

SCOTTISH AUTISM

Embracing difference,
leading change

Trustee Recruitment Pack

Message from our Chair

Thank you for showing an interest in joining our Board of Trustees.

This pack provides information about Scottish Autism and the role of a Trustee.

Scottish Autism was established almost 60 years ago by a group of parents and is now the largest provider of autism-specific services in Scotland as well as being a leading authority and advocate for good autism practice. Scottish Autism provides a broad range of services to autistic people and their families and carers. Services include, care, support, advice and information and training for both autistic adults and young people. Scottish Autism also stands alongside autistic people campaigning to influence national and local policies related to our work and provides a research facility.

Scottish Autism is governed by a Board of Trustees who provide an invaluable contribution to the success of the organisation. A priority of Scottish Autism is to increase the diversity, knowledge and experience of its Board. We hope to attract applications from a wide range of talented individuals irrespective of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, nationality, belief or caring responsibilities. Applications from people with lived experience of autism are especially welcome. We are looking to recruit at least two individuals and whilst all applications are appreciated, we are keen to welcome people with experience of strategic financial planning including financial management and compliance, and strategic people leadership experience. Experience and knowledge in the following areas, are desirable, not exclusive:

- Lived experience, particularly autistic/neurodivergent people
- Board membership and governance

Scottish Autism is not just a charity, it is a place where our culture is driven by our values so we can support autistic people to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives and be recognised as valued members of the community in which they live.

If you are interested in being part of something that really makes a difference, then please apply.

Chris Harte
Chair

Your Impact

In your role as a Trustee you are helping autistic people to lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives. People like Alan, Robin and Jaqui.

Alan, Central Area Services

I like Founders, it's my home, I like to relax it's very relaxing. I like that I can hang my own washing out myself and I'm in charge to water the plants."

Alan is supported at Founders House, a residential service that provides accommodation for up to nine autistic adults. The aim of this service is to provide accommodation which meets the specific care needs of autistic adults as they age.



Robin, Fife Services

Robin attending Pittodrie Stadium with David, Autism Practitioner. "I went to watch my favorite team Aberdeen play Kilmarnock for my birthday, Aberdeen won 1-0, this made me feel very happy."

Robin has been supported by Scottish Autism in our Housing Support Service and Day Opportunities for over 25 years.



Jaqui, West of Scotland Services

I like story writing, doing fashion shows, I enjoy working with Abbie staff, having my chicken curry on a Friday. I enjoy Abbie gym and spending time with my Abbie friends."

Jaqui is supported at our resource day service, The Abbie in Arden Craig Place, Glasgow. The Abbie supports a number of autistic individuals to develop skills across a wide range of activities.



Who we are

Our Vision – For the future

An inclusive world where difference is embraced and autistic people thrive.

Our Mission – What we are focused on doing

To stand alongside autistic people to create a world where autistic people can thrive, led by the priorities of the autistic community.

Our Values

Belonging

Compassion, caring, relationships, understanding, inclusion

Empowering

Independence, thriving, respect (human rights), amplifying voice

Curiosity

Innovation, leading change, open heart and open mind, pioneering

Integrity

Trust, listening, values-driven always, justice, authentic

Constitution

- Our Board consists of up to twelve Trustees including the Chair.
- The term of office for a Trustee is four years with an option to serve an additional term of four years.
- Typical commitment is six Board meetings a year.
- A copy of our Articles of Association can be accessed [here](#).

Trustee – Role & Responsibilities

1. Board Responsibilities

The function of the Board as a whole is two-fold:

- provide leadership to Scottish Autism and determine its strategy.
- control Scottish Autism's affairs and ensure compliance with regulatory standards, expectations and good practice.

The operational management of Scottish Autism is delegated to the Chief Executive and thereafter to staff within a framework of controls established by the Board. In practice, this distinction involves a strong element of partnership between the Board and senior staff which demands mutual respect, trust and support.

2. Strategic & Leadership Function

In relation to its strategic and leadership function, the core responsibilities of the Board are to collectively:

- Determine Scottish Autism's central purpose, its values, and its culture and ensure that they are consistent with Scottish Autism's Articles of Association.
- Determine and keep under review Scottish Autism's strategic direction, its business objectives and to ensure its ongoing sustainability.
- Develop and maintain an understanding of the operating environment of Scottish Autism and take this into account in assessing Scottish Autism's strategy.
- Disseminate and ensure compliance with the values of Scottish Autism.
- Establish a framework for the development, approval and review of policies and plans to achieve Scottish Autism's business objectives.
- Ensure that Scottish Autism is adequately resourced to meet its business objectives.
- Identify and manage the risks associated with Scottish Autism's strategy.
- Decide on and keep under review formal partnerships and alliances with other organisations.



