



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RECRUITMENT PACK



WELCOME

Congratulations on taking this first step towards an influential leadership role in Surrey's vibrant voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

By finding out more about our newly-vacant Chief Executive role you now have a rare opportunity to build on 75 years of service by Surrey Community Action to communities across our county.

I've lived and worked in Surrey throughout my life and have seen many changes, including the first major Local Government and NHS Reorganisations in 1974.

Surrey Community Action was a mere 25 years young at that time - now, 50 years further on, the familiar civic landscape is about to be transformed once again, as traditional grant funding gives way to income generation, addressing new needs through a range of services.

This is where our new Chief Executive will play a strategic role. We are looking for a creative, dynamic and entrepreneurial leader with empathy, flair and a vision of what Surrey Community Action could be when it reaches its centenary in 2050.

Local Government Reform (LGR) and devolution in Surrey gets under way this May with our first elections to the new East Surrey and West Surrey Councils. There will be challenges ahead for sure, but there will be real opportunities too.

We have started the process of reinventing Surrey Community Action to meet the new and changing needs of the people we serve and the VCSE sector we support. We know our direction of travel - but not yet the exact path we'll take to get there.

So, does this sound like the kind of challenge that you could rise to? If so, apply now and be prepared for a stimulating and rewarding journey where you'll be making a real and meaningful difference to Surrey's communities and the county's VSCE sector.

Good luck with your application.

Chris Stanton

Chair of Trustees



ABOUT

“Strengthening and Supporting Communities and the Voluntary Sector in Surrey”

Surrey Community Action supports Surrey’s voluntary sector, the diverse communities of Surrey, and other organisations who seek to work with either. We do this in four main ways:

- **Advocacy and Representation**

We ensure that non-voluntary sector stakeholders understand the value of our sector and how to work together to achieve shared objectives.

- **Services to the Voluntary Sector**

We provide services to Surrey’s voluntary sector that increase their effectiveness or fill gaps in their capability, capacity, and resilience.

- **Services to the Surrey’s Communities**

We provide services directly to Surrey’s communities that support community action and address unsupported needs.

- **Increasing Understanding**

We research issues, collate and analyse data and disseminate information necessary for the VCFS to survive and thrive.

We work on behalf of our wider stakeholders, defined as anyone that works with or alongside the voluntary sector and would benefit from a closer relationship or better understanding. Such stakeholders include Surrey County Council, Surrey’s district and borough councils (and the unitary authorities that will succeed both), parish councils, health, central government and other statutory bodies, plus private sector organisations and support structures.

Much of our work is with other community organisations, including community building management groups, voluntary car scheme organisers, councils, and others, but we also run projects and activities targeted at individuals within communities, such as fuel poverty advice, and support to Surrey’s Gypsy and Travellers, hence we have two strategic focus areas; the services to the voluntary sector that we provide, and our services to Surrey’s communities.

We provide business support services, predominantly to other voluntary sector organisations, including managing payroll, conducting DBS checks, and delivering training and events.

We also manage the ‘Astolat’ charity offices, providing high quality office accommodation and support to eight other VCFS organisations.

We have a specific interest in rural communities that face unique challenges compared to urban areas:

- Higher housing costs
- relative lack of facilities or less access to services and facilities,
- different structures in governance, different access to funding
- infrastructure support.



ABOUT

We collaborate with rural communities on community planning, community buildings, affordable housing, social and community enterprise and rural future proofing.

In late 2025, we commissioned consultants Shared Purpose to help us review our mission, vision, values and strategic priorities. Our new Chief Executive will join us at an ideal time to complete and implement this new strategy and direct Surrey Community Action into a bright future.

You can find more about what we do and how we do it on our website (www.surreyca.org.uk)

ABOUT THE ROLE

This is an exciting opportunity to lead a respected, purpose-driven organisation at a pivotal moment in its 75 year history.

As Chief Executive Officer, you will have the scope and authority to shape strategy, influence policy, empower Surrey's voluntary sector, and champion rural communities, working closely with a committed Board, and experienced staff team. You will be the organisation's lead ambassador, building trusted relationships with partners, funders and decision-makers, and ensuring the organisation's voice is heard at local, regional and national level.

You will also play a critical role in leading change and transformation within the charity – strengthening systems, diversifying income and evolving how the organisation works so it remains resilient, relevant and impactful in a fast-changing environment. This is a role for someone who enjoys balancing big-picture thinking with practical delivery, and who can bring people with them through periods of transition.

If you are motivated to improve the capability, capacity and resilience of the Surrey's voluntary sector, communities and residents; if you thrive in complex and changing stakeholder environments; and if you are excited by the challenge of leading an organisation through its next phase of growth and influence, this role is for you.

You will not be alone. You will be supported by a skilled Board of Trustees, a strong Management Team, including a Head of Communities and Development and Head of Finance, and an efficient and effective staff team.

No two days will be the same, but there are some core parts of this role.



