

# Trustee Candidate Pack 2026



Strengthening our Board for the next phase of strategic development, sustainability and leadership.



James Angus Pow  
Chairman

## Welcome

As Victim Support Scotland prepares for its next phase of strategic development, the Board is taking a proactive approach to strengthening its collective skills, experience, and future leadership capacity. We are particularly keen to hear from people who can contribute to long-term sustainability, strategic development, and effective charity governance within the criminal justice context.

VSS is dedicated to helping people affected by crime. We provide information and support to victims, witnesses and family members. Our service is independent, non-judgemental, confidential, and most importantly, free.

Many of us do not realise or consider the impact that crime, in all its forms, has on victims.

Through the information, practical help, emotional support and guidance we offer, we can empower people to deal with what can be a significant life event. We are there to help people find the strength to move forward with their lives.

However, we do so much more than this. Through representing the voices of people we support and influencing key national policy decision-makers, we champion victim and witness rights.

It has been a great experience to work alongside partners from criminal justice agencies, the third sector and other organisations as we advocate for positive improvements within the criminal justice system; knowing that with collaboration and partnership we are stronger and can influence and change policy and approach.

I am interested in hearing from talented and committed people, from a whole range of diverse backgrounds, who want to give some of their time and expertise to the Trustee positions.

If you can see how working together we can contribute to further developing a fair and just Scotland, then please get in touch.

James Angus Pow, Chairman

# Who we are

Victim Support Scotland continues to be at the forefront of providing emotional, practical and financial support for people affected by crime.

What sets us apart from other support organisations is that we can support everyone after a crime - regardless of the type of crime, whether or not it has been reported to the police, or how much time has passed since it happened.

VSS prides itself in offering free and confidential services at the point of need for people affected by crime. Our services are available throughout Scotland, both in local communities and in the courts.

We balance our consistent approach with personalised packages of support, tailored to the needs of people whose lives have been disrupted by crime.

VSS works alongside our partners to listen to the views and experiences of victims and witnesses.

Our strength is in our ability to take these views and experiences, and to positively influence national policy decision making, advocating for a better justice system for all.

Although our core funding comes from the Scottish Government, we are an independent charity. We can therefore provide a critical lens to all that is happening within the justice system from a victims' perspective.

Our staff team of just over 100 employees are supported by hundreds of volunteers. This team of dedicated, highly trained volunteers provide practical and emotional support to victims and witnesses across Scotland.



# The future

## Our current strategy has laid solid foundations: Empowering people affected by crime 2021-2026

Scotland has a tremendous opportunity to think innovatively about how justice and support services are delivered.

Our current strategy therefore focuses on four strategic priorities.

- **EMPOWER** people affected by crime by providing high quality, outcome-focused support and care to all who need it.
- **TRANSFORM** victims' and witnesses' experiences of the criminal justice system.
- **BUILD** productive partnerships aimed at improving the experiences of those affected by crime.
- **SUSTAIN** our impact by focusing all we do, in every area of the organisation, on making a lasting difference for people affected by crime.

Our relationships with our partners and colleagues in the justice and third sectors remain central to us delivering on our aims, as do our relationships with victims, witnesses and families across Scotland who have been affected by crime.

By listening to their experiences and views, we will be able to positively influence policy and legislation and better shape support services based on their needs.

## OUR VISION

That people affected by crime – victims, witnesses and their families – are treated with dignity and respect and are at the heart of justice in Scotland.



## OUR MISSION

That all those affected by crime receive the high-quality support and care they need to move forward in their lives.

# The importance of lived experience

## Emergency Assistance Fund

In 2025/26, our Emergency Assistance Fund (EAF) distributed £630,151 worth of goods and services to support 1,509 people affected by crime across Scotland. People benefiting from the fund were in urgent need of financial help as a direct result of a crime and had access to no other funds.

We had additional referrals from over 70 partner agencies or stakeholders. The EAF can provide for a variety of goods and services, including:

- Emergency household goods
- Food, utility, or clothing expenses
- Costs to repair or replace damaged property or goods
- Contributions to funeral costs
- Moving costs
- Travel costs to a place of safety
- Security equipment costs

The Emergency Assistance Fund is also available for some people who live outside Scotland, who have been a victim of crime that happened in Scotland.

Greg called the police after his partner returned home drunk and began to break doors, cupboards, mirrors, and crockery after a heated argument, during which Greg was assaulted.

His partner was told by police not to return to the shared property or contact Greg. However, as the two of them split the costs of living, Greg was now left to pay for all the repairs and the full rent, with no way of contacting the partner. As a result, Greg's finances were heavily impacted due to the crime.

**“I spoke to a VSS volunteer, and they completed an Emergency Assistance Fund application to cover the cost of rent backdated to the date of the incident.**

**“Thankfully, this was approved, and it gave me the space to sort out my finances and look for somewhere else to live that I could afford on my own.”**

# Exceptional leadership

**We are particularly interested in applicants who bring strength in one or more of the following areas:**

- Strategic development and organisational transformation – including shaping, delivering or governing strategy in complex or changing environments.
- Organisational sustainability – including income diversification, partnership working, commercial insight or long-term financial viability.
- Criminal justice system experience – policy, practice or leadership experience within justice, statutory or related public services impacting victims and witnesses.
- Charity governance and board leadership – experience as a trustee, non-executive, committee chair or senior leader with a strong understanding of good governance.

