



Recruitment Pack

Trustee & Treasurer



Message from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in joining Cambridgeshire ACRE as a Trustee and Treasurer. This is an important time for our organisation as we move into the delivery phase of our 2025–2028 strategy, strengthening our support for rural communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough while ensuring the charity remains resilient, sustainable and well governed for the future.

For more than 100 years, Cambridgeshire ACRE has worked alongside rural communities, helping local people create positive change in the places where they live. Today, our work spans rural housing, community wellbeing, village halls, environmental action and rural leadership. As our reach and impact continue to grow, strong financial oversight and effective governance are more important than ever.

The Treasurer is a full member of the Board of Trustees, bringing additional oversight and support in relation to the organisation's finances. We are not necessarily seeking someone with a formal accountancy qualification, but rather an individual who is confident interpreting financial information, understands strategic decision-making and can help fellow trustees consider financial sustainability and risk. Experience of parish and town councils, charity governance or commercial leadership would also be highly valued.

As Chair, I know how important a strong and engaged Board is to the success of our organisation. If you share our commitment to rural communities and believe you could contribute to the future direction and resilience of Cambridgeshire ACRE, we would be delighted to hear from you.

David Olney
Chair, Cambridgeshire ACRE



Cambridgeshire ACRE's Chair, David Olney

Who we are and what we do



Cambridgeshire ACRE is the rural community council for Cambridgeshire. We support communities to thrive – whether that’s helping villages develop affordable housing, keeping community buildings running, tackling rural isolation through community hubs or enabling local action on climate change. We also connect rural voices to decision-makers so that policies and funding reflect the realities of rural life.

We’re proud of our strong roots and the practical difference we make every day – supporting residents, groups and partners to build places, services and facilities they truly care about.

Our vision

Rural communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough where people flourish, connections grow and everyone can thrive.

Our mission

To inspire, lead and partner with rural communities, enabling local people to create positive, lasting change for themselves.



Residents attending a Community Health & Wellbeing Hub

Our values



1. Empowerment

We believe rural communities hold the answers to their own success. Our role is to provide the tools, support and encouragement that enable local people to lead and act.

2. Collaboration

We achieve more together. Through genuine partnerships built on trust and understanding, we work alongside communities and stakeholders, pooling expertise and resources.

3. Integrity

Honesty, openness and accountability are non-negotiable. Communities trust us because we always act independently and ethically, placing their needs above all else.

4. Creativity

Innovation drives us forward. We proactively seek imaginative, effective solutions that address rural challenges sustainably and uniquely.

5. Commitment

Our dedication to rural communities runs deep. We remain proactive, reliable and driven, tirelessly advocating and working for a sustainable, inclusive future for rural Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.



Attendees at a training session for community building trustees

Our strategy:

Empowering rural communities to thrive



Cambridgeshire ACRE's three-year strategy sets out a clear and ambitious direction for strengthening rural communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Rooted in our long history and informed by the voices of our members, partners and residents, the strategy provides a practical framework for the work we will undertake between 2025 and 2028.

Our strategy focuses on six interconnected aims:

1) Providing rural leadership

Strengthen Cambridgeshire ACRE as a leading, influential organisation, ensuring we are a trusted, proactive resource for rural communities, valued for our expertise, guidance and community-driven impact.

2) Supporting community buildings

Support and sustain community-run assets and services, equipping local groups with the skills, confidence and resources needed to manage and maintain essential spaces that enhance rural life.

3) Facilitating rural housing

Help communities shape their own futures by facilitating rural and community-led housing development, rural planning and local leadership for sustainable growth.

4) Improving wellbeing and inclusion

Enhance the physical and mental health and wellbeing of rural communities by expanding opportunities for participation, improving access to healthcare, tackling rural loneliness and developing initiatives that support healthier lifestyles.

5) Protecting the environment

Encourage communities to take an active role in protecting their natural surroundings by conserving landscapes, safeguarding water resources, improving sustainable water management and enhancing biodiversity, creating a more climate-resilient Cambridgeshire.

6) Promoting economic growth

Foster a sustainable and inclusive rural economy by supporting local businesses, driving innovation and improving access to employment, training and long-term economic resilience.

We are now entering the implementation phase of this strategy. The Board of Trustees plays a central role in overseeing progress, ensuring accountability, maintaining financial resilience and supporting the organisation to deliver meaningful and lasting impact. This is therefore an exciting time to join Cambridgeshire ACRE as we deepen our partnerships, expand our reach and strengthen our support for rural communities.





The role at a glance

Purpose of the role

The Treasurer is a full member of Cambridgeshire ACRE's Board of Trustees, sharing collective responsibility for the governance, strategic direction and long-term sustainability of the charity.

In addition to the responsibilities of all trustees, the Treasurer provides additional support and oversight in relation to the organisation's financial position, helping the Board understand financial performance, sustainability, risk and future planning.