ABOUT THE ROLE

Strategic Leadership & Organisational Direction

- Lead the delivery of a clear, compelling organisational strategy, adapting it in response to an evolving operating environment.
- Translate the strategy into actionable business plans, work programmes and measurable outcomes.
- Ensure the organisation remains agile, future-focused and well positioned within the voluntary and community sectors.
- Champion innovation and continuous improvement across all services, projects and ways of working.

Board Partnership & Governance

- Work collaboratively with the Board, providing high-quality insight, advice and assurance on strategy, finance, risk, governance and compliance.
- Support effective Board decision-making through clear reporting, analysis and professional guidance.
- Contribute to the development of a confident, skilled and engaged Board, encouraging active participation in strategic thinking and organisational development.

Leadership of People & Culture

- Lead, inspire and support the staff team through a transparent, inclusive and empowering management style.
- Create a high-performance culture rooted in trust, accountability, equality, diversity and wellbeing.
- Lead organisational change sensitively and effectively, ensuring staff are engaged, supported and aligned during periods of transition.
- Play an active role in recruitment, personal development, performance management and succession planning.
- Provide effective line management and support to the Management Team and core staff.

Change Management & Organisational Development

- Act as a skilled change manager, leading transformation in response to evolving funding landscapes, policy shifts, technology and community needs.
- Design and implement systems, structures and processes that strengthen organisational effectiveness and resilience.
- Balance strategic ambition with operational delivery, managing competing priorities and resources effectively.



ABOUT THE ROLE

Ambassadorial Role, Advocacy & External Relations

- Act as the public face of the organisation, representing it with credibility, passion and authority.
- Build strong, influential relationships with funders, partners, policymakers, communities and stakeholders.
- Position the organisation as a trusted, independent, influential and collaborative partner across sectors.

Other Responsibilities

Undertake any other reasonable duties consistent with the senior leadership and responsibilities of the role, as directed by the Board.

ABOUT YOU

The purpose of the Chief Executive Officer's role is to guide and plan the strategic development and overall direction of the organisation, providing strong leadership and co-ordination in order to ensure the aims, strategic objectives and priorities of the organisation are achieved.

To do this, we need someone who embodies the following attributes, skills and experience. These will make you stand out, but even if you do not match all the criteria below, we still want to hear about you and what you can offer.

You will have

- Senior leadership experience within a voluntary, community, public or values-led organisation, with accountability for strategy, performance and resources.
- Proven experience of working effectively with a Board or trustees, providing strategic advice and supporting good governance and decision-making.
- Demonstrable success in leading and managing organisational change, including restructuring, service development or cultural transformation.
- Experience of financial leadership, including budgeting, financial planning, income generation and managing funding agreements or contracts.



ABOUT YOU

You will also have:

- A strong track record of external engagement, partnership working and representation at senior level.
- People management experience, supporting a compact team delivering diverse projects.
- Excellent communication skills (including social media) and governance literacy.
- Developing and leading delivery of income generating services.
- It will be a distinct advantage to have familiarity with Local Government Reorganisation and devolution, ideally in a county like Surrey.

You will be

- Motivated, motivating and dynamic
- An effective communicator (including social media) with good network contacts, especially in the VCSE sector and across local government
- Experienced in fundraising, income generation and business development
- A strong team builder, able to develop, encourage and support colleagues in making the most of their experience and skillsets and to feel confident in their abilities
- A visionary leader who is able to embrace and manage change through strategic creativity and innovation, while also able to pay attention to detail when necessary

Ideally, you will also be able to demonstrate:

- Understanding of charity governance, compliance and safeguarding.
- Ability to set vision, priorities, and direction that align with Surrey Community Action's charitable objectives and long-term sustainability.
- Strong relationship-building skills with funders, partners, local authorities, and community networks.
- Sound judgment under pressure and an evidence-based approach to prioritising finite resources.

Above all, we are looking for someone with the potential to make Surrey Community Action a stronger organisation, able to create an even bigger impact across Surrey and the VCSE sector.



THE NUTS AND BOLTS

- The role is a permanent contract for 35 hours per week, mostly office based but with some scope for working remotely.
- Our offices are in Guildford, Surrey
- We are committed to continued professional development and will support you to develop your skills even further.
- The role is subject to a satisfactory DBS check.

The salary for this post is £62,000 for a 35-hour week.

We also offer:

- 5% employers pension contribution
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Paid volunteering leave
- Free on-site parking
- 25 days holiday with an additional three days between Christmas and New Year, as well as all English Bank Holidays
- Professional development opportunities

If you would like an informal conversation about the role and whether it is right for you , please contact our Office Manager, Liza Campbell on 01483 566072 or email info@surreyca.org.uk to arrange an informal conversation with the outgoing Chief Executive Officer.

How to apply

To apply for this position, please send an up-to-date CV and a covering statement highlighting how your skills and experience matches our needs to Liza, as above, by Sunday 26 April, 11:59pm.

First round interviews will take place at our Guildford offices during the week of 11 May, with selected candidates being invited to a second interview on Tuesday 19 May.

