

Voluntary **Action** Islington

TRUSTEES RECRUITMENT PACK

Introduction from the Chair

Do you value the work of local charities and voluntary bodies? Do you have the drive and commitment to help Islington communities to thrive? If so, you may be interested in becoming a Trustee of Voluntary Action Islington (VAI).

The London Borough of Islington is a very vibrant and diverse borough with a population of just over 216,000. It is one of the most densely populated boroughs in England and Wales with a demography identifying themselves as 43% Christians, 8% Muslims, 5% other religion whilst 49% identified as having no religion. The ethnicity breakdown is as follows: 48% White British/Irish; 20% Other White, 10% Asian/Asian British; 12% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; and 10% Mixed. More information about the demography of Islington can be found on the Office for National Statistics [website](#). The population of Islington is expected to grow in the coming years.

Islington is sixth most deprived London Borough. A recent study by [Trust for London](#) found that over a third (34%) of Islington residents live in poverty which is above the London average. The COVID-19 pandemic and the Cost of Living Crisis are two of the biggest challenges facing the residents of Islington. A breakdown of the current situation is available on the [Islington Strategic Commissioning and Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2021 – 2024](#).

Voluntary Action Islington (VAI) has been operating for 50 years in Islington as the ‘umbrella’ organisation for the not-for-profit sector providing a wide range of capacity building support and organisational development to local voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise sector organisations (VCFSE) both directly and by working with partners. VAI has also been running the nationally accredited Volunteer Centre Islington for over 13 years, delivering a borough-wide brokerage service that provides a vital link between local organisations and local residents who wish to volunteer.

Another important aspect of our work is bringing together networks of local VCFSE organisations - encouraging collaboration on specific priority areas to promote a fairer Islington by reducing inequality.

To deliver against VAI’s mission to strengthen our local VCFSE to deliver services effectively and sustainably and to promote social justice VAI has developed a new 3-year strategy (2021-24) with the following 5 strategic aims:

- To empower Islington’s communities
- To support the growth and development of voluntary and community organisations
- To facilitate a stronger VCFSE to influence policy
- To strengthen volunteering in the community
- To work in partnership across the VCFSE and all sectors

VAI will deliver against these 5 aims by providing leadership and support to the VCFSE to ensure that it is:

- Independent and sustainable
- Better connected and networked
- Promoted and championed
- Vocal and influential

- Adaptable and effective

VAI is part of the Fairer Together Partnership which brings together a range of organisations in Islington to confront the challenges local people are facing.

VAI recently held a Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) conference in May and a Summit for Islington Small Groups and Grassroots Organisations in July 2022. These two events highlighted challenges such as poverty and health inequality, gaps in connectivity and joint working between the VCFSE and statutory sectors resulting in unmet needs of the local communities whilst improved infrastructure and workforce development is needed to support the VCFSE to work more effectively with the statutory sector.

It is therefore a very interesting time to become a trustee of Voluntary Action Islington and support us in developing a thriving community!

We are looking for up to five new trustees as several of our trustees are coming to their end of terms in the next few months. We recently carried out a skills audit of the current trustees and are looking for people with expertise in particular areas such as fundraising, policy and community development, HR & legal, property management, health and social care, public health, and volunteering.

We are also very keen to increase the level of diversity amongst our Trustees, and so we are particularly encouraging people from Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic, and Refugee (BAMER) backgrounds, LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities to apply.

In the remainder of this pack, you will find information about what being a VAI trustee will entail, what skills and attributes we are looking for in our new trustees, and an application form for you to tell us about yourself. More information about VAI is available on our website, www.vai.org.uk.

The timetable for recruitment is as follows:

- Deadline for applications: 30 November 2022
- Formal appointment of new trustees will take place in late December 2022 or early January 2023 and will be led by our Vice-Chair Emma Hutchins.
- **We will be reviewing applications as they come in and will interview people on a rolling basis.**

If you would like an informal discussion about the role, please contact Navinder Kaur, CEO, either via email at recruitment@vai.org.uk or telephone on 020 7832 5801.

I look forward to receiving your application soon.

Joe Irvin
Chair of Voluntary Action Islington

Why become a trustee at VAI?

