

Trustee Terms of Reference

Exceptional trustees are what make the difference. This document aims to share the commitment expected of you as a trustee for Oxfordshire Community Foundation, so that you are clear about your duties and responsibilities.

1. Key responsibilities

As Board members, all trustees will:

- Act as ambassadors for the organisation in the wider community, taking every opportunity to promote the community foundation's key messages and values
- Make an important contribution to the foundation's fund development activities, and maintain an awareness of the foundation's priorities and objectives
- Hear the voices and views of key stakeholders, especially beneficiaries
- Have an interest in the local community and in the issues of social concern facing Oxfordshire
- Act with integrity and avoid any activities that would be contrary to the interests of the community foundation, or create a conflict of interest
- Develop the strategic direction of the foundation, ensuring it has the resources to deliver its mission and objectives
- Give adequate time and energy to the duties of being a trustee, using their skills and experience to the benefit of Oxfordshire Community Foundation
- Work in partnership with the CEO and office team, responding promptly to communication
- Appoint a Chair and work collectively with the Board
- Attend and contribute to Board meetings, committees and task groups, and review papers in preparation for any consent and discussion agenda items
- Review their own, the Board's and the foundation's effectiveness, and take any necessary steps to ensure that all continue to work well.

2. Personal gifts of time and money

On joining the Board of Oxfordshire Community Foundation, all trustees are committed to the promotion of philanthropy in Oxfordshire, and to building our charitable funds for the present and future needs of the county.

Whilst appreciating that all Board members give freely of their time and expertise, each trustee is expected to make an annual donation appropriate to his or her circumstances, thus demonstrating a tangible commitment to the work and ethos of the community foundation. This simple principle also ensures that potential donors are aware that those seeking donations from them have already made one themselves.

3. Fund development

The essence of a community foundation is the creation of an endowed fund. It is therefore expected that each trustee has a role to play in the proactive development of this fund. This does not necessarily mean by direct face-to-face fundraising; it can also be achieved by attending events to meet prospective donors and other key contacts, or introducing colleagues to the foundation.

4. Governance

Oxfordshire Community Foundation is governed by the Charities Act 2011, which defines the legal framework for a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), and the responsibilities of its charity trustees.

Trustees must familiarise themselves with all clauses included in our CIO constitution dated 1st March 2013, and must accept ultimate responsibility as appropriate for directing the affairs of the charity, and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and delivering its charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public.

Each trustee is expected to ensure excellent governance of the foundation, including effective management and monitoring controls, reduction of risk, and compliance with charity law and UKCF QA standards.

5. Appointment

The constitution of Oxfordshire Community Foundation dictates that trustee appointment should be made by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of charity trustees. In selecting individuals for appointment, the charity trustees must consider the skills, knowledge and experience needed for effective administration of the CIO.

6. Length of appointment

Every trustee must be appointed for a term of three years. After this time, they may remain in post for a further three years, with a maximum term of six years, after which they must stand down.

7. Attendance at meetings

Trustees are required to participate in particular aspects of the foundation's activities through membership of one or more strategic sub-groups or committees, eg Financial Strategy, Grants Panels, or a specific project committee.

Trustees are expected to attend Board meetings and their relevant committee meetings regularly, and to ensure they are fully prepared by reading the papers provided. Trustees should not be absent from three consecutive Board meetings, except in exceptional circumstances.



8. Trustee away days/annual Think Tank Day

Established community foundations often hold trustee away days: an opportunity for all trustees to reinforce relationships and motivation, and to brainstorm ideas and any relevant issues. Trustees are encouraged to recognise the value of such an exercise. OCF have established the concept of an annual Think Tank Day to assess the strategic progress of the organisation.

It is also expected that during their period of office, trustees will attend at least one national UK Community Foundations conference or symposium in order to gain a broader understanding of, and draw on the experience of, other community foundations.

9. Trustee support

In order to ensure that trustees are able to carry out their duties effectively, the foundation undertakes to:

- Offer an induction to the community foundation, which will include a personal toolkit, the opportunity to attend various sub-groups, and personal meetings with the Chair and Chief Executive
- Ensure that Board papers are circulated electronically in advance of meetings so that trustees can prepare
- Ensure that trustees are kept up to date on matters relating to the foundation
- Provide occasional papers of relevance or interest to the role of the trustee
- Identify relevant personal development seminars/training events/networking opportunities, and provide suggestions for attendance to support the ongoing training of individual trustees.

