

# Board Trainee

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Recruitment pack  
April 2026

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# Welcome to Karbon Homes

Thank you for taking the time to read the application pack for the role of Board Trainee.

I am pleased that you are considering this opportunity to come and join us at this important moment in our development as an organisation.

As a significant profit-for-purpose business, Karbon Homes has a focused and thoughtful approach to housing, not least in the specific context of the North East of England and Yorkshire. We combine a sound business head with a strong social heart. At the same time, we remain true to the values that guide all that we seek to do.

The organisation has a compelling vision to provide people with a strong foundation for life. In addition, the strategic aims that Karbon has set itself – to provide good quality homes, deliver an excellent customer experience and shape strong, sustainable places for our communities – which attracted me to join the Karbon Group Board five years ago – still resonate strongly with me today.

Since our creation in 2017, a key element of our success has been strong, thoughtful, engaged and effective leadership and governance. That has been validated by an external team of reviewers and by our top 'G' – Governance – rating from the Regulator of Social Housing.

The Group Board encompasses people with a wide range of strategic skills and experience. We enjoy lively debate with, and offer constructive challenge to, the Executive Team responsible for the day-to-day running of the business.

Yet, our shared commitment is to serve the needs and interests of our customers. To do that, the business must be appropriately resourced and properly managed to realise its goals. At the same time, the Group Board – and Karbon Homes as a whole – is relentless in the pursuit of equality, diversity and inclusion, where everyone

is respected, treated fairly and has equal access to services. The Group Board also seeks to model integrity, openness and accountability in all its dealings, internally and externally.

We are now looking to appoint one new colleague as a Board Trainee. We have joined up with the Housing Diversity Network (HDN) to deliver a two-year learning, development and mentoring programme, to support and nurture a more diverse cohort of future non-executive board members in the housing sector.

We value different perspectives and diversity of thought in our Group Board, and are keen to develop a new pipeline of talent through this programme. If you apply and are appointed as a Board Trainee, you have my assurance that we will support you through the programme, offering structured induction and development opportunities. That will also include observing the Group Board and its committees in action.

If you support our vision, share our ambition for improving the lives of our customers and the places where they live, and want to make Karbon Homes a great place to work, then I hope that you will consider applying for a role as a Board Trainee.

Best wishes,



**Alexis Cleveland**  
**Chair of the Group Board**  
**Karbon Homes**



## About us

At Karbon we build, manage and look after homes for people across the North. And then we go further, we give them the strong foundations they need to get on with life.

Since our creation in 2017, we've been focused on delivering on our three strategic aims - to provide as many good quality homes as we can; to deliver excellent service to our customers; and to shape strong, sustainable places for our communities.

You can read more about this in our [Stronger Foundations Strategy](#)

Our footprint covers the North East of England and Yorkshire, with around 34,000 homes across diverse communities where customers face differing opportunities and challenges.

Some customers just need an affordable home, or a way onto the property ladder. Others might need a bit more – financial advice, community services, sheltered accommodation or even training that can lead to a new job. Whatever people need to feel more secure, confident and happy with where they're at, we aim to provide it.

We always make the effort to really understand our customers. We believe that everyone deserves respect. Everyone's voices should be heard. And everyone deserves someone in their corner now and then. We believe that by focusing on our three strategic aims, combining a sound business head with a strong social heart and staying true to our values, we will build strong foundations for even more people.

## Our values

Here at Karbon, we have five values that reflect our ethos of a sound business head and a strong social heart:

### Inspiring

We believe in people and create the conditions for them to succeed and unlock their own potential.

### Dynamic

We continually learn and innovate so we are able to respond to change and be the best we can be.

### Bold

We go forward with confidence and are passionate, proactive and influential in building a better future.

### Reliable

We use our knowledge and experience to be effective and efficient and make sound, well-informed business decisions with integrity.

### Thoughtful

We work hard to understand the needs and aspirations of others and are mindful of our impact on people, communities and the environment.



# About the HDN Board Trainee Programme at Karbon

We're proud to continue this exciting programme, which we hope will once again offer a route for those who may not ordinarily consider themselves candidates for board positions.

We know that the path to board membership can seem daunting and not everyone will feel they have the necessary expertise or experience, which is how this programme can help. It's designed to offer you the opportunity to develop your skills, knowledge and confidence – and to help you to flourish – regardless of where you currently stand. We're committed to providing a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive.

