



## **Listen Well Scotland**

### **BOARD of TRUSTEES:**

**DESCRIPTION OF THE TRUSTEE ROLE  
and PERSON SPECIFICATION**

## Background

Listen Well Scotland (LWS) was registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation under SC044382 on 31 October 2013. In March 2020, LWS adopted a single-tier SCIO structure. The Trustees are the “members”.

LWS currently employs a Charity Leader and a National Manager for Training and Listening Services. The Strategy is developed jointly by Trustees and Staff and is implemented by Employed Staff. Trained Volunteers commit to serve as Trainers, Listeners or Supervisors to fulfil the charitable purposes of the SCIO. These are

- 3.1.1 to advance education through the provision of training programmes
- 3.1.2 the advancement of health through the prevention or relief of sickness and suffering through the holistic therapy of listening; and
- 3.1.3 to provide, through trained listeners, relief to those persons in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage.

The organisation provides high quality training in Listening, at introductory, foundation and advanced levels. Volunteers are recruited to train towards becoming Registered Trainers, to deliver the courses, or Registered Listeners, offering a formal one-to-one Listening service (*Listening Time for You*) in their community in partnership with a school, or GP surgery, or a community/family support centre or other facility.

## 1. Who are the charity’s trustees?

The Charities Act 1993 defines charity trustees as those responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity. This is the case regardless of the terminology used to describe the role.

For LWS the charity trustees form the Board of Trustees, and in line with the LWS Constitution (revised March 2020) the Board comprises:

up to six elected trustees in total

and may co-opt up to three additional trustees

The Board appoints a chair and a vice chair from among the trustees.

## 2. The role of the Board of Trustees

At its simplest, the role of the trustee board is to receive income from LWS training courses and any assets from donors or grant-making bodies, safeguard them and apply them to the charitable purposes of LWS. The trustee board must always act in the best interests of LWS, exercising the same standard of duty of care that a prudent person would apply if looking after the affairs of someone for whom they have responsibility. The trustee board must act with collective responsibility and not as individuals. Trustees work together to affirm the strategic direction, scrutinise the financial management, and ensure the sound governance of LWS. Trustees are not responsible for overseeing day-to-day operation, but they are responsible for ensuring the operational decisions delegated to the Charity Leader and the National Services Manager for Training and Listening are in line with LWS vision and values and that LWS operates effectively.

### **3. Duties of a trustee board member**

The duties of a trustee board member are to:

- Ensure that LWS complies with its Governing document (its Constitution), charity law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensure that LWS pursues its objects as defined in its Governing document
- Ensure LWS applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects. For example, it must not spend money on activities which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be
- Contribute actively to the board of trustees by giving strategic direction to LWS, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- Safeguard the good name and values of LWS
- Ensure the financial stability of LWS
- Give oversight to the charity leadership
- Give oversight of the charity risk management register

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, identifying key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, and evaluating or offering advice on other areas in which the trustee has particular expertise.

### **4. Time commitment**

Trustees are expected to have an induction session either online or at a convenient venue prior to their first board meeting. Trustees are expected to attend all board meetings. Board meetings are held four times a year, usually late afternoon/early evening at times dependent on Trustees being released from employment duties. Since 2020, Board meetings have been conducted successfully on a video-conferencing platform, as permitted by the Constitution. The virtual meetings last approximately two to three hours. An AGM is held immediately before the Spring Board meeting.

Papers are distributed at least one week in advance of meetings to allow time for essential reading before the meeting

Expectation is in future to hold at least one Face to Face evening meeting a year in a central location for convenience of all Board members. This will be combined with a full day meeting on a Saturday for the Board with all Employees, Volunteers, and Partners.

Over and above this, Board members are encouraged to be available to our Employees, to offer input and advice in specific areas of knowledge and expertise.

No Salary is paid. Expenses incurred in travelling to Board meetings and any other agreed meetings will be re-imbursed. All trustees are encouraged to participate in the excellent training available from SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations) and OSCR (Scottish Charity Regulator).

## **5. Person Specification**

Each trustee must have:

- Commitment to the vision and values/ethos of LWS
- Commitment to the Charitable Objects in the Constitution agreed with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).
- Willingness to meet the minimum time requirement
- Integrity
- Strategic vision
- Ability to make good, independent judgement
- Ability to think creatively
- Willingness to speak their mind
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team and to take decisions for the good of LWS

It is essential that diverse skills and experience are represented in a Board of Trustees. The LWS Board of Trustees collectively needs skills and experience in the following areas:

- Financial management, Income generation and enterprise
- National and local voluntary sector
- National and local government and statutory bodies
- Communications, IT, Digital Strategy in the field of education/training for all ages
- Human Resource management
- Volunteering management and brokerage
- Fund raising from different sources [(especially Trusts and Foundations).
- Collaborative partnerships
- Social investment and impact
- Knowledge and /or experience and representation of the diverse settings that LWS exists to serve

## **6. Proceeding to interview and appointment.**

Suitable applicants will be invited to interview by a panel of Trustees. Following a provisional offer, confirmation of appointment will be conditional on satisfactory references and signature of the Trustee Declaration (of eligibility).