



Share Community: Trustee Role Description

Background:

Share Community is an independent charity based in Wandsworth, but we work across the boroughs in London, supporting residents from Lambeth, Southwark, Croydon and Merton among others. The charity was founded in 1972 by a group of disabled people and our service users and their families still have a strong voice in how our services are delivered.

Share works with disabled people who need extra help and support in order to achieve their potential and realise their dreams and aspirations. Share's aim is to transform disabled people's lives so that they live more independently and make choices about all aspects of their lives. We provide training and employment support for disabled adults, including those with learning disabilities, physical/sensory impairments, autism and mental health needs.

At Share, we focus on what people can do, not what holds them back. And we believe that everyone has something to offer their community, whether it be in employment or as active members of our society. We aim to inspire our students to live happy, healthy and independent lives.

Our services are provided from our main building at Altenburg Gardens, from a satellite site on Brixton Road and from our beautiful garden in Tooting. Increasingly our staff and volunteers work with our service users in locations near to their own homes and outreach in the wider community.

This document will refer throughout to our Objects and the values of the charity, these are defined as follows:

Charitable Objects

To assist persons of any nationality who are suffering from any form of disablement.

Mission

Delivering learning, living and wellbeing programmes to disabled people so that they may realise their potential, have greater choice and independence, and live happier, healthier lives.

Vision

We're working for a world where disabled people are fully included and have access to all the amenities and opportunities in their communities. We're working for a world in which diversity is valued and everyone is treated equally

Values

We work with respect, compassion and kindness. We believe everyone has something to offer others, and we build on people's individual talents, interests and abilities. We welcome difference and celebrate diversity.

Further information can be found in our governing document included in this pack.

Who are the Charity's Trustees?

According to the Charity Commission "Trustees have overall control of a charity and are responsible for making sure it's doing what it was set up to do. They may be known by other titles, such as directors, board members or governors, but whatever they are called, they are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run".

At Share these people are our "trustees", and the charity's governing body is called the "Board of Trustees". They are also directors of Share, which is a company limited by guarantee as well as a registered charity.

The Share Board of Trustees comprises the following specific officer roles, all appointed by the trustees themselves:

The Chair

The Deputy Chair

The Treasurer

There are currently seven additional elected trustees.

The role of the Board of Trustees

At its simplest, the role of the Board of Trustees is to receive assets from donors, safeguard them and apply them to the charitable objects of Share. The Board of Trustees must always act in the best interests of the charity, exercising the same standard of duty of care that a prudent person would apply if looking after the affairs of someone for whom they have responsibility. The Board of Trustees must act as a group and not as individuals.

Duties of a trustee board member

Key responsibilities:

1. To ensure that Share complies with its governing document (its Articles of Association), charity law and other relevant legislation or regulations.
2. To act in Share's best interests by:
 - being clear about the charity's aims and ensuring that these are being delivered effectively and sustainably,
 - making balanced and informed decisions, thinking about the long term as well as the short-term future,
 - avoiding putting themselves in a position where their duty to the charity conflicts with their own interests or loyalty to any other person or body,
 - not receiving any benefit from the charity unless it is properly authorised and is clearly in the charity's best interests.
3. To manage Share's resources responsibly acting with a duty of prudence by:
 - making sure that Share's assets are only used to support or carry out its purpose,
 - avoiding exposing the charity's assets, beneficiaries or reputation to undue risk.

4. To act with reasonable care and skill by:
 - making use of your skills and experience, taking advice when necessary,
 - giving enough time, thought and energy to the role, for example by preparing for, attending and actively participating in trustee meetings,
 - ensuring that decision making processes are informed, rigorous and timely, and that risk assessment and appropriate management systems are set up and monitored.

5. To ensure that Share complies with statutory accounting and reporting requirements by:
 - being able to demonstrate that the charity is complying with the law, well run and effective,
 - ensuring accountability within the charity, particularly where you delegate responsibility for tasks or decisions, to staff and volunteers.

In addition to above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge and experience they have, to help the Board of Trustees to reach sound decisions. This may involve leading discussions, identifying key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, and evaluating or offering advice on other areas in relation to which the trustee has knowledge or expertise.

For some trustees the latter can be achieved via membership of one of the committees through which Share's Board of Trustees oversees different aspects of the charity's activities. Each committee is chaired by a trustee and has a variable number of other trustees in attendance. Each trustee is expected to join at least one committee.

In addition, the trustees appoint and support the Chief Executive, monitor her performance, and work collaboratively with the Chief Executive and her senior management team.

Time commitment from trustees

Trustees are expected to attend:

- Sessions agreed as part of each trustee's personalised induction programme.
- Bimonthly board meetings; currently held on Monday evenings either in person at Altenburg Gardens or via Zoom.
- Ad hoc training sessions to develop their understanding of Share/ skills in Trusteeship
- One board away day per year, dedicated to strategic planning and held in or around the local area.

Trustees will be asked to join one of the board sub-committees. These all usually meet on Monday evenings.

Trustees are also invited to attend Share's various events which may include Annual Conference, Open Day and Awards Event.

We are keen to encourage participation from a wide and diverse trustee catchment and would hope to be able to support Trustees with specific needs.

Commitment from Share

Whilst this is an unpaid, voluntary role, out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

It is not necessary to have previous board level experience, as a personalised induction programme, training, support and mentorship will be provided.

Person specification

Each trustee must have:

- commitment to the vision of Share
- willingness to meet the minimum time commitment
- integrity
- strategic vision
- good, independent judgement
- the ability to think creatively
- willingness to speak their mind
- understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- the ability to work effectively as a member of a team and to take decisions for the good of Share.

Previous board/trustee experience is not necessary and we would welcome applications from all ages and backgrounds. Trustees must be eligible under charity law and companies law to stand as charity trustees and company directors.

References

The Charities Act 2011

Charity Governance Code

www.gettingonboard.org

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