

# Trustees Together

Promoting and Supporting Trustee Development



**Welcome to the Second Edition of the newsletter for the East of England's Trustees Together - for you, about you!**

## The Gathering!

Reporting on the **TRUSTEES TOGETHER CONFERENCE** held last September, Sally Hiscock from the Governance Hub writes: Trustees often complain of feeling isolated in their governance roles and can sometimes become out of touch with the latest policies and practice in their field, or in the wider voluntary sector. Similarly trustees often have limited time or space to reflect on how well they are governing their organisations - keeping projects going, meeting users' needs and securing the next pot of funding are often more pressing issues.

The Conference showcased the latest thinking around good governance. Around 60 trustees and staff discussed issues such as using quality standards and building diverse boards. A practical workshop set out ten steps to finding and recruiting new trustees and the new e-learning service, built by SAVO for the Governance Hub, was introduced and key features highlighted. Local presentations from new support services were well received.

The Governance Hub is one of six national Hubs of expertise, developed as part of the Change Up programme, to improve the support available to the voluntary and community sector. Its role is to improve the governance in the sector by: 1) Increasing the supply of trustees, through a high profile trustee recruitment campaign launching in January 2007 2) Enhancing trustee learning and development by signposting to resources available to help and developing new ones to fill gaps 3) Working in partnership with organisations across the country to ensure that advice and support is available to everyone.

Trustees especially appreciated the time to network and share their experiences, ideas, frustrations and challenges with others. It is always a support to hear how others are facing similar issues across different organisations and better still to learn from colleagues' strategies for change and improvement. Many said they would welcome getting together as trustees on a regular basis.

Contact **ionne.hammond@savo.co.uk** with your local your news on Trusteeship or ring **01473 273273**

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# RESOURCES



## [www.trustee-elearning.org.uk](http://www.trustee-elearning.org.uk)

Over 300 people have already registered with Learning to Drive and numbers are growing every week. Join them to find **EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BEING A TRUSTEE**

## Learning to Drive

It is a **free**, flexible toolkit that you can work through at **your own pace** in **your own time**. Pick and mix the modules that are of interest to you or view it as a refresher course or introduction to Trusteeship. Develop your skills and knowledge to enable you to lead your organisation more effectively.

## On the Radar:

### Governance & Employment

Through the Maze: Secured your funding? The next steps made easy [www.hlc-vol.org.uk/documents/publicationuploads/Secured%20Funding%205.pdf](http://www.hlc-vol.org.uk/documents/publicationuploads/Secured%20Funding%205.pdf)

The Trustee Pathway CD-Rom [www.savo.co.uk/default.aspx?page=8083](http://www.savo.co.uk/default.aspx?page=8083)

'Good Employers' Toolkits [www.savo.co.uk/default.aspx?page=8895](http://www.savo.co.uk/default.aspx?page=8895)

Risk Assessment and Minute Taking online [www.savo.co.uk/default.aspx?page=9019](http://www.savo.co.uk/default.aspx?page=9019)

ACAS Employment Factsheets [www.acas.org.uk/publications](http://www.acas.org.uk/publications)

Chtd Inst of Personnel Development [www.cipd.co.uk/onlineinfodocuments/factsheets.htm](http://www.cipd.co.uk/onlineinfodocuments/factsheets.htm)

Good Employment fact sheets [www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk/DisplayPage.asp?pageid=9531](http://www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk/DisplayPage.asp?pageid=9531)

### Funding

Funding guide for Voluntary and Community Groups

Details about availability from West Norfolk VCA on 01553 760568

Introductory Pack of six guides to Funding and Finance for Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations. [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sfp](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sfp) and [www.financehub.org.uk](http://www.financehub.org.uk).

