



Role Description: Chair of Trustees

Whitfield Tabernacle Trust

About the Trust

The Whitfield Tabernacle Trust was established in 2017 by local residents committed to saving the derelict Tabernacle in Kingswood. Phase I of restoration completed in 2022, and Phase II – the internal fit out and conversion – began in 2025. The new venue, The Tabernacle Kingswood, is expected to open in late Autumn 2026 as a vibrant community, cultural and heritage asset.

The Chair of Trustees plays a pivotal role in ensuring the Trust fulfils its charitable purpose, provides strategic leadership, and guides the transition from restoration project to a sustainable, community focused venue.

Core Responsibilities of All Trustees

- Ensure the Trust has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction, and remains focused on achieving them.
- Act as guardians of the Trust's assets, ensuring their proper use, security and application.
- Ensure the Trust complies with all legal, regulatory, charitable and financial requirements.
- Set overall policy, define goals, set targets and evaluate performance.
- Use independent judgement, acting legally and in good faith to promote the Trust's interests.
- Uphold Nolan's Seven Principles of Public Life.
- Safeguard the good name and values of the Trust.
- Ensure effective and efficient administration and financial stability.
- Protect and manage the property of the Trust, including appointing and monitoring the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO).
- Participate actively in Board meetings, events and activities.

Additional Responsibilities of the Chair of Trustees

Strategic Leadership

- Provide clear strategic leadership to the Board throughout the completion of the Tabernacle development and its transition into a fully operational community venue.
- Ensure the Trust's strategy, business plan and activities align with its charitable objectives.
- Oversee the development and delivery of a viable commercial and community focused operating model.

Governance & Board Effectiveness

- Ensure compliance with the Trust's governing documents, policies, charity law and UK law.
- Lead the Board in fulfilling its duties, maintaining high standards of governance and ensuring accountability.
- Create a positive, collaborative and effective Board culture.
- Conduct regular trustee appraisals and ensure a diverse mix of skills, experience and perspectives.
- Lead on Board renewal, succession planning and recruitment of new trustees.
- Work with the Trust Secretary and Treasurer to agree agendas, minutes and effective meeting management.
- Ensure that all the required information to support the Agenda has been provided to those attending a meeting.
- Opportunity to apply innovation and flexibility to the governance framework to accommodate new ways of working whilst the Trust is in transition stage .
- Chair all meetings of the Trust to ensure that all decisions that need to be made are made, the views of all those present are considered when making that decision, and it is understood what decision has been made.

Financial Oversight & Fundraising

- Ensure the Trust maintains sound financial health, with appropriate systems for financial accountability.
- Oversee fundraising proposals and support the promotion of the Trust to potential donors, partners and sponsors.
- Ensure resources are applied exclusively in pursuit of the Trust's charitable objectives.

Stakeholder & Partnership Engagement

- Build and maintain strong relationships with key partners including South Gloucestershire Council, WECA, Historic England and community organisations.
- Represent the Trust externally, acting as an ambassador for its mission and values.
- Use personal and professional networks to support programming, partnerships and future venue activity.

Heritage, Safety & Compliance

- Ensure the Tabernacle adheres to appropriate heritage conservation principles for a Grade I listed building.
- Ensure the venue meets modern health & safety, accessibility and public use standards.
- Support the development of policies and procedures that balance heritage protection with community use.

Person Specification

Essential Skills & Experience

- Proven experience in a senior leadership or management role, ideally with Board or charity governance experience.
- Strong understanding of charity governance, trustee duties and regulatory compliance.
- Strategic planning capability and the ability to lead an organisation through change.
- Excellent communication, influencing and networking skills.
- Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Integrity, objectivity, accountability and sound independent judgement.
- Ability to foster effective teamwork and motivate others.

Desirable Skills

- Experience with capital projects, heritage conservation, community engagement or grant funded programmes.
- Knowledge of property management, event management, performing arts or community asset development.
- Strong financial literacy.

Personal Qualities

- Diplomatic, approachable and trustworthy.
- Able to build strong relationships internally and externally.
- Committed to the Trust's aims and to serving the Kingswood community.

Eligibility

Individuals are disqualified from acting as a trustee if they have:

- An unspent conviction for an offence involving deception or dishonesty
- An undischarged bankruptcy order
- Been removed as a trustee by the courts or Charity Commission
- Been disqualified from being a company director

Terms of Office

- Trustees are appointed for a maximum term of 12 years, subject to rotation policies.
- Trustees are expected to serve a minimum of 3 years, though they may resign at any time.
- The role is voluntary, with reasonable expenses reimbursed.

Time Commitment

- Chairing monthly Board meetings, the AGM and occasional meetings with Members.
- Attendance at additional meetings relating to finance, programming, community engagement, media, and site visits.

- Participation in events, presentations and activities organised by the Board.
- Commitment to ongoing learning and development in relation to the role.

Benefits

- A unique opportunity to lead a significant heritage and community project at a pivotal moment.
- The chance to shape the launch and future success of a major new cultural and community venue.
- Development of high level governance and strategic leadership skills.
- Working with an enthusiastic and skilled group of trustees, members, supporters and volunteers.