Cambridgeshire ACRE employs experienced staff and external specialists to manage day-to-day financial operations. **The Treasurer role is therefore focused on strategic oversight rather than operational bookkeeping.**

What we are looking for

We are seeking an individual who is confident interpreting management accounts, budgets and financial information, and who can support constructive discussion and decision-making at Board level.

We do not necessarily require a qualified accountant. Experience of business leadership, charity finance, governance, parish or town councils or strategic financial oversight would all be valuable.

Time commitment

Board meetings: 5 per year, held as a mix of online and in-person meetings.

Finance & HR & Trustee Committee: The Treasurer chairs the Finance Committee and is also a member of the HR & Trustee Committee. Both committees meet online four times per year and play an important role in supporting effective governance, organisational resilience and strategic oversight.

AGM and strategy events: Trustees are expected to attend the Annual General Meeting and occasional in-person strategy or development sessions.

Additional activities: Occasional reading, attendance at events or contribution to short-term working groups, as appropriate.

Location

Meetings are held online or at an accessible community building around the county.

Expenses

All reasonable travel and subsistence expenses incurred in fulfilling trustee duties are reimbursed in line with Cambridgeshire ACRE's policy.



The Treasurer is a full member of Cambridgeshire ACRE's Board of Trustees and shares collective responsibility for the governance, strategic direction and long-term sustainability of the charity.

All trustees play an important role in ensuring that Cambridgeshire ACRE remains well governed, financially resilient and focused on supporting rural communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The following pages outline the core responsibilities expected of all trustees, followed by the additional responsibilities specific to the Treasurer role.

The role of the trustee is to:

- 1. Determine the organisation's mission and vision**
Only the Trustee Board has the power to create and change an organisation's essential mission and vision. Every policy decision the Board makes is designed to help the organisation realise the aims laid out in the mission.
- 2. Engage in strategic planning**
Trustee Boards make strategic policy and work with the Chief Executive to develop long-term strategic plans. Ideally they tie their meeting agendas to key points in the strategic plan to ensure they are dealing with the significant issues.
- 3. Formulate policies**
The Board establishes and oversees a framework of delegation and systems of control so that the organisation applies its resources exclusively in the pursuance of its objectives.

Role description

Continued...



4. Approve and monitor the organisation's programmes and services

The Board ensures that all the organisation's programmes and services obey the letter of the law and effectively serve the organisation's mission. The Board's vision for the organisation determines the direction the programme will take. The Board must ensure that the organisation complies with its Memorandum & Articles of Association, charity law, company law, and any other relevant legislation and regulations, and pursues its charitable objectives as defined in the Memorandum of Association.

5. Ensure adequate financial resources

Trustees make sure that the organisation has the resources to carry out its mission. They create policies governing financial reserves and fundraising practices.

6. Provide effective fiscal oversight and ensure sound risk management

The Trustee Board approves the annual financial statement and budget, monitors spending, creates policies to manage and protect organisational assets and property, and ensures that the finances are handled according to the law and in the best interests of the organisation. It also protects the organisation against liability by providing adequate insurance and creating policies designed to minimise risk.

7. Act as a responsible employer

The Board creates comprehensive, fair personnel policies that meet legal requirements and protect both the organisation and those who work for it. It monitors organisational activity to make sure that practice lives up to policy. It determines the framework for staff employment and remuneration.

8. Select and support the Chief Executive and review performance

The Board hires, supports and develops the Chief Executive, and is responsible for conducting an annual review of their performance.

9. Understand and respect the relationship between Board and staff

The Board must recognise areas of staff responsibility and avoid interfering in matters properly the domain delegated to staff. At the same time, it creates policy to guide staff activities and safeguard the interests of the organisation. Trustees should also understand other roles that they can play, e.g. as adviser or volunteer.

10. Enhance the organisation's public image

Through their own behaviour, their governance oversight and their activities on behalf of the organisation trustees enhance and protect its reputation and values.

11. Carefully select and induct new Board members

The Board ensures the quality of governance for the organisation by using its experience to aid the selection of new Board members and providing them with training. It recruits and develops individuals who can provide the best leadership for the organisation.

12. Carry out Board business efficiently

The Board should ensure that its meetings are productive and key issues are dealt with in an efficient way. It should create purposeful committees and ensure resources are adequate for the work to be undertaken. It may hire consultants to bring needed expertise into the organisation. It should engage in regular performance appraisals, and periodic self-assessment and development to strengthen its effectiveness.

Additional responsibilities of the Treasurer



- Liaise with the Chief Executive, Head of Business Services, Finance Officer and any organisation appointed to help Cambridgeshire ACRE with its accounting to ensure the financial viability of the organisation.
- Chair the organisation's Finance Committee.
- Make fellow trustees aware of their financial obligations and assist in interpreting financial data to them.
- Ensure the Head of Business Services regularly reports the financial position at Finance Committee meetings (management accounts, balance sheet, cash flow, reserves).
- Work with the Chief Executive and Head of Business Services to produce an annual budget and recommend its adoption by the Board of Trustees.
- Spot-check that proper financial records are kept and that effective financial procedures and controls are being adhered to.
- Guide fellow trustees in appraising the financial viability of plans and proposals for new work.





