

Urban Patchwork



Voluntary Board Member

Urban Patchwork is based by Greenland Dock in Rotherhithe SE16, close to both Surrey Quays and Canada Water stations. We were founded in March 2018 by brother-and-sister team Toby and Tessa who grew up nearby in South London.

In the widespread calls for both improvements to the agency sector and for providing more housing, we saw an opportunity for a new approach:

- We provide professional and personable residential sales and lettings services, including property management (competing with established high street agents)
- We aim to be a positive example of agency practice and to influence improvements in the sector (for example, we submitted our support for the Tenant Fees Bill in May 18, which will see the majority of agency tenant fees scrapped from April 19.)
- We will use the majority of our profits for homeless housing and support through our UP fund, or reinvest them in the organisation so we can increase our impact over the longer term. (We also raise awareness and funds for our local homeless charity the 999 Club.)

We are members of the Property Ombudsman, NAEA & ARLA Propertymark and the Tenancy Deposit Scheme. We are also a certified 'business for good' and member of Social Enterprise UK.

Our aims are integral to how and why they do things and so far, this approach is leading to a high level of customer satisfaction having received 5-star [Google Reviews](#) and [AllAgents](#) reviews to date from across vendors, buyers, landlords and tenants, as well as other prospective customers. For example, Steve James said: *"Can't recommend them more: very helpful, honest and worked with the highest level of integrity. They helped us in a difficult situation and were able to look outside the box. Thank you."*

We are seeking volunteers to form a board of experts to advise on the direction of the organisation, and to have voting rights on how profits are allocated to homeless housing initiatives.

We are ideally looking for five to nine people to sit on the voluntary board that will meet every quarter in person with our two directors. Individuals may also be contacted for advice more regularly. The first board meeting will be held in spring 2019.

Expressions of interest are invited from people with expertise in one or more of the following areas: housing, homelessness, social enterprise management, finance, real estate and lettings (and also specifically new homes sales and lettings and property management), residential property development, proptech and marketing & comms etc.

We'd preferably like representation from individuals/organisations across landlords, tenants, homeless, vendors, buyers, residential sales, residential lettings, residential property development, accountancy, marketing & comms and social enterprise management.

Contact tessa@urbanpatchwork.co.uk / 020 7043 2348 with details of your skills, experience and interests to discuss the opportunity further.

More about us (taken from part 6 of our Articles of Association)

Mission

- Our mission is to meet more housing need through providing the same services that many estate and lettings agents provide in the best way we can.

Operations

- We aim to achieve our mission by:
 1. Providing professional and personable residential sales and lettings services, including property management.
 2. Being an example of positive agency practice and helping influence improvements in the sector.
 3. Using the majority of our profits for homeless housing and support, or reinvesting them in the organisation to ensure we can increase our impact over the longer term.
 4. Supporting a local homeless charity/project near where our branch/es is/are based, through raising awareness and fundraising for them.

Governance

- Our governance is embedded through:
 1. Our articles of association
 2. A voluntary board of four-to-ten experts across a range of relevant disciplines that will provide challenge and advice to the directors on the direction of the organisation to ensure transparency and accountability, and to harness expertise for the benefit of the organisation and its mission.
 - i. Relevant disciplines could include for example: housing, homelessness, management, social enterprise, finance, law, estate and letting agents, new homes sales and lettings, property development, property management, proptech, marketing & comms etc.
 - ii. Together with the directors, voluntary board members will have voting rights on how profits are spent on homeless housing and support projects.
 - iii. The voluntary board will meet at least three times a year, though preferably once a quarter, and board members may be contacted for input more regularly.
 - iv. The voluntary board should be formed and have its first meeting by summer 2019.

3. Our guiding principles that influence our practices and how we go about what we do:
 - i. A transparent approach: We're here to sell and let places in the right way – we aim to simplify the process to make it as clear as possible and to minimise surprises.
 - ii. Experienced professionals: At the point of starting operating in spring 2018, our directors have a collective 15 years' industry experience with established London agents and have also worked in related sectors – we use our knowledge, and continue learning, to ensure we're operating in the best way we can.
 - iii. A dynamic service: We listen to your needs and quickly adapt to changing circumstances – our flexible cloud-based systems also ensure our processes always support the services we provide.
 - iv. People with integrity: We have an unwavering focus on delivering positive results for all parties – we're an independent start-up that's invested our own funds to create a new model of estate agency you can trust.
 - v. A social purpose: The majority of our profits go to homeless housing and support or are reinvested in us so we can increase our impact over the longer term – we're committed to helping meet homeless housing need and to providing a better deal for tenants.
4. An impact article/report published each year in the spring, outlining how we are working towards/achieving our mission.

Vision

- Our vision is to be the go-to organisation for those wanting to buy, sell, let or rent residential property where we operate:
 - Providing an excellent service to our customers
 - Helping to create a more circular economy
 - Making a meaningful difference to both tenants and people who are homeless
 - Being an example of positive practice in the residential sales and lettings sector.

A visual of our operating model

