliant time to join Gentoo. We're financially strong, top-rated for governance, and full of talented, caring people who want to do the right thing. If you share our values and want to be part of something meaningful, we'd love to hear from you.

Louise Bassett
Chief Executive Officer

A little bit about us

We're a Sunderland housing association with a social purpose that provides more than 60,000 people in Sunderland with a place they can call home.

Everyone has the right to live in a good quality home they can afford. To help us achieve this in Sunderland we invest millions of pounds every year in keeping our existing homes safe, secure and compliant.

We're a values driven organisation, with a clear vision. We achieved the highest C1 grading in Consumer Standards from the Regulator of Social Housing and are committed to making sure our customers are at the heart of everything we do.



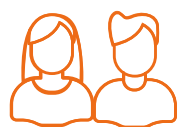
How we operate

Our vision

To become the best provider of social homes in the country.

Our values

Our values are what we stand for and what we want to be known for. They are what make us, us.



We care about people.



We take accountability.



We shape the future.



We bring leadership.



We deliver.

Our performance
You can read our annual documents [here](#).



Our five commitments for the next 10 years

- A housing provider that listens and sorts things out
- Embracing technology and data
- Helping our communities thrive
- Achieving growth through partnerships and innovation
- A professional, caring, great place to work

Gentoo in numbers

 28,500
Homes

 60,000
Customers

1,000+
Colleagues

79% 
Live in Sunderland

G1,C1,V2
regulatory governance

 £5
million
in additional benefits and
discounts for customers

80% 
overall customer satisfaction
(IFF independent score)

19,000
people on Gentoo's social
housing list

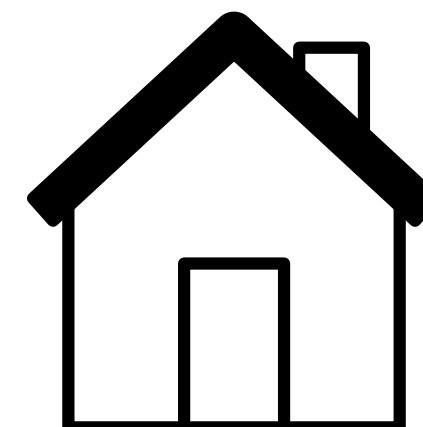


£1
million
a week invested in existing properties



79%
of homes are EPC
C or above

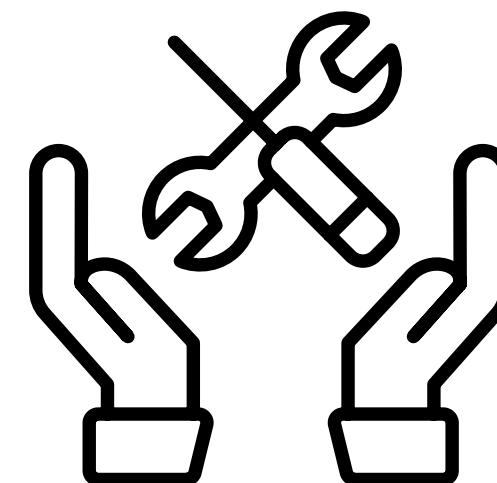
700
new affordable homes
built by 2029



We will invest

£467 million
over the next 5 years to maintain
and modernise our homes and
estates

92.75%
repairs completed first time



Join our Board – help us grow with purpose

At Gentoo, we believe everyone deserves a great home – one that’s warm, safe, and part of a thriving community. We’re proud of our roots in Sunderland and the North East, and we’re ambitious about the future.

We’re looking for new Board Members who share our passion for social purpose and bring a strong commercial mindset. If you’ve got experience in growth, regeneration, or innovation – and want to use it to make a real difference – we’d love to hear from you.

We are seeking a distinguished professional with substantial senior experience, you will be someone who has excelled in roles such as Managing Partner, Executive or Managing Director level.

The ideal candidate will have a proven track record of strategic leadership and a deep understanding of complex organisational dynamics.

What’s the role all about

As a Board Member, you’ll help shape Gentoo’s future. You’ll work with fellow Board Members and our Executive Team to guide our strategy, challenge our thinking, and make sure we’re delivering on our promises to customers and communities.