The HDN Board Trainee Programme is a nationally recognised two-year development pathway that helps people from diverse backgrounds take their first steps into board leadership.

We're partnering with HDN to give a practical, supported route into governance. This includes things like workshops, mentoring and observation of live Board and Committee meetings combined with real world exposure to how strategic decisions are made in a large, values-driven organisation.

## What the programme delivers at Karbon

Over two years, you will build governance capability and strategic confidence through structured learning and hands-on experience. The programme includes a Strengthscope® assessment, access to HDN's online learning and events and membership of a national peer network. This is all designed to develop your leadership potential and prepare you for future governance roles in housing and the wider public and third sectors.

What you will gain:

- Governance foundations: A clear grounding in board responsibilities, assurance and good governance.
- Practical exposure: Firsthand experience of Board and Committee meetings and decision making.
- Paper and meeting confidence: Improved ability to read, interpret and contribute to Board papers and discussions.
- Mentoring: One-to-one support from experienced board members.
- Peer network: A national cohort of emerging leaders to learn with and from.
- Portfolio of learning: Evidence of development and experience to support future governance applications.
- Career launchpad: A strong route into board roles across the housing sector and beyond.



Current Board Trainee, Dawn Snowball shares how she's found her time as a Board Trainee:

*"My experience as a Board Trainee has been really positive. I've gained valuable insight into Karbon's strategic direction and how strongly it puts customers at the heart of everything it does, while also developing my confidence and understanding of governance and decision-making. I now feel ready to look for similar roles where I can use these skills."*

## About you

We believe diverse leadership is not just fair, it's a competitive advantage. Bringing different backgrounds, perspectives and lived experiences into the boardroom improves decision making, drives innovation and delivers better outcomes for our customers. Housing is one of the defining issues of our time, so your voice will help shape real decisions affecting real people and communities.

You don't need a CV full of board experience - we're looking for curious, ambitious, emerging leaders who bring fresh thinking and a commitment to social purpose. You might be early in an executive role, working in the public, private or third sector or bringing lived experience that adds a new perspective.

We aren't looking for the finished article – just potential, commitment and the confidence to challenge constructively matter more than prior board experience.

You'll join a welcoming, forward thinking boardroom culture that invests in developing leadership skills that will set you apart. We provide induction, meeting preparation, flexible assessment options and reasonable adjustments so the programme is accessible to people with different commitments and needs.



## What's involved?

If you're selected as a Board Trainee, you'll take part in a two-year scheme and you'll be able to access:

- The chance to attend board and committee meetings across the Karbon Group.
- A comprehensive induction to the Karbon Group, as well as having access to the same development opportunities as our Board Members.
- Ongoing support from the Housing Diversity Network (HDN), which will provide training and networking events to help equip you with the skills and knowledge to enable you to operate in a board level environment.
- Support from Karbon Board Members and the Karbon Governance Team.



## Expectations

- You're expected to show commitment to your personal training and development during your time on the programme.
- You're expected to abide by Karbon's Code of Conduct. You must ensure that all information obtained during the programme is confidentially maintained in accordance with the law and the Group's policies and procedures.
- You're expected to respond promptly to communications from HDN and Karbon during the course and whenever possible within any specified response deadlines.
- You're expected to attend all of the HDN Board Trainee Programme sessions.
- A schedule of Karbon Group Board and committee meetings will be arranged with you. Additionally, you may be invited to attend induction events and board development sessions during the two years. Failure to attend without good reason may ultimately result in the termination of your participation on the programme.
- You're expected to participate fully in evaluations of your own progress through the programme and contribute to the assessment of the Karbon Board Trainee Programme's success overall.
- Supported by Karbon and HDN, you'll be expected to take ownership of your own development through the programme.

# Role and person specification

## Board Trainee

Our mission is to provide people with a strong foundation for life. We have three strategic aims to help us achieve this mission:

- To provide as many good quality homes as we can
- To deliver excellent customer service
- To shape strong, sustainable places for our communities.

In everything we do, we will combine a sound business head with a strong social heart.

### Role purpose:

As a Board Trainee, you will attend a variety of the Group's board meetings and board committee meetings, to shadow and observe the role of a full Board Member and gain an understanding of the purpose and duties of a board in a social housing provider. This is a great opportunity to learn in a real-time board environment, shadowing experienced board members from a variety of different backgrounds, and to prepare you for a full-time board role.