- a) **Fulfilment of a great cause:** as a trustee you will play an integral part in the good governance of VAI, not only ensuring that the organisation remains viable and sustainable but ensuring that it adheres closely to its mission and works in the interest of its members which are community groups and grassroots organisations providing information and advice support services to the local communities affected by inequality and poverty due to the cost of living crisis and other challenges such as rising cost of housing, childcare, etc.
- b) **Strategic experience:** being a VAI trustee is a fantastic way of getting a head start on acquiring strategic experience. You will have the opportunity to hone your critical thinking, problem-solving and analytical skills as well as developing strategic sensibilities and team working skills.
- c) **Community & professional networks:** as a VAI trustee, you will be surrounding yourself with a wide variety of community and professional contacts which will open your community and professional network in all kinds of unforeseen and advantageous ways. You will learn about community engagement and social investment and impact.
- d) **Developing skills and experience:** as a VAI trustee, you will gain a clearer idea of your own professional strengths and weaknesses whilst learning altogether new and transferable skills which will increase your versatility, giving you confidence in your existing abilities while pushing your boundaries of expertise. We will be providing induction and training to all new trustees.
- e) **Improve your CV and enhance your professional development:** getting involved as a VAI trustee will provide professional development from learning how organisations are run, to planning finances, and attending meetings. This experience can be the perfect boost to your CV and set you apart.

'I have been a trustee for VAI for over 8 years and enjoyed it immensely. When I joined, I was initially nervous and thought, what could I possibly offer, and was pleasantly surprised that I could provide first-hand knowledge on the experiences of residents and support the organisation in a number of ways from talking to volunteers, visiting other community groups and really helping residents on how to set up their own groups to address a need or service they feel is needed.

The other board members are very friendly, and the meetings are engaging, not filled with jargon, serious but not dull. The other trustees are from such a wide background that there are always different views which adds to your experience and learning.

From being on the board of trustees it has given me the confidence of being on the board of other organisations that I am passionate about such as the Hate Crime Forum and Safer Neighbourhood Board.'

Colin Adams, VAI Trustee

Role description for Trustee board members

Voluntary Action Islington (VAI) is a membership organisation that champions and strengthens the voluntary sector and volunteering in Islington. We currently have over 500 members ranging from small groups to large organisations. We provide a range of capacity building and organisational development support through information, advice, and training. We coordinate various local networks and provide a voice to the local sector, representing them where appropriate. VAI is also the accredited Volunteer Centre for Islington supporting volunteers and organisations through a brokerage service and capacity building.

1. Who are the charity's trustees?

Under section 177 of the Charities Act 2011, the legal definition of a charity trustee is 'the persons having the general control and management of the administration of a charity'. For VAI the charity trustees are the board of directors of the trustee board. The board of trustees is the governing body of the charity and trustees have ultimate legal responsibility for the direction and strategic leadership of the charity. More information on the Charities Act 2011 and the duty of a trustee is available on <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/25/contents>. A collection of the Charity Commission's 'CC' detailed guidance publications for trustees, from CC3 to CC49 is available on the [government website](#).

VAI is a registered company and therefore its trustees are also its company directors.

The VAI trustee board comprises up to 12 appointed trustees including the Chair and the Treasurer. At this point, we are looking for three new trustees to join us with expertise in fundraising, health and social care, public health, volunteering, and community development. However, if you think you have other expertise which will be suitable for VAI, please do get in touch with us.

2. The purpose and role of a VAI trustee

As a trustee, you will be responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of VAI, developing its aims, objectives, and goals in accordance with company guidelines, legal and regulatory guidelines. The trustee will carry out business on behalf of VAI and will help to protect its wealth and assets. The trustee will be legally responsible for the assets and debts of VAI.

Trustees do not usually do the day to day running of VAI and instead they play the role of a 'critical friend' to the CEO and the staff. They are the ambassador of VAI and represents VAI at the local community level.

Trustee can make the role as exciting as they would like to. He/she/they are the ambassador of VAI, and we would like our trustee to be very involved in the strategic work of VAI in the borough.

3. Duties of a trustee board member

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have, to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, evaluation, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

The duties of a trustee board member are to:

- ensure that VAI complies with its governing document (its Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- ensure that VAI pursues its objects as defined in its governing document
- ensure VAI applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, i.e., it must not spend money on activities which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be
- monitor the financial position and ensure that it operates within its means and that there are clear lines of accountability for financial management
- make sure that the administration of the company is carried out efficiently
- scrutinise board papers and other communications
- contribute actively to the board of trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to VAI, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- safeguard the good name and values of VAI
- ensure the financial stability of VAI
- protect and manage the property of VAI and to ensure the proper investment of VAI's funds
- represent VAI at strategic meetings and events
- act as an ambassador of VAI and promote VAI services
- appoint and support the chief executive officer and monitor his/her performance.