You’ll play a key role in helping us:

- Build more social homes than ever before.
- Invest £600 million in our existing homes.
- Tackle child poverty and support thriving communities.
- Embrace technology and innovation to improve services.
- Grow sustainably through strong partnerships.

What you’ll bring

We’re looking for people who:

- Have senior-level experience – especially in finance, leadership in a commercial organisation or regeneration.
- Understand how to balance social purpose with commercial thinking.
- Know what good governance looks like and why it matters.
- Can think strategically and see the bigger picture.
- Are confident asking questions, challenging constructively, and making decisions.
- Believe in fairness, inclusion, and putting customers first.

What you’ll be doing

Driving Strategy and Growth

- Help shape our long-term vision and strategic goals.
- Support innovation and new ways of working.
- Champion investment in homes, services, and communities.
- Encourage bold thinking and sustainable growth.

Ensuring Good Governance

- Make sure we meet our legal and regulatory responsibilities.
- Help us manage risk and make smart, informed decisions.
- Sit on committees or panels to support key areas of the business.

Monitoring Performance

- Review performance and hold the organisation to account.
- Read reports, ask the right questions, and help us stay on track.
- Support the appraisal of the CEO and Executive Team.

Building Relationships

- Work closely with fellow Board Members and the Executive Team.
- Be an ambassador for Gentoo – promoting our work and values.
- Help us connect with stakeholders, funders, and the wider community.

What kind of person are you?

We’re looking for someone who:

- Acts with integrity and leads by example.
- Is open, honest, and committed to transparency.
- Values diversity and brings a fresh perspective.
- Is curious, thoughtful, and always learning.
- Wants to make a real difference in people’s lives.

