

Citizen Academic Project



University of
Chester

Welcome

Being a Trustee is a responsibility, but it is one of the most satisfying things I have done. It gives you a chance to give something back to your community in a way that brings benefits to all parties. You will have skills that can be used by community groups, social enterprises, charities and faith groups and are greatly appreciated.

These organisations have often been created by passionate people who want to make a difference to the people and places where they live. They can't have all the skills needed to bring their vision to life and they will need help and support to do those things all organisations need to do, whether they are not for profit or not, that includes organising finances, looking after health and safety, putting together operations and researching their market to name just a few. But don't think these relationships are one sided. You will find the people involved in the community organisations have something to teach trustees and even more so the beneficiaries of their services. You will increase your understanding of what's happening at grass roots level in your own community and see the issues and problems, as well as the solutions, in all places at all times.

Please consider being a Trustee. I can promise you a satisfying and interesting journey. You might learn something as well.



Gary Cliffe,
Co Chair of Cheshire West Voluntary Action

Read more about Gary's role as a Trustee:
<https://chesterva.org.uk/case-studies/sharing-skills-and-expertise-with-the-voluntary-and-community-sector/>

Why be a Trustee?

There are over one million trustees in the UK working with nearly 200,000 charities. And these numbers are constantly growing. With more and more charities popping up every day, there's a constant need to recruit talented and enthusiastic people to help shape the direction of a charity. So why couldn't one of those people be you?

Being a Trustee means leading the organisation. It's a vital and stimulating role, ensuring the charity is not only reaching its goals, but is forward-thinking and running as efficiently as possible. Working closely with the CEO, trustees set the direction of the organisation. They're strategic, and they're an absolutely necessary part of any charity.

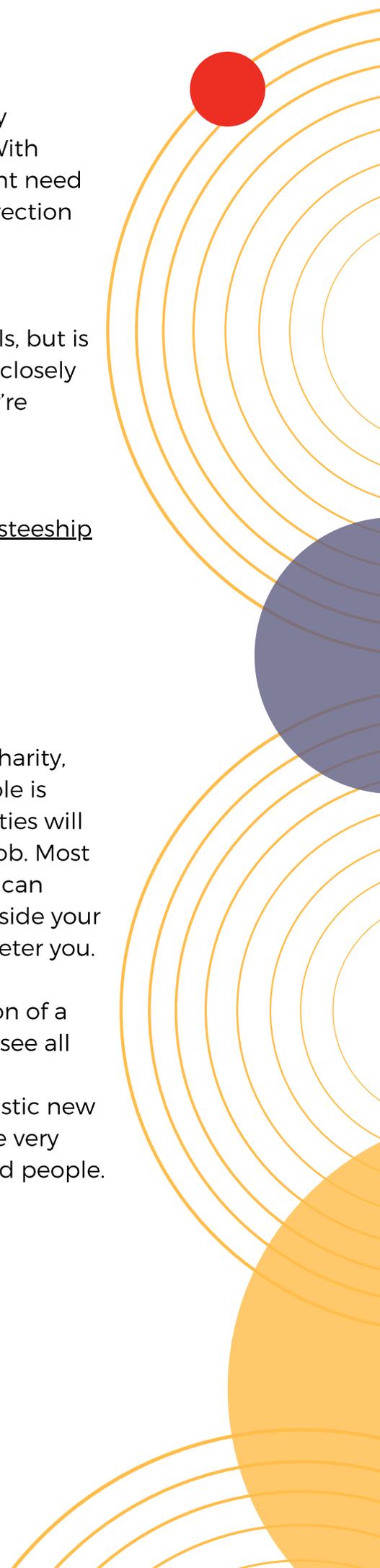
- Read more about the benefits of being a Trustee here: <https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/blog/five-career-benefits-trusteeship>

What is a charity Trustee?

A Trustee is a volunteer who serves on the governing body of a charity, responsible for the general running of the organisation. As the role is voluntary, it's not generally a paid position (although many charities will pay things like expenses and travel). But it's also not a full-time job. Most trustee boards meet monthly or even quarterly. That means you can pursue trustee positions at several charities and even do it alongside your regular full-time position. But don't let the fact that it's unpaid deter you.

It's such an amazing experience being able to shape the direction of a charity – just think about how rewarding it is when you actually see all your work yielding positive results. Becoming a trustee is both a rewarding way to help your community and a way to learn fantastic new skills. It's an invigorating and dynamic role, which puts you at the very heart of a charity and its work, liaising with a team of like-minded people.

- Read FAQs here <https://chesterva.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Trustee-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf>



What are a Trustee's responsibilities?

First and foremost, trustees make the crucial decisions. They have oversight over the charity's activities, funds, and future – in other words, they're in charge of the charity's affairs. Some of these responsibilities can include the following:

- Helping the CEO lead the organisation.
- Contributing skills and expertise to an important cause.
- Leading the strategic development of the organisation.
- Making sure the charity is delivering its goals.
- Looking after the organisation's finances.
- Taking care of the charity's assets.

Because the Trustee board is responsible for such a broad overview of the organisation, most boards look to bring in people with a range of different expertise and skills – from finance and marketing to legal and HR. It's a great idea for trustees to do some strong research on the charity before they start. Many charities will offer relevant training to support their new Trustees or allow them to sit in on a trustee meeting as an observer.

- More about the duties of a Trustee here:
<https://chesterva.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/essential-trustee-pic.pdf>