## **Lived experience and diversity**

We would value someone with lived experience of being affected by crime on our board.

We are also looking to increase the diversity of Board members.

We welcome individuals from all backgrounds, cultures, and communities to apply for Trustee positions, as we believe that a diverse board enhances our ability to provide effective support to victims, representative of our communities.

Whether an experienced Trustee or new to this position, you will have an interest in social justice. We welcome your determination and commitment to support us to deliver our strategy. Third sector experience would be beneficial, as would an understanding of governance and stewardship of organisations.

## **Board Leadership and Succession**

In line with the organisation's Constitution, Trustees elect the Chair and Vice Chair(s) from among themselves. As part of planned Board succession, we are keen to attract Trustees who may, over time, be interested in taking on future Board leadership roles once they are fully inducted and embedded.

Appointment as a Trustee does not imply appointment to an office-bearer role. Any such roles are elected by Trustees in line with governance arrangements and based on skills, experience and readiness.

VSS is looking for committed individuals who will fully engage with the organisation and the role. The minimum term for appointment is three years.

# Your commitment

## Time commitment

- Four board meetings a year
- Four sub-committee meetings a year
- Annual strategic board away day
- 3-4 trustee training sessions a year
- Attendance at VSS events (e.g. Victims' Awareness Week events, staff and volunteer conferences, and OneVSS meetings).
- Preparation for meetings, reading papers and reports and asking questions in advance.
- Commitment to induction, mentoring and shadowing arrangements, particularly during the first year of appointment.

## Equal Opportunities

VSS is committed to equality of opportunity and to no discrimination on the grounds of race, religion or belief, age, sex, marital or civil partnership status, disability, sexual orientation, transgender status, pregnancy or maternity.

Your unique experiences, perspectives, skills and experience at a strategic level are valuable assets in helping us create a more inclusive and responsive organisation.



# VSS Committees

## Board of Trustees

Responsible for the governance of VSS in accordance with its constitution and its charitable purpose.

Provides vision, leadership, guiding its strategic direction.

Meets four times per year in addition to the Annual General Meeting

All committees meet four times per year.

## People, Quality and Innovation Committee

Ensures quality and continuous improvement of services and processes including recruitment, induction, staff development and management of staff. Ensures robust safeguarding and compliance procedures and reporting mechanisms.

Ensures quality and continuous development of new service delivery models.

Ensures appropriate Board training programmes, monitoring of board activities and evaluation of board members' performance are in place.

## Finance and Audit Committee

Ensures the financial resources are managed effectively to deliver the objectives in the organisation's corporate plan and its mission.

Ensures the long-term sustainability and viability of the organisation with respect to financial matters.

Ensures that the Board of Trustees fulfils its legal, compliance, ethical, and functional responsibilities.

Ensures adequate governance is in place.

# Organisational structure



# The Role

We are looking for exceptional leaders who are ambitious for change to improve victims' and witnesses' experiences.

We welcome applications from both experienced Trustees and individuals new to Board roles who can demonstrate the judgement, confidence and strategic perspective required of charity trustees.

**Purpose:** Use your skills and expertise to drive the strategy of VSS, ensuring all activity is in line with the charity's core mission and working collaboratively with other Trustees and the Chair.

All trustees have legal duties and responsibilities under the Trustees' Charity and Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. See OSCR guidance Charity Trustee Duties.

## You will:

- Decide the organisation's strategic direction, mission and priorities.
- Take all reasonable steps to achieve the organisation's strategy, mission and priorities.
- Ensure that VSS complies with its governing documents, charity law and other relevant legislation.
- Ensure that the organisation is managed in accordance with the decisions of the Board and its strategic priorities, making effective use of resources.
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and members act in a manner consistent with the charitable purposes of VSS.
- Scrutinise, evaluate and account for the organisation's performance
- Ensure that there is an effective risk management system in operation to safeguard the organisation's sustainability, financial and otherwise, and to protect its assets and reputation.
- Maintain open and transparent methods of selection for Board and Office Bearer appointments and that of staff at all levels.
- Regularly review the performance of the Board, the Chair and individual Trustees.
- Take appropriate disciplinary action as required in relation to any member who is in serious or persistent breach of that code.
- Always act in the interests of the organisation.
- Safeguard the good name and values of VSS.
- Adhere to the VSS trustee code of conduct.
- Adhere to the guidance for charity trustees as produced by OSCR.



# How to apply

## How applications will be assessed

By joining the Board at this point, Trustees will help shape Victim Support Scotland's next chapter and contribute to strong, sustainable governance that supports victims and witnesses across Scotland for years to come.

Applications will be assessed against the Board's current and future skills priorities, with particular regard to how individual experience complements the existing Board and supports effective succession planning.

Interviews will be held online on Friday 14 August.

The closing date for applications is 12 noon on Thursday 6 August 2026.

Successful candidates will be formally voted onto the Board at their next meeting on 10 September 2026.



## How to apply

Applications are welcomed in the form of a tailored CV and covering letter. Covering letters should be no more than two pages of A4 in length and should summarise your relevant skills, experience and motivations for applying for the role.

**To submit your application, or ask any questions about the process, please email:**

**[kim.fraser@victimssupportsco.org.uk](mailto:kim.fraser@victimssupportsco.org.uk)**

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Victim Support Scotland is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered in Scotland SC002138.

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