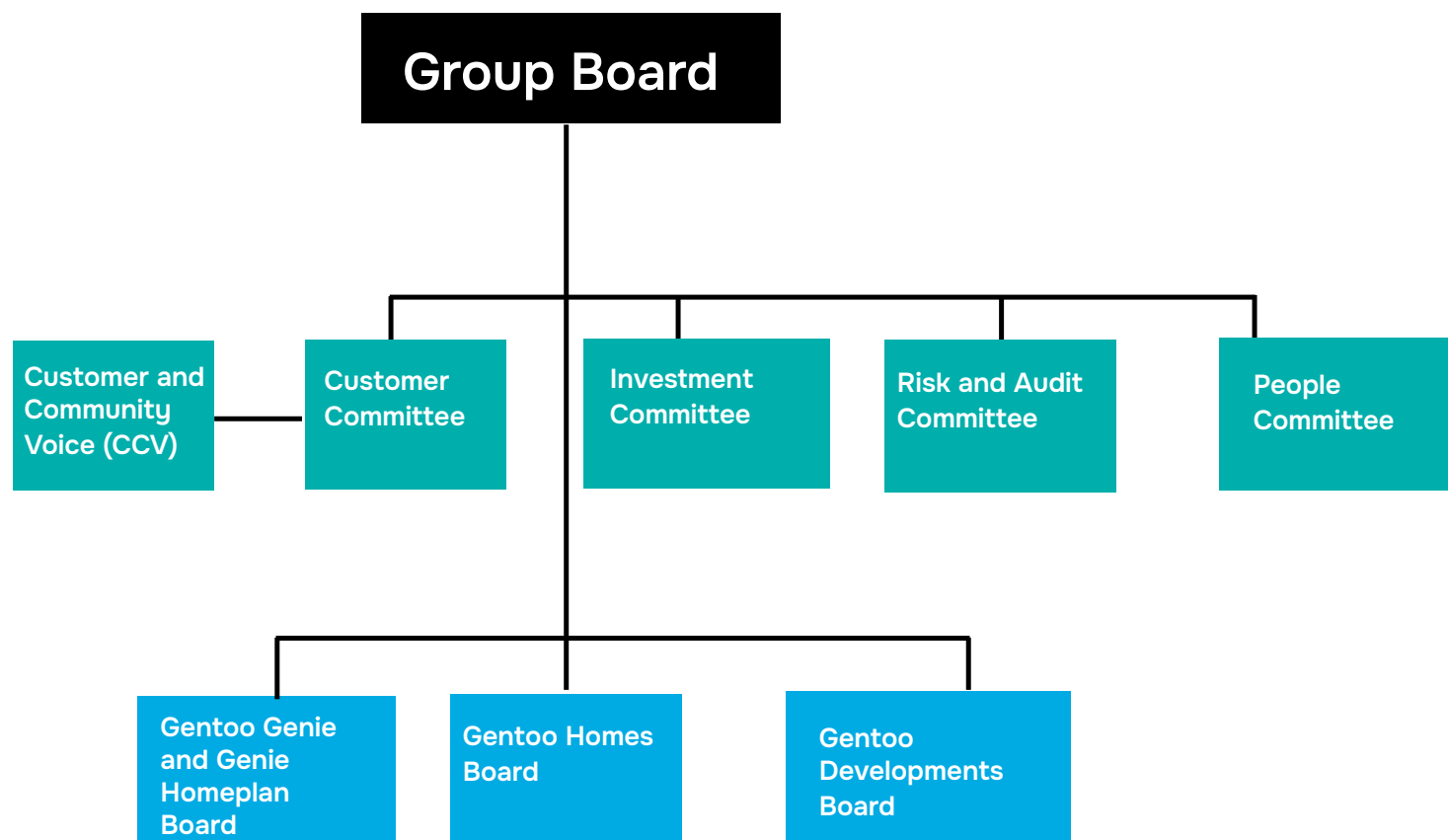
Remuneration and commitment

- £10,000 per annum
- Initial 3 year term

How we are governed

Gentoo's governance structure comprises of the Group Board and a number of subsidiary boards and committees. The membership is made up of Independent, Customer and Council Members.

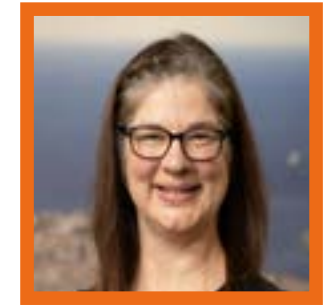
All Members play a key role in the leadership and decision making processes of the Group and set the strategic vision and direction of the organisation. Board and Committee Members support the Group's Executive Team with valuable challenge and scrutiny and seek assurance on how the Group is run.



Emily Cox MBE
Chair of Group Board and
Customer Committee
Investment Committee
Member



Dr Nichola Stefanou
Group Board Member
Risk and Audit
Committee Member



Hannah Pollard
Group Board Member
Investment Committee
Member



Brenda Naisby
Customer Group Board
Member
People Committee Member
Customer Committee
Member



Claire Long
Group Board Member
Chair of Risk and
Audit Committee
People Committee Member



Morven Smith
Group Board Member
Chair of People
Committee



Ellen Thinnesen
Group Board Member
People Committee
Member



Nick Forbes
Group Board Member
Investment Committee
Member



Graeme Miller
Council Group Board
Member
Risk and Audit Committee
Member
Customer Committee
Member



Andrew Lister
Group Board Member
Chair of Investment Committee
Risk and Audit Committee Member

Meet our Executive Team



Louise Bassett
Chief Executive Officer



Marc Edwards
Executive
Director of
Property



**Stephen
Flounders**
Executive
Director
of Regulatory and
Business Services



Susan Fulton
Executive
Director
of Customer,
People and
Engagement



Peter Lenehan
Executive
Director
of Finance

How to apply

Closing date: **5pm on Friday 15 August 2025**

Shortlist meeting: **21 August 2025**

Shortlisted candidates will meet the Chair, CEO and other Board Members on dates to be confirmed. Please let us know of any dates when you are not available to meet us.

To apply, please provide an up-to-date CV. A supporting letter is optional.

Applications should be submitted via

<https://www.gatenbysanderson.com/job-search/>

Please also provide the contact details for two professional referees. We would not approach these referees without your permission.

Should you require a confidential discussion before you apply, please contact our advising consultants at GatenbySanderson:

Nick Roberts on 07393 013697 nick.roberts@gatenbysanderson.com,
Delicia Coutinho on 07741 264 892 delicia.coutinho@gatenbysanderson.com
or Becky Downs on 07831 116 336 becky.downs@gatenbysanderson.com

