



TRUSTEE ROLE DESCRIPTIONS



Trustee Role Description

This document draws together all the information about the roles undertaken by our trustees. As a Trustee the commitment and energy displayed makes a direct difference to the Trust and everyone it helps.

The duties of a trustee are:

Duty of trust

- to ensure the trust applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives, i.e. the trust must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objectives, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are.
- to act in the best interests of the trust as a whole and its beneficiaries, both current and future.

Duty of care

- to manage the trust's affairs prudently and take a long-term as well as a short-term view.
- to contribute actively to the board of trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the trust, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- to ensure the effective and efficient administration of the trust.
- to ensure the financial stability of the trust.
- to keep informed about the activities of the trust and wider issues which affect its work.
- to represent the trust at functions and meetings as appropriate.

Duty to declare conflicts of interest and duty not to profit

- to declare any conflict of interest while carrying out the duties of a trustee.

Duty to act collectively

- to be collectively responsible for the actions of the trust and other trustees.

Duty to comply with the governing document

- to ensure that the trust pursues its objectives as defined in its governing document.

Duty not to profit

Duty to safeguard the assets

- to safeguard the good name and values of the trust.



Duties when investing

- to protect and manage the property of the trust and to ensure the proper investment of the trust's funds.

Statutory duties

- to ensure that the trust complies with its governing document, organisation law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- to make sure the trust is properly insured against all reasonable liabilities.
- to appoint and support the employees and monitor their performance.
- in addition to the above statutory duties of all trustees, each trustee should use any specific knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This will involve scrutinizing board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, and providing advice and guidance requested by the board on new initiatives, or other issues relevant to the area of the trust's work in which the trustee has special expertise.
- to participate in other tasks as arise from time to time, such as interviewing new staff, helping with fundraising.
- to abide by the equal opportunities policy.

Contractual duties

- to ensure that all contracts entered into by the trust are fair, in the best interest of the trust and honoured.

Duty to meet

- to attend meetings, maximum number of meetings in a calendar year of 2 meetings, and to read papers in advance of meetings.
- to attend sub-committee meetings as appropriate.

Trustee Person Specification

Each trustee must have:

- integrity
- a commitment to the trust and its objectives
- an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a trustee
- strategic vision
- good, independent judgment
- an ability to think creatively
- willingness to speak their mind
- an ability to work effectively as a member of a team



The board of Trustees has skills and experience in the following areas:

- setting targets, monitoring and evaluating performance and programmes in commercial and non-profit organisations
- financial management
- legal matters
- fundraising
- public relations
- marketing
- computers and information technology
- campaigning
- education and learning

The Trustee board seeks to maintain a membership that has a wide-ranging level of experience so that the Board as a whole has the skills and experience to draw upon in its governance and decision-making roles.

In addition, the Board has a number of honorary roles appointed from the Board membership in order to ensure the effective running of the Board and that it is able to meet its obligations and responsibilities.

The role of the honorary officers

The 'honorary officers' comprise a Chair, Vice-chair, and Treasurer. The honorary officers are elected by the members of the board of trustees.

The Chair

The role of the Chair extends well beyond drawing up the agenda and chairing the meetings of the board of trustees. The Chair has to take a leadership role in ensuring that the board of trustees fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the trust. S/he must also work closely with the employees to support them in achieving the aims of the organisation, and act as the channel of communication between trustees and staff.

The Chair acts as a figurehead of the trust and represent it at functions, meetings and as required in the press and broadcasting media. Other tasks include authorising action to be taken between meetings of the full board, signing cheques and legal documents.

Job description for a Chair

The role of the Chair is to lead the board of trustees, ensuring that it fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the trust. The Chair's role is also to work in partnership with the employees, helping her or him achieve the aims of the trust; and to optimise the relationship between the board of Trustees and the staff.



The responsibilities of the Chair will include:

- providing leadership for the board of trustees in their role of setting the strategy and policy of the trust
- planning the annual cycle of board meetings
- setting agendas for board meetings
- chairing board meetings
- monitoring that decisions taken at meetings are implemented
- representing the trust at functions and meetings, and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate
- liaising with the employees to keep an overview of the trust's affairs and providing support as appropriate
- leading the process of appraising the performance of the CEO
- sitting on appointment and disciplinary panels.

Person specification for a Chair

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the Chair should also possess the following:

- leadership
- experience of committee work, tact and diplomacy
- good 'people' skills
- impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences
- knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the trust and a wider involvement with the voluntary sector and other networks.

The Vice-chair / Senior Independent Director

The Vice-chair acts for the Chair when the Chair is not available and undertakes assignments at the request of the Chair. The current Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees is also the Senior Independent Director of the Board of Trustees.

Job description for a Vice-chair / Senior Independent Director

The Vice-chair acts as Deputy to the Chair at committee meetings, other meetings and events. The Vice Chair will also act as the trust's representative on external bodies as required. In addition, the Vice-chair provides an independent route for other trustees to raise queries and concerns where they might feel unable to approach the Chair.



Person specification for a Vice-chair / Senior Independent Director

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the Vice Chair should also possess the following:

- Good meeting and presentation skills
- A supportive and confident management style

The Treasurer

The Treasurer takes the lead in overseeing the financial affairs of the trust, ensuring its financial viability, and seeing that proper financial records and procedures are maintained. The Treasurer assists other trustees to perform their financial duties, by interpreting and explaining accounting requirements, ensuring that the board receives reports containing the information trustees need in an 'easy to understand' format, and helping trustees guide any other professional advisers they have appointed.

Job description for a Treasurer

The overall role of a Treasurer is to maintain an overview of the trust's affairs, ensuring its financial viability and ensuring that proper financial records and procedures are maintained.

The tasks of a Treasurer will include:

- reviewing and presenting financial reports to the board on a monthly basis, including projected cash-flow.
- keeping the board aware of its financial responsibilities.
- ensuring that the trust's accounts are prepared in a suitable format.
- ensuring that the accounts and financial systems are audited as required by law.
- liaising with the auditors.

This role is supported by the Finance function.



The responsibilities of the Treasurer will include:

- preparing and presenting budgets, accounts and financial statements in collaboration with staff
- being assured that the financial resources of the trust meet its present and future needs
- ensuring that the trust has an appropriate reserves policy
- the preparation and presentation of financial reports to the board, ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place
- liaising with paid staff and volunteers about financial matters
- advising on the financial implications of the trust's strategic plan
- ensuring that the trust has an appropriate investment policy
- monitoring the trust's investment activity and ensuring its consistency with the trust's policies and legal responsibilities
- keeping the board informed about its financial duties and responsibilities
- contributing to the fundraising strategy of the trust.
- sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.

Person specification for a Treasurer

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the Treasurer should also possess the following:

- financial experience and business planning skills
- experience of charity finance and fundraising
- the skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences
- a preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the board