3. Control & Compliance Function

In relation to its control and compliance function, the core responsibilities of the Board are to:

- Establish and oversee a framework for delegation to Committees and to the Chief Executive.
- Establish and regularly review systems of internal and external control including external audit, internal audit, financial control and performance reporting.
- Establish and oversee a framework for the identification and management of risk in order to protect Scottish Autism and its assets.
- Ensure the solvency of Scottish Autism, approve the annual budget and approve the annual accounts prior to publication.
- Monitor and assess Scottish Autism's performance against plans, budgets, controls and targets taking into account customer feedback and the performance of comparable organisations.
- Establish and oversee a framework for the employment and remuneration of staff.
- Appoint, support, appraise and (if necessary) dismiss the Chief Executive and approve their remuneration.
- Ensure that Scottish Autism meets all its statutory obligations and acts in accordance with regulatory expectations and accepted good practice standards.
- Ensure that Scottish Autism acts in accordance with its own constitution.
- Assess periodically the Board's own effectiveness.
- Assess how well Scottish Autism follows its Articles of Association.

In both sets of responsibilities, the Board is informed, advised and supported by the Executive Leadership Team. The core responsibilities are central to the Board's role and cannot be delegated.



4. Expectations of a Trustee

Each Trustee is expected to contribute constructively to the work of the Board. The effective collective performance of the Board depends on members recognising and fulfilling their individual responsibilities.

All members share and must accept collective responsibility for the decisions properly made by the Board. All members are equally responsible in law for the decisions made. Each must act only in the interests of Scottish Autism and the people it supports; not on behalf of any constituency, other organisation or interest group. Whatever Trustees' background and interests, their overriding loyalty must be to Scottish Autism as a whole.

All Trustees take part in Board business on an equal footing. Although they may have different backgrounds and different reasons for their involvement, they must act in the best interests of Scottish Autism. Trustees should not be lobbyists, campaigners or advocates for any particular group.

The Board has a valid role as a 'critical questioner'. This is not to imply a lack of trust or doubt but only by questioning and testing does the Board add the value of its collective knowledge. The Board has a right to seek external advice whenever it wishes to do so. This is another way in which the Board effectively fulfils its 'critical questioner' role.

Trustees have a duty of loyalty and support towards the staff and this should be reflected in a constructive, professional relationship. In the unlikely event of a serious difficulty with an individual staff member, the problem should be discussed in confidence with the Chief Executive or Chair.



Every individual member is expected to:

1. Uphold the values, objectives, activities, powers and policies of Scottish Autism.
2. Contribute to and accept responsibility for the Board's decisions.
3. Treat all colleagues on the Board with consideration and foster mutual respect and trust.
4. Prepare for meetings and attend regularly and punctually.
5. Attend relevant training sessions and events.
6. Attend and participate in reviews of the performance and effectiveness of the Board.
7. Represent Scottish Autism positively and appropriately.
8. Be aware of the restrictions on payments and benefits and follow Scottish Autism's policy on managing these restrictions.
9. Not accept any offers of gifts and hospitality which could be seen as a way of exercising an improper influence over decision making.
10. Declare any personal or other interests which could potentially conflict with those of Scottish Autism.
11. Not engage in any activity which could be detrimental to the interests of Scottish Autism.
12. Respect confidentiality of information where appropriate.
13. Keep their own learning and knowledge as up to date as possible.
14. Adhere to the principles and the expectations set out by OSCR and other regulatory codes that apply to Scottish Autism including the Scottish Governance Code for the Third Sector and relevant Acts.
15. Serve on any Committee or short life working group as required.
16. Follow the Board Code of Conduct.



Data Protection & General Data Protection Regulations

Potential Trustees should be aware that Scottish Autism is required to share personal information with Companies House and OSCR. It may also be requested to support grant and tender submissions or commercial contracts. The role will also be PVG checked.

Time Commitment and Expenses

A Trustee would be expected to undertake the following:

- A comprehensive induction programme
- At least six Board meetings a year (usually a Tuesday afternoon in Alloa or can be joined online)
- One annual review meeting with the Chair
- To sit on one Board Committee if possible which usually meet quarterly
- To promote, attend and support Scottish Autism events.
- To represent and be an ambassador for Scottish Autism at external events

Recruitment Timetable

Discussion about reasonable adjustments in the recruitment process and at Board meetings to meet individual needs is welcome.

Closing Date: **21st August 2026.**

The initial process will involve an informal chat with the CEO followed by an interview with Board members. Dates will be arranged by mutual consent. Presentations to the Board will be made on **29th September 2026.**



How to apply for the role

Please apply for this role via our [recruitment portal here](#)

We hope this pack provides the information you require
but if you need anything further or would like an
informal discussion about the role of a Trustee, please
contact:

Dorry McLaughlin, Chief Executive
dorry.mclaughlin@scottishautism.org

Scottish Autism
Hilton House
Alloa Business Park
Whins Road
Alloa
FK10 3SA
Tel: 01259 720044
www.scottishautism.org



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