



**Bioregional**  
Championing a  
better way to live

**Trustee (Residential Property Development)  
Candidate Information Pack  
2019**



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## Welcome



Dear candidate,

Thank you for the interest you have expressed in Bioregional and in the position of trustee of our organisation.

If Bioregional is well known for anything it is our work to build sustainable homes and communities. This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced professional in the sector to join us as a trustee to help us scale our work and our impact in the UK. The position available is for a member of our regular charity board, who would also act as a board member and chair for our wholly owned subsidiary Bioregional Homes.

I wanted to share with you here a little bit about Bioregional and what we are looking for to help you to see if you think this might be the right role for you.

Our trustees make an invaluable contribution to the delivery of our mission, bringing a wealth of skills and experience to guide us as we work to achieve our strategic aims. It is a voluntary commitment of your time which we recognise and appreciate and we aim to make it a good experience for you. We maintain a happy and well-run organisation, take a collegiate approach and invite trustees to participate in occasional all-staff events, and of course strategic business planning activities.

Bioregional's trustees meet with senior management four times a year on a weekday in the late afternoons at our offices at BedZED eco-village in south London or at a central London location. Trustees also get involved to varying degrees between quarterly meetings, and so the time commitment can vary. In this case considering the role includes becoming chair of Bioregional Homes we would expect a time commitment of between 5-10 days a year.

The ideal candidate will have the following skills and experiences.

- **Commitment to sustainability:** Our mission is to champion a better, more sustainable way to live and so it's essential that all Trustees understand and share that commitment.
- **Entrepreneurship or commercial experience:** We take an entrepreneurial and business-minded approach to our work, and have won awards as a social enterprise. We earn around 80% of our income working with partners to create sustainable communities, products or business operations. We sometimes establish associated companies, and trustees may serve on the boards of these companies, as is the case for this role.
- **Residential Property Development:** Professional experience in residential property development and the construction sector is essential for the role. Whilst the executive team will take responsibility for the day to day operations of our advisory work within the charity and our wholly owned subsidiary Bioregional Homes; a working familiarity with development appraisals, and all elements of the business from funding, planning, risk, construction and skills, plus contacts in the industry would all be called upon in the role.
- **Chair, board or at least senior management experience:** Part of this role will be to chair the Board of the charity's wholly owned residential-led property development subsidiary Bioregional Homes Ltd.

It is an exciting time to join us as we set a new medium-term strategy this year against a backdrop of increased awareness and popular support for urgent action on the climate and ecological emergency.

If this is something you would like to be part of and you have the skills and experience we need, we look forward to receiving your application. You can find out more in this recruitment pack.

With best wishes,

Sue Riddlestone OBE

Chief Executive and co-founder

## About Bioregional

**Bioregional Development Group** is an award-winning sustainability charity and social enterprise. At Bioregional we champion a better, more sustainable way to live. We work with partners to create places which enable people to live, work and do business within the natural limits of our planet. We call this One Planet Living.

Bioregional's achievements include the world-famous BedZED eco-village in south London (where Bioregional are based), the sustainability of the London 2012 Olympics and our work on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We scale what we do by telling the stories of our practical work to change policy and practice and through our one planet living framework.

Bioregional employs 29 staff in the UK, with 4 based in our Oxford office and bases in Brighton and Bristol. Our turnover was £1.4million in 2018/19. We work internationally, with sister organisations or representatives in Canada, Mexico, Australia and South Africa, and projects and One Planet partners from the USA to France and Tanzania. You can learn more about us on our website [www.bioregional.com](http://www.bioregional.com).

We have achieved a lot in our twenty-five years of operation and continue to adapt to the changing opportunities both in the UK and internationally. We are currently concluding a strategic period, where our objectives also included; refreshing our One Planet Living offer to make it more accessible through a digital platform and face to face training; and initiatives for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. We will be setting a new medium-term strategy this Summer.

**Bioregional Homes** Our recently established subsidiary company Bioregional Homes is pioneering a new model of residential property development where we build truly sustainable homes, with communities, which remain affordable in perpetuity through a community land trust. Our first project of 30 homes in Chobham, Surrey, is at the stage of applying for [planning permission](#), with a pipeline of follow on projects around London and the South East. Bioregional Homes aims to build up to 100 homes per year using this model in addition to partnering on larger developments.



