

Generation Rent is looking for a Treasurer

Generation Rent (the trading name for the National Private Tenants Organisation) is looking for a treasurer to join our board of trustees in an unpaid volunteer role.

We are especially interested in hearing from candidates who are private renters themselves.

We are a young not-for-profit organisation that is campaigning for a safe, secure, decent and affordable private rented sector for England's 10 million private renters. Our staff team of two is working hard to build a movement of renters across the country, by supporting new and existing private renters groups, involving renters in national campaigns, and by influencing the political and media debate around private renting.

The coming year poses big, strategic discussions and decisions for our board: how do we work with the government to secure change for private renters? How do we continue to build an effective movement of private renters? What kind of organisation do we want to be? What kind of funding should we seek and how should we go about raising it to ensure that we are a sustainable force for improving private renting in England?

We have four board meetings a year, of which one is an Annual General Meeting (in January). We aim to hold meetings mid-afternoon to minimise disruption, and at least one meeting a year is outside London.

This role is voluntary, but administrative support is provided, and reasonable travel and accommodation expenses are covered while undertaking trustee duties.

Referring to the advert and role description, please send a CV and covering letter of no more than two sides of A4 detailing your motivation for joining the Generation Rent board and the skills and experience you would bring to the role as outlined in the Treasurer job description below to bernardcollier@gmail.com by 11.59pm on 27th May.

Section 2 Trustee Role Description

Generation Rent is the trading name for the National Private Tenants Organisation Ltd. Our trustee role description refers to the name National Private Tenants Organisation, as our trustees are directors of that limited company.

Vision

Our vision is of professionally managed, secure, decent and affordable private rented homes making a full contribution to sustainable communities.

Our values:

- We are passionate about making a positive contribution to improving life for those in the private rented sector, recognising that high housing costs and poor conditions impact on the health of tenants and increase inequality
- Everything we do is tested against how it will help those living in the private rented sector, particularly those who are most vulnerable
- We use resources wisely to achieve our goals
- We will operate with integrity and honesty and deal with people respectfully
- We will be a great place to work because our staff are vital to the success of the organisation

Position

The Board supports the work of Generation Rent and provides mission-based leadership and strategic governance. While day-to-day operations are led by the National Private Tenants Organisation's Director, the Board-Director relationship is a partnership, and the appropriate involvement of the Board is both critical and expected.

All trustees must accept ultimate responsibility for the way the organisation is directed and run in meeting its purposes. In this context trustees should:

- accept ultimate responsibility for the way the organisation is directed and run in meeting its purposes, setting and maintaining a framework of delegation and internal control.
- be alert to those matters that cannot be delegated to individual trustees or others
- act at all times in the best interests of the organisation and its beneficiaries
- ensure the solvency and financial strength of the organisation
- safeguard the organisation's assets and use them only in furtherance of its purposes
- take a considered, proportionate and balanced approach to risk management
- act reasonably in their decision making and leadership of the organisation
- recognise and respect that all trustees are equally responsible in law for the board's decisions
- comply with all relevant legislation and regulation applicable to the organisation and the activities it undertakes and make appropriate public statements to confirm that this is the case
- comply with relevant provisions in the governing document and relevant law concerning the exercise of powers of delegation by the board
- act prudently to protect the reputation, assets and property of the organisation; ensuring that the organisation's assets and property are used only to deliver its stated objects and aims.

Other trustee responsibilities include:

Leadership, governance and oversight

- Serving as a trusted advisor to the Director as s/he develops and implements our business plan
- Reviewing achievement of outcomes and other measures created by the National Private Tenants Organisation for evaluating its impact, and regularly measuring its performance and effectiveness using these measures; reviewing agenda and supporting materials prior to board and committee meetings
- Approving the National Private Tenants Organisation's annual budget, audit reports, and material business decisions; being informed of, and meeting all, legal and fiduciary responsibilities
- Contributing to an annual performance evaluation of the Director and to periodic reviews of the Board's effectiveness
- Assisting the Director and Board chair in identifying and recruiting other trustees
- Partnering with the Director and other trustees to ensure that board resolutions are carried out
- Serving on committees and taking on special tasks
- Representing the National Private Tenants Organisation to stakeholders; acting as an ambassador for the organisation

- Ensuring the National Private Tenants Organisation's commitment to a diverse board and staff that reflects the communities the National Private Tenants Organisation serves

Fundraising

The National Private Tenants Organisation trustees will consider the National Private Tenants Organisation a philanthropic priority and participate in its fundraising activities in whatever way is most appropriate for each trustee.