Personal qualities & knowledge and experience needed

Cambridgeshire ACRE is governed by a Board of trustees who bring strategic insight, sound judgement and a shared commitment to strengthening rural communities. Candidates for trusteeship are expected to demonstrate the following qualities and attributes.

Personal qualities

- Commitment to the organisation and its objectives
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Integrity and good interpersonal skills
- Ability to be detached and make good independent judgments
- Ability to think creatively and with vision
- Ability to work effectively as a team member with a shared sense of purpose
- Willingness to learn and be informed of both the activities of the organisation and the context in which it operates
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship

Additional experience and skills for the Treasurer role

- Accounting experience or experience of using and interpreting financial information at a senior level within an organisation
- Experience of charity finance or experience of using and interpreting financial information at a senior level within an organisation
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- The skill to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences
- Willingness to be available to staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.
- Commitment, willingness and ability to devote the necessary time and effort

Sector experience (desirable but not essential)

- Parish and town councils
- Community building committees or community asset management
- Community wellbeing or neighbourhood health
- Charity governance or voluntary sector leadership
- Rural communities or community development
- Business leadership or organisational strategy

How to apply



Thank you for your interest in joining Cambridgeshire ACRE as a Trustee & Treasurer. We encourage prospective applicants to arrange an informal conversation about the role before submitting an application. This provides an opportunity to discuss the work of the charity, the expectations of trusteeship and the skills and experience you may bring to the Board.

If you would like an initial discussion, please contact Hayley Neal, Chief Executive, via email: hayley.neal@cambsacre.org.uk or telephone: 01353 865034.

Application process

To apply, please complete the **Trustee Application Form**, available to download from our website or via request from our office. The form asks you to highlight your relevant skills and experience, and to outline your motivation for joining the Board.

Completed applications should be emailed to: Alison Brown, Company Secretary alison.brown@cambsacre.org.uk

Application deadline

Applications received by **9am on Monday 20 July** will be reviewed by the Chair and a sub-group of Trustees in line with our trustee recruitment process.

What happens next

Suitable candidates will be invited to an initial online meeting to explore their interest in the role. If both parties wish to proceed, candidates will then be invited to observe a Board meeting before a formal decision is taken on co-option or nomination for election at the next Annual General Meeting.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds and communities. We value a diverse Board and are committed to ensuring our trustee recruitment process is fair, inclusive and accessible.

Attendee at one of Cambridgeshire ACRE's networking events



Hear from our Board

Don't just take our word for it. Here, Jessica Sellick, one of our existing trustees, explains why you should consider volunteering with Cambridgeshire ACRE.

1. What motivated you to become a trustee of Cambridgeshire ACRE?

Between 2020 and 2023, I evaluated an employability project delivered by Cambridgeshire ACRE. That experience opened my eyes to the charity's remarkable breadth of work and the tangible difference it makes in rural communities – from sustaining village halls and supporting the delivery of affordable housing, to tackling fuel poverty and promoting wellbeing. Meeting staff and trustees, and seeing their passion first-hand, was truly inspiring. So when trustee recruitment opened, I wanted to step forward and offer my skills and expertise to further its work.

2. What do you enjoy most about being a trustee?

I value the opportunity to help shape Cambridgeshire ACRE's strategic direction – supporting the development of our 2025-2028 strategy, and aligning our activities with community, NHS, local government, and national priorities. While visiting projects and having an understanding of the day-to-day work of staff and volunteers and hearing directly from beneficiaries brings the work to life, as trustees we are ultimately responsible for governance, and compliance with charity law. Like every charity, Cambridgeshire ACRE has finite resources, which means making careful choices, yet it is a privilege to guide an organisation that has supported rural communities for over a century, remains vital today, and will be needed long into the future.

3. How has being a trustee helped you develop your skills, perspective or understanding of rural issues?

Trusteeship has allowed me to apply my UK-wide rural experience locally, while also sharing Cambridgeshire ACRE's work nationally. Serving on the finance and governance subcommittee has deepened my understanding of charity finances, and I have seen how Cambridgeshire ACRE's robust procedures and internal controls support the trustee board to safeguard assets, ensure funds are used appropriately, and support long-term resilience.

4. Why would you encourage someone to join the Board of Cambridgeshire ACRE?

Joining the board is both stimulating and deeply rewarding. Every trustee brings unique skills, experiences, and perspectives, and all are valued in shaping decisions. This is a pivotal moment to get involved, as we continue to implement our 2025-2028 strategy – putting you at the very heart of Cambridgeshire ACRE and its work. As one of 37 county-based organisations across England, we are part of the national Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) network which means there are also opportunities to influence policy and practice beyond Cambridgeshire. Most importantly, please don't rule yourself out if you don't meet 100% of the role specification, or have the specific skills we have listed, you may fill a gap that we haven't considered.



Cambridgeshire ACRE
trustee, Jessica Sellick



Get in touch

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