Trustees are required to:

- declare any conflict of interest while carrying out their duties
- accept collective responsibility for the decisions and actions of the Board
- abide by all VAI policies and procedures
- and treat each other with respect.

4. Time commitment

VAI provide induction and training to all new trustees. Trustees are expected to attend induction sessions at VAI prior to their first board meeting. The time commitment for induction may vary for each new trustee depending on how much he/she/they would like to know about VAI, i.e., meeting with individual staff, attending/observing meetings, etc.

Trustees are expected to attend all board meetings. An additional meeting each year may allotted to strategic planning, held during normal office hours. This tends to be either a half day or full day event. Moreover, there will be other engagements in between Board meetings and trustees are expected from time to time to attend strategic meetings and events to represent VAI. Trustees will be notified in advance about such meetings and events.

- Board meetings are held four times a year from 6.00pm- 8.00pm and are either at VAI's offices or via video conferencing
- Papers are distributed one week in advance of meetings
- Trustees are invited to the annual general meeting (AGM) of VAI, which takes at 6.00pm on the first Wednesday in November, in London.
- Trustees can claim out of pocket expenses incurred in travelling to meetings and events.

5. Person specification

Each trustee must have:

- a commitment to the vision and mission of VAI
- a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- integrity and honesty
- good, independent judgement
- an ability to think creatively
- a willingness to speak their mind
- an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities of trusteeship
- an ability to work effectively as a member of a team and to take decisions for the good of VAI

The board of trustees collectively needs knowledge, skills, and experience in:

- governance
- health and safety including risks and safeguarding
- financial management, fundraising and income generation
- community development and engagement
- public policy and public affairs
- national and local voluntary and community sector
- national and local government and statutory bodies
- digital transformation
- human resource management
- volunteer management and brokerage
- collaborative partnerships
- social investment and impact

It is important to note that we do not expect everyone to have the knowledge, skills and experience listed above and be an expert in everything. This is a collective approach and each trustee is able to contribute on areas he/she/they are comfortable with. We would like our board of trustees to be as diverse as possible in terms of experience, skills and knowledge, cultures, and backgrounds.

For more information or if you would like to have an informal chat regarding the role of VAI trustees, please contact: Navinder Kaur, CEO, either via email at recruitment@vai.org.uk or telephone 020 7832 5801.

Voluntary **Action** Islington

Application for Trusteeship

Personal Details	
Name:	
Home address:	
Daytime telephone number:	
Email address:	
Current occupation:	
Other voluntary positions currently held:	
Are you or an organisation that you are associated with (as a trustee or employee) a member of Voluntary Action Islington?	
If 'Yes', please provide details:	
Please tell us where/how you heard about this position:	
Referees	
Please give the details of two referees, who we can contact if you are offered a Trustee position.	
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Telephone:	Telephone:
Email:	Email:
Relationship to you:	Relationship to you:

Skills / Experience

In addition of providing your CV, please use this space to tell us why you are interested in this position and what you would bring to the role (1 - 2 A4 pages).

Prompts: tell us about your passion for the borough of Islington, your involvement in your local community and your skills and perspectives that would help the work of VAI.

I hereby submit my application for trusteeship of Voluntary Action Islington and confirm that:

- I am committed to achieving the aims and objectives of Voluntary Action Islington.
- I understand the responsibilities and liabilities I would be taking on in becoming a trustee of Voluntary Action Islington and agree to devote the necessary time and effort to my trusteeship.
- I am not disqualified from acting as a trustee under Part 9 Section 178 of the Charities Act 2011 and/or as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.
- If I am not already a member of Voluntary Action Islington either as an individual or through association with an organisation that is a member, I will become a member before being formally appointed to the position of Trustee.

Signed:

Date:

Please complete this application form and return it with a copy of your CV and an Equalities Monitoring Form to: recruitment@vai.org.uk

- Deadline for applications: 30 November 2022
- **We will be reviewing applications as they come in and will interview people on a rolling basis.**