Board terms/participation

The National Private Tenants Organisation's trustees will initially be appointed and thereafter will be eligible to stand for election at the National Private Tenants Organisation's Annual General Meeting. Board meetings will be held quarterly.

Skills, experience and motivation

This is an extraordinary opportunity for an individual who is passionate about the National Private Tenants Organisation's mission and who has strong leadership and strategic skills to bring to the organisation. The National Private Tenants Organisation is committed to ensuring diversity on the board.

At this time we are seeking in particular individuals who can bring experience of successful leadership in the fields of public campaigning (especially mass mobilisation and online campaigning tools) and/or fundraising. This experience could have been gained in a number of sectors.

Candidates will have, will work to achieve or can demonstrate in any walk of life, the following:

- Extensive professional experience with significant leadership
- Accomplishments in philanthropy, the non-profit sector, government or business
- A commitment to, and understanding of, the problems faced by private tenants
- Savvy diplomatic skills and a natural affinity for cultivating relationships and persuading, convening, facilitating, and building consensus among diverse individuals
- Personal qualities of integrity, credibility, and a passion for improving the lives of vulnerable private tenants. Please see also the National Private Tenants Organisation's Code of Practice for trustees and declaration form.

Service on the National Private Tenants Organisation's board is without remuneration. Administrative support is provided, and reasonable expenses cover travel, subsistence and accommodation costs in relation to trustees' duties.

Section 3 Job Description

Overall

- Oversee the financial affairs of the organisation and ensure they are legal, constitutional and within accepted accounting practice.
- Ensure proper records are kept and that effective financial procedures are in place.
- Monitor and report on the financial health of the organisation.
- Oversee the production of necessary financial reports/returns, accounts and audits.

- Lead on the board's risk management activities; collating and monitoring the risk register.

Specifically

- Liaise with relevant staff, committee members and/or volunteers to ensure the financial viability of the organisation.
- Make fellow committee members aware of their financial obligations and take a lead in interpreting financial data to them.
- Regularly report the financial position at committee meetings (balance sheet, cash flow, fundraising performance etc).
- Oversee the production of an annual budget and propose its adoption at the last meeting of the previous financial year.
- Ensure proper records are kept and that effective financial procedures and controls are in place, ie:
 - Cheque signatories
 - Purchasing limits
 - Purchasing systems
 - Salary payments
 - Pensions
 - PAYE and NI payments
 - Others as appropriate
- Appraising the financial viability of plans, proposals and feasibility studies.
- Arrange salary payments to the director and arrange appropriate signatures on payments.
- Sit on the finance committee and approve organizational expenses on Basecamp

Qualities

- Knowledge and experience of current and fundraising finance practice relevant to voluntary and community organisations.
- Knowledge of bookkeeping and financial management, ideally with an understanding of Quickbooks
- Good financial analysis skills.
- Ability to communicate clearly

Section 4 Generation Rent background information

Generation Rent is the trading name for the National Private Tenants Organisation, which was established in September 2011 by members of Scarborough Organisation of Private Tenants, Brent Private Tenants' Rights Group and Blackpool Residents Federation.

In 2013 it was awarded significant funding from the Nationwide Foundation charitable trust. This funding was based on a Business Plan that the founding members of the National Private Tenants Organisation drew up with consultancy from CASS Business School.

By January 2014, we had successfully recruited and had in post a Director, a Community Campaigns Manager and a Policy and Campaigns Manager. The organisation relaunched as Generation Rent in March and over the course of the year added members to the team both in London and community organisers in Manchester, Liverpool and Brighton.

The organisation's focus was on influencing the development of party policy in the run-up to the 2015 General Election, publishing a manifesto early on, meeting with politicians and building a strong media profile. The campaign also won changes from government over revenge evictions and transparency of letting fees.

Following the election, the organisation shifted its focus towards its sustainability, and navigated a couple of shocks to its finances, which resulted in a smaller team by the autumn but more stable finances. A new grant from the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust helped to fund a campaign focused on the London Mayoral Election. This involved a policy comparison website, www.votehomes2016.com, and a social media campaign, #ventyourrent. The organisation also made strides in developing the capacity of its growing volunteer base, including a project on www.lettingfees.co.uk, and early discussions on a tenants' union.

Our priorities beyond May 2016 will be ensuring that we influence the new Mayor of London's policies on private renting in the city, while monitoring the implementation of the government's Housing Act as it affects private renters.

Without a high profile election to work towards, we will also spend more time developing our strategy to become a sustainable organisation, and particularly harness the energy of our supporters and volunteers to mobilise more renters.