

## Vacancies for board members of Community Rail Network – four places (including potential re-elections)

Community Rail Network is currently inviting applications to the Board to play a role in shaping the future direction of the organisation and community rail more broadly. Subject to our application to become a Charitable Company being passed, board members would be both charity trustees and directors of a limited company.

### Duties and responsibilities of board members

Board members are expected to assess risks and opportunities, make informed decisions, and remain accountable for delegated matters enabling the charity to operate efficiently and stay aligned with its legal and strategic responsibilities.

The main responsibilities are to:

- Fulfil the duties of a charity trustee and director of a limited company, in line with our [Articles of Association](#) and any Community Rail Network byelaws that may be agreed from time to time. This includes acting within the powers as set out in our [Articles of Association](#); promoting the success of the organisation for the benefit of its members as a whole; exercising independent judgement and reasonable care, skill and diligence; avoiding conflicts of interest; not accepting benefits from third parties; and declaring interests in proposed or existing transactions.
- Be responsible for the overall management of the organisation, ensuring compliance with its objects and relevant legislation and exercise oversight of the organisation as a whole, its success, impact and sustainability. Lead the long-term strategic direction ensuring appropriate strategies, policies, processes and frameworks are in place.
- Ensure the Board's business is carried out in line with legal and regulatory requirements and its practices are periodically reviewed and benchmarked against the Charity Governance Code.
- Define and agree the strategic aims and objectives of the organisation and approve and monitor the strategy and any associated frameworks and annual delivery plans.
- Act as custodians of the organisation's assets, ensuring they are used only in accordance with Community Rail Network's objectives, and to ensure financial sustainability.
- Approve HR policies, terms and conditions, and any major changes or deviations from established procedures.
- Ensure a risk management policy is in place in order to identify and control risks, and to annually review this system to ensure it is appropriate and effective.
- Ensure the organisation meets and aims to exceed its legal and moral responsibilities, including for equality and diversity, health, safety and wellbeing, and sustainability.

As per our Articles of Association, board members are generally appointed for three years, renewable on re-election (for a maximum of three consecutive terms). Board membership is voluntary, with remuneration only of agreed travel and subsistence expenses.

The board meets around every six weeks, either online or in person. In person meetings, if not connected with an awayday, are usually in London. Online meetings typically start at 09:30 and finish by 12:00. Meetings in person typically start at 11:30 and finish at 15:00. Occasional additional conference call meetings are arranged as needed.

We will start the new Board year with a two-day meeting in the north of England, to be confirmed, but likely to be based in Preston on Tuesday 25 and Wednesday 26 November 2025. We also have an awayday every summer, usually in July or August. This is a two-day event and is combined with a Board meeting and a visit to a community rail initiative.

## Person specification

Applicants for the role must be a representative of a Community Rail Partnership (CRP), station adoption/friends group, community station member, or an individual or honorary member of Community Rail Network. No more than one board member can represent the same member or member group, see our current list of board members [here](#). At least one place on the Board will be reserved for a qualifying representative from each of the nations of the UK.

We believe in equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and encourage board applications from people with a range of backgrounds and experience. We would particularly welcome applications from women; ethnic minority; disabled and LGBTQ+ candidates, as they are currently under-represented on our board. We also welcome those with experience of corporate/third sector fundraising, third sector governance, and finance. To be effective, the Community Rail Network board aims to ensure that all board members display the skills outlined below (recommended by the Non-Executive Director Network) and we ask those standing for election to make clear their possession of these:

- Integrity and high ethical standards
- Sound judgement and willingness to challenge
- Interpersonal skills, including listening, persuasiveness, ability to communicate ideas, sensitivity, openness and awareness of non-verbal communication, co-operation and team-working, facilitation skills
- Leadership and self-awareness, ability to gain respect and attention, confidence
- Critical thinking, creativity and strategic awareness, with the ability to take a wider, strategic view
- Business acumen, ability to identify new business opportunities, embrace change and innovation
- Ability to assimilate, assess and analyse information, especially financial information
- Political astuteness, diplomatic, able to deal with conflict
- Determination, with the tenacity and drive to succeed
- Keenness to gain new knowledge and skills to develop competences further

If individually or collectively board members identify that they have training or development needs related to their abilities to serve in their role as board members effectively this can be addressed, through internal coaching and support or external training.

## How to apply

For an informal discussion about the role prior to application, please contact our chair Jeremy Whitaker at [jeremy.whitaker@jeremywhitaker.com](mailto:jeremy.whitaker@jeremywhitaker.com). Potential applicants are encouraged to read minutes of previous board meetings, the [Articles of Association](#) and governance procedures (which can be obtained by contacting the chair). Potential applicants can also arrange, with the chair, to attend a board meeting (as an observer).

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Community Rail Network is in the process of applying for charitable status (we hope to know by the end of 2025 if this has been successful). If successful, board members (i.e. existing company directors) will also become charity trustees. The regulation and responsibilities for charity trustees is not too dissimilar to the responsibilities of [company directors](#), but we ask all prospective board members read the following Charity Commission guidance [The Essential Trustee: what you need to know, what you need to expect](#) (and check their eligibility<sup>1</sup>) to ensure that they are happy with the prospect of also becoming a charity trustee before submitting their application.

To apply, please complete in full the nomination form, which can be [downloaded from the Community Rail Network website](#), providing a 250 word summary of yourself and why you are suited to fulfil the role along with your relevant skills. If you are not an individual honorary member of Community Rail Network, then you will also need to indicate on the form which CRP, station friend/adoption group or community station member you represent. You will also need to supply the name of a proposer and seconder both of whom must be representatives of a Community Rail Network member organisation or individual honorary member. If you are seeking election as the representative of a CRP, station friend/adoption group or community station member, that body must be your proposer. Completed forms must be submitted by email to [patrick@communityrail.org.uk](mailto:patrick@communityrail.org.uk). **All applications must be received no later than 12:00 on Wednesday 15 October 2025.**

Your 250-word summary and the names of your proposer and seconder will be available on our website and you will also have the opportunity to make a short statement during Community Rail Network's AGM that is being held online on Wednesday 5 November 2025 (14.00-15.30). If there are more candidates standing for board places than there are vacancies, the board will be elected via an online member ballot held during the AGM. If there are less, or the same number, of candidates as board vacancies then it will be agreed at the AGM without the need for a vote. More details on the AGM are available on our [website](#).

The electorate is made up of each CRP, station adoption/friend group and community station membership (one vote per organisation in Community Rail Network membership), and our individual honorary members. If a vote is required, this will take place at the AGM and results will be announced post-meeting.

## Appendix 1: Articles of Association



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<sup>1</sup> See [section 3](#) of '[The Essential Trustee: What you need to know](#)'.