## **The Trustee's principal responsibilities are:**

- Lead role on the trustee board on all property development related matters.
- Have good, independent judgement and the ability to think creatively in the context of the organisation and external environment
- Help to maintain close relationships with key stakeholders and influencers.
- As a sustainability charity, we naturally expect all trustees to have a good understanding of, and commitment to, sustainability.

## **Strategic leadership & governance**

- Provide strategic leadership, with regards to the charity residential property development activities as part of the Board, ensuring that the charity has maximum impact and operates within its charitable objectives
- Ensure that the Board is updated and able to review major risks and associated opportunities associated with the subsidiary property development company Bioregional Homes. And to satisfy itself that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities and manage and mitigate the risks.

## **Efficiency and effectiveness**

- Chair the meetings of the Bioregional Homes Board, currently held every 2 months, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process, and monitor that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.
- Ensure that trustees are fully engaged, from a property development aspect, and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the Charity
- Provide ad hoc advice to the Chief Executive, the Managing Director of Bioregional Homes, the Head of Sustainable Places and the Head of Finance.

## **Person Specification**

The ideal candidate would have some of the below experience or qualities, all of which are useful in a trustee role:

- Comfortable with numbers and governance.
- Experience of strategic planning at senior management and/or board level
- Entrepreneurial approach
- Policy experience
- Good communicator and a team player
- External profile in our circles, with good connections.
- Entrepreneurial and/or commercial acumen and experience
- Governance
- Legal knowledge would be advantageous

## **Personal Qualities**

- A strong and visible passion and commitment to the charity, its strategic objectives and cause, and have personal gravitas to instil confidence in being able to lead the financial aspect of the organisation
- Exhibit strong communication and interpersonal skills, plus strong networking capabilities that can be utilised for the benefit of the charity
- Ability to commit time and effort to conduct the role well, including travel and attending events out of office hours.

## **Knowledge and skills**

- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship and of a company director
- Broad knowledge and understanding of the wider Civil Society sector and current issues affecting it
- Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate staff and volunteers and bring people together
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of charity and residential real estate development finance.

## **Additional information:**

The above is indicative only and wider skills and experience will be considered. The trustee position will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with their role, and to employ any specific skills and expertise they have for the benefit of Bioregional.

## **Remuneration:**

The role of Trustee is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, although expenses for travel may be claimed.

## **Location:**

Bioregional, BedZED Centre, 24 Helios Road, Wallington, London, SM6 7BZ. Our offices are a seven-minute walk from the nearest train station, Hackbridge, which is a 30-minute journey from either London Victoria or London Blackfriars. More detailed travel directions can be found at <http://www.bioregional.com/contact-us/>

## **Time commitment:**

A commitment ranging between 5-10 days a year is likely to be needed for this role.

Time and commitment will be needed for:

- four Bioregional Board meetings (plus preparation and reading time)
- six Bioregional Homes Board meetings (plus preparation and reading time)
- time spent giving specific advice or support, drawing on areas of expertise
- daytime attendance at various events (such as for strategy development)
- time to work with the Chief Executive, senior team and Managing Director on strategic and operational issues relating to Bioregional Homes (between trustees' meetings)
- opportunities to represent the charity and the company at various open days and other events and meetings with key stakeholders.

In addition to the main Board meetings, the Board may establish additional sub-committees with appropriate focus for organisational needs.

## **Term of office:**

The trustee will serve a four-year term and is eligible for re-appointment for one additional term.

## Process

**There is no closing date for this role as we look to find the best individual to fill the role.**

Following a successful application, the below steps will be followed:

- There will be a panel meeting with the Chair and CEO (arranged for a suitable date for both parties)
- If the prior stage is a success the candidate will be invited to attend a charity board meeting.
- As well as a charity board meeting, the candidate is also invited to attend a trustee and management team strategy development event at a date most suitable.

## How to apply

**To apply for this role, please supply the following:**

- a supporting statement, explaining how you believe your skills and experience match the requirements of the role, directly addressing the person specification;
- a comprehensive CV including details of your achievements in each role and two referees (who will not of course be contacted without your prior knowledge or consent).

Applications should be emailed to [recruitment@bioregional.com](mailto:recruitment@bioregional.com)

For an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact Sue Riddlestone the CEO at [sue.riddlestone@bioregional.com](mailto:sue.riddlestone@bioregional.com) or on 020 8404 4880.

**\*A reminder that this, like most trustee roles is unremunerated.**