



Chair of the Board of Trustees Application Pack

About Us

Building Futures East is a unique Community Development organisation located on Walker Riverside in the East End of Newcastle. Established in 2007, we work with people in the 20% most disadvantaged communities North of Tyne. We take a "people and place" based approach to our work, improving the quality of life and opportunity for individuals whilst supporting fragile communities to build their social and economic resilience.

We are an anchor organisation in the East End of Newcastle occupying a valued place of trust and confidence within our community. We seek to empower communities by listening and responding to the expressed needs of residents, offering a range of interconnected, intensive, complimentary services.

Our Values

Building Futures East is a strongly value driven organisation. Through our work we want to help influence positive change through provision of compassionate interventions that seek to address social and economic inequality. We are motivated by a desire for social justice, by a desire to ensure that everyone, regardless of where they come from or what their background is, has an opportunity to improve their life opportunities.

We believe in what we do, we believe in the value of what we do and its contribution to supporting the creation of resilient and vibrant communities. Our work starts with the individual and through this individual transformation and growth, it radiates across personal and family networks and through communities.

We believe in:

- Involving our communities and being accountable to them
- Operating with integrity and respect in all of our relationships
- Setting ourselves high standards in quality and ensuring that they are met
- Embracing diversity and caring for and improving all of our people
- Creating a challenging and rewarding workplace
- Developing innovative and best value solutions
- Sharing knowledge
- Promoting collaboration and partnership across all areas of activity and learning from those with whom we work

Our Team, Service Delivery and Funding

We currently have a highly skilled, dynamic team of 13 who bring with them a wealth of skills and experience that interconnect to offer a robust service for community members.



Our CEO is supported by 2 Managers who are responsible for ensuring quality operational delivery across our projects.

Whilst not exhaustive, the services we offer include benefits advice and support with making welfare benefit claims, debt and budgeting information, employment and careers advice, basic skills training, point of care health checks, therapeutic wellbeing interventions including craft, exercise and gardening groups, vocational skills courses including garment manufacturing and upcycling courses, confidence building workshops and specialist domestic abuse support.

Established at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, our foodbank operates from our main site in Walker and is where we coordinate weekly deliveries of food parcels to families in crisis in Walker and Byker. We rely upon a dedicated team of volunteers who assist us in processing food donations, preparing parcels and making the deliveries each week. Connected to our food support, we are developing our community gardening project and are converting a double decker bus into a large greenhouse to allow us to scale up our food production.

All of our work is person centred, allowing us to work holistically with individuals, many of whom face multiple challenges directly attributable to the impact of poverty and disadvantage. All strands of activity complement each other and have evolved from direct consultation and conversation with community members, ensuring that what we offer meets need, builds trust and instils hope. In all that we do, we actively seek to help our community find and use their voice to influence positive, sustainable change.

Currently, most of our services are funded via grants received from various grant making bodies, both locally and nationally. We have a contract to deliver National Careers Service advice and guidance and we are actively seeking to increase levels of unrestricted donations through support from the public and from corporate donors. We have experienced success with crowd-funding campaigns since April 2020 and continue to explore how we can utilise these approaches to best effect in order to boost our wider fundraising.

Some highlighted achievements across all of our projects over the last 12 months are:

- 1300+ individuals accessed or benefitted from our services both directly and indirectly
- Walker residents were supported to maximise household income by over £302,000 through receipt of support with budgeting, benefit claims and submitting applications for household support payments
- 159 women completed the Freedom Programme, a domestic abuse recovery programme
- Over 380 residents, predominantly from Newcastle and North Tyneside received careers advice, mentoring and employment support

We constantly strive to raise our profile and enhance wider awareness of the importance and impact that our work has within our communities. This includes capitalising upon the



ways we use our social media channels to promote and showcase the vital nature of our work and also to celebrate our achievements with the wider public and potential new volunteers and donors.

Our Governance

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales: reg no 1125555. It is also a registered company listed on Companies House: 06261491

We currently have 10 Trustees who are also Directors of the limited company. Over the last 18 months the organisation has seen some significant positive changes to its governance and leadership. The previous CEO and funder of the charity retired in December 2022 and around this time a number of long-standing board members also chose to retire. During 2023, the Chair of Trustees and new CEO commenced work to increase Board membership, diversity, representation and skills. This piece of work was hugely successful and we have attracted enthusiastic, passionate new members who are ardent supporters of our work and whose values align with those of the organisation. For the first time since the charity was founded, we have board members with lived experience of living and working in deprived communities such as Walker. This offers a richness and valuable insight to the importance of our work and the impact it has upon those we support.

Our new members bring a broad range of skills to the table, although many are new to taking on the role of a Trustee and are therefore on a learning journey in terms of settling into their roles and understanding their responsibilities. The new Chair of Trustees will therefore work closely with the Board and CEO in the coming months to continue this governance development journey, providing guidance and leadership as is appropriate.

Who we are looking for

This is an exciting opportunity to lead the Board at a time of significant growth and new opportunities for the organisation. As Chair, you will ensure the Board functions effectively to meet the charitable aims of the organisation, ensuring it is compliant with its governing document, charity and company law and all other pertinent legislation and regulations. The role of Chair also requires connection with the CEO outside of standard board meetings, acting as a key sounding board for them as and when required and ensuring they have adequate oversight of key operational performance areas.

Following a recent skills audit, the key skills, experience and attributes we are looking for in a new Chair include:

- Experience of how boards, leadership teams and sub-committees operate
- Awareness of charity governance and the operational, financial and legal responsibilities of an effective Board of Trustees
- Strong leadership and communication skills with an ability to motivate other Trustees and the staff team to achieve organisational objectives



- A passion, commitment and desire for social justice for all, particularly for those living in our most deprived communities

We welcome and encourage applications from all sections of our community regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, or marital status.

Commitment Level

Our Board currently meet around 6 times per year. In addition to these meetings we are in the process of establishing a number of working sub-groups that will focus upon priority areas as identified by the Board, thereby utilising the skills of individual Trustees to maximum effect in support of the organisational strategic plans.

Please note that this role is unremunerated.

How to Apply

To express interest in applying for this position, please send your CV along with an accompanying document explaining how you feel you meet the person specification to admin@buildingfutureseast.org by 22nd July 24.

Applications will be reviewed and those of interest to the panel may be invited to interview which we anticipate being held during August/September.

If you would like further information and the opportunity to talk further about the role, please contact Ashleigh Wright who is the lead Trustee for the recruitment of our new Chair of Trustees. She can be contacted via email: AWright@westray.co.uk

Further information about our work can be accessed via the following web and social media platforms:

www.buildingfutureseast.org

X (formerly Twitter):

@bfnewcastle @eastendwomen @SewSisters_

Facebook:

Building Futures East Lifting Neighbourhoods Together – Walker

East End Women at Building Futures East Sew Sisters Studio

Instagram:

@ bfnewcastle eastendwomen sewsistersstudio