Over a flexible two-year programme, you will fully participate in the HDN's Board Trainee Programme, including meeting with other board trainees, monthly evening workshops and mentoring support, and participating in further learning and development activities that we might organise.

The purpose of the role is for the Board Trainee to develop the skills, confidence and experience to be successful in gaining a position on the Karbon Group Board, or one of the Group's boards or committees, by the end of the two-year programme. You will also bring your own skills, knowledge, experience and feedback to provide us with a wider diversity of thought and opinions.



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# Role and person specification

## Board Trainee

### Role Responsibilities:

- Observe board and committee meetings on a rotating basis, including preparing for them by reading board/committee reports.
- Engage fully in the HDN Board Trainee Programme.
- Participate in Board Trainee learning and development activity organised by Karbon.
- Provide regular feedback on the Karbon Board Trainee Programme to the Governance Team and those overseeing the programme, and assist with reviewing and improving the programme as necessary.
- Represent the Karbon Group as necessary to key external stakeholders.
- Uphold the principles of good governance at all times in line with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance and Code of Conduct.
- The duties and responsibilities detailed above are not exhaustive and the post holder may be expected to undertake any other duties appropriate to the post as necessary or as directed.

### Person Specification

1. A passion for social housing and/or social purpose and value.
2. Interest in and commitment to Karbon, its customers and the neighbourhoods they live in.
3. Eager to learn about the role of a Board Member.
4. Self-motivated and ambitious.
5. Excellent communication skills.
6. Organised and self-disciplined.
7. Understands the challenges faced by diverse and under-represented communities individuals.
8. Understands and appreciates good customer experience.
9. Ability to think differently and challenge the norm.
10. Future focused and an advocate of change.
11. A high degree of personal integrity and a commitment to 'doing the right thing'.
12. A high degree of confidentiality.
13. A commitment to the values of the organisation and a willingness to promote a culture that champions diversity and provides equality of opportunity.

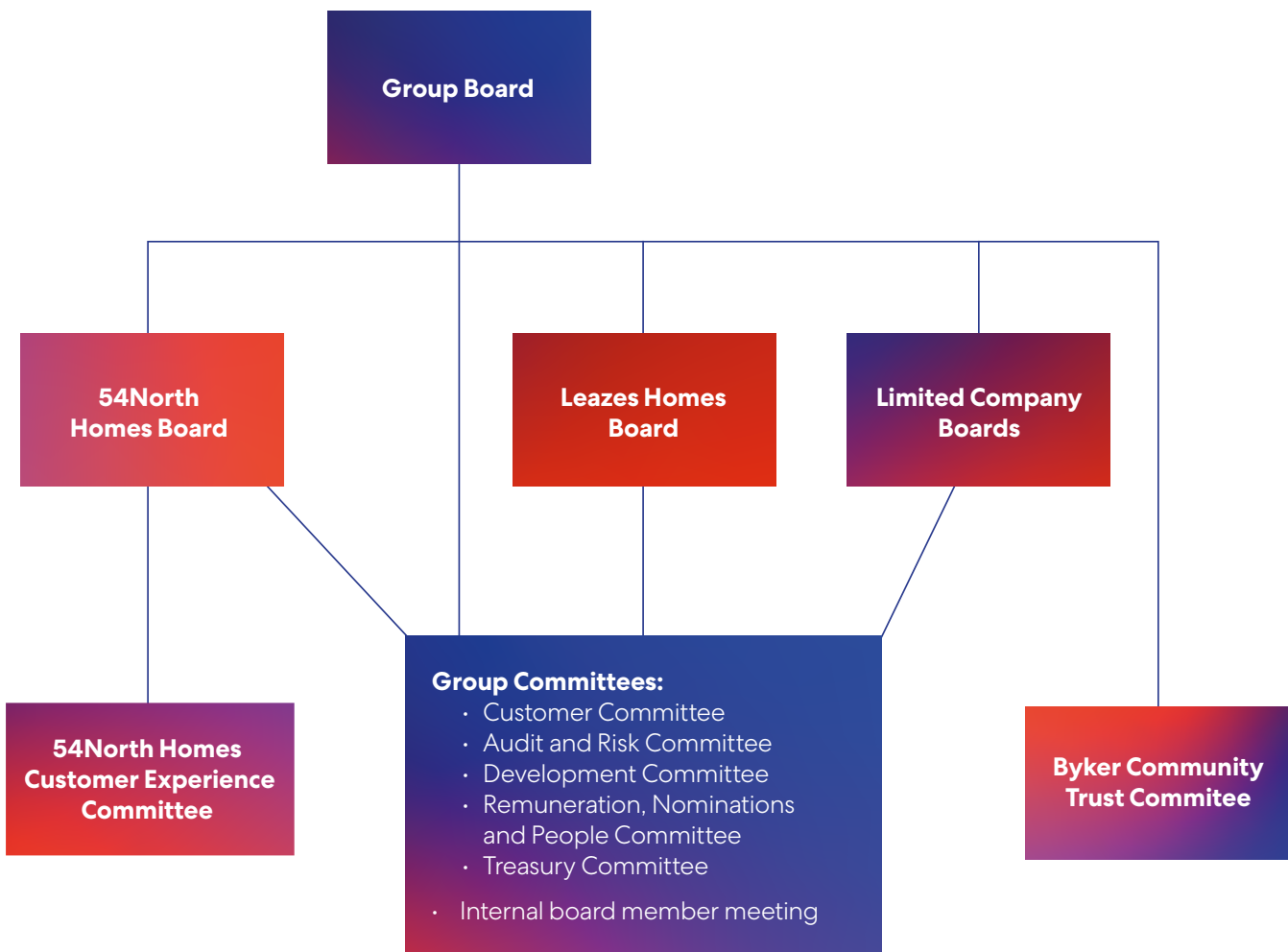
Please note that this person specification will be used as guidance when shortlisting all applications and again at interview. Please ensure you provide evidence within your application giving examples, where appropriate, as to how you meet the specified requirements for the role.

You must be able to provide to the Group your evidence of your Right to Work in the UK, in accordance with Home Office (border agency) rules, before you can commence this programme.

The role is covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA). The successful candidate(s) will be asked to submit a basic disclosure and barring check application during pre-employment checks. We recognise the contribution that people with criminal records can make. A criminal record will not exclude a candidate from being appointed where offences are irrelevant to, or do not place them at risk in, the role they're applying for. However, due to the nature of the role, we cannot accept candidates who have been disqualified from acting as a director of a company, a board member or a charity trustee, or who have been convicted of an indictable offence which is not, or cannot be, spent.

# Governance Structure

As a board trainee, you'll attend a variety of the Group's board meetings and board committee meetings, to shadow and observe the role of a full Board Member and gain an understanding of the purpose and duties of a social housing provider board. Here's what our governance structure looks like:



## How to apply

If you're interested, we'd love to hear from you. If this sounds like the role for you, please apply through our website:

**[www.karbonhomes.co.uk/careers](http://www.karbonhomes.co.uk/careers)**.

You will need to supply an up-to-date CV and complete a brief online application form.

In the Supporting Statement section of the application form, you will need to provide an answer to these questions:

- Why are you interested in joining this programme?
- What do you think you will bring to the role and to Karbon?
- How do you meet the person specification?
- What personal development do you hope to get out of being a Board Trainee?

We want to make this process as accessible as we can, so please let us know if there are any reasonable adjustments we can put in place to support you by contacting

**[governance&risk@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:governance&risk@karbonhomes.co.uk)**

We are a Disability Confident employer. Any candidate with a disability who meets the essential criteria for the post will be guaranteed an interview.



## Important dates

The closing date for applying to be part of the programme is 5pm on **Wednesday 22 April 2026**.

There will then be a selection and interview process, which will take place week commencing **4 May 2026**. If successful, you will receive more details about this stage at that time.

We hope that the programme will commence on **Monday 1 July 2026**, with successful candidates observing their first Group Board meeting on **Monday 27 July 2026**.

**Find out more at our virtual open event via Microsoft Teams, 11am-12pm on Monday 13 April 2026.**

This virtual open event provides an opportunity for people who are interested in applying for the Karbon Board Trainee Programme to find out more about the programme, about Karbon and about the role the Karbon Board plays. There will be an opportunity to listen to the thoughts of the Board Chair and the Group Director of Governance, and to ask any questions you may have about the programme.

Please register via the following link on the role advert page: <https://www.karbonhomes.co.uk/board-trainee/>

Alternatively, you can email [governance&risk@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:governance&risk@karbonhomes.co.uk) to book your place on the event.