Developing a Funding Strategy Toolkit

[www.luton-dunstable-partnership.org.uk/ESF%20Funding%20Strategy.pdf](http://www.luton-dunstable-partnership.org.uk/ESF%20Funding%20Strategy.pdf)

Before signing on the dotted line: All you need to know about procuring public service contracts [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sfp/earning/contracting](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sfp/earning/contracting)

### Impact measurement

Proving and improving toolkit [www.proveandimprove.org](http://www.proveandimprove.org)

Evaluating Community Projects [www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1859354157.pdf](http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1859354157.pdf)

Performance Improvement Hub [www.performancehub.org.uk](http://www.performancehub.org.uk)

### Business Planning

[www.luton-dunstable-partnership.org.uk/ESF%20Business%20Planning%20Tool%20Kit.pdf](http://www.luton-dunstable-partnership.org.uk/ESF%20Business%20Planning%20Tool%20Kit.pdf)

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# RECRUITING

You recruit the staff, you rely on them to deliver your Charity's objectives; A pretty important decision then! Does this prompt list give you any thoughts on changes within your own group's practice?



## Recruiting:

## Top Ten Tips

### 1. Job description should include:

- Job title, grade, location
- Summary of post's main purpose
- Outline of main duties/ key responsibilities

### 2. Person specification essential/desirable requirements and how they will be assessed:

- Qualifications
- Experience
- Knowledge & understanding
- Aptitude/skills
- attributes

### 3 Advertising accurately reflecting the post's requirements and include:

- Brief description of your organisation
- Summary of post's main purpose
- Summary of essential attributes
- Application procedure
- closing date
- Interview date

### 4. Information pack includes:

- Relevant organisational information
- Annual report
- Application form
- Equal opportunities form
- Covering letter with closing date and address for return of application

### 5. Short listing process to include:

- All interview panel members
- Take place within 2 days of closing date
- Be recorded with clear reasons for not short listing candidate

### 6. Invitation to interview should be sent at least 5 working days before interview:

- State date, time, location (with a map)
- Details of any tests/presentation
- Opportunity to request special arrangements
- Expenses form

### 7. Interviewing Panel members should:

- Meet prior to interview & plan questions based on person specification
- Agree format for the interview – Who'll ask which question?

- Choose a chairman - Who will be provide candidates with feedback?

### 8. Interview structure and questions

**Do:** Set up room so that panel & candidate are comfortable

- Welcome candidate and introduce panel members
- Provide water for panel and candidates
- Keep questions in sequence
- Give candidates time to think about their answer
- Look at candidate
- Encourage with occasional nod
- Listen with open mind

**Don't:** Jump from one subject to another

- Ask multiple questions
- Ask trick questions
- Criticise the answer
- Interrupt
- Think about your next question while the candidate is still answering

**9. References should be:**

- Requested for successful candidate
- Ask for factual information only
- One from most recent employer
- Not be from family members
- Written not verbal

**10. Offer of employment** Note that a verbal offer of employment is legally binding but may be made subject to:

- Satisfactory references
- Proof of essential qualifications
- Proof of right to work in UK
- CRB check
- Probation.

Do send a confirmation letter with start date and information

### FINALLY – Welcome your new employee and don't forget

- Induction programme
- Issue of contract

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# GOVERNANCE Perspectives



**93 % of voluntary & community sector boards have between one and five vacancies**

## Trustees Down: between 1 & 5

**Get on Board** is a high profile campaign to promote trusteeship to the general public and is launching this month. The campaign partners are Governance Hub, Charity Commission and Volunteering England. You are urged to register **your board vacancies** and prepare for new recruits **now**. To register vacancies either contact your local Volunteer Centre – to be found at [www.volunteering.org.uk/finder](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/finder) or go to: [www.do-it.org.uk/needvolunteers](http://www.do-it.org.uk/needvolunteers)

View from

## NORTH HERTS

As trustee of a very small committee as well as Director of North Herts. CVS, I was looking forward to **Trustees Together Conference**. It seemed to be an ideal opportunity for networking and understanding what problems trustees had at grass roots level and comparing them to my own experiences. A good venue, wide attendance from trustees of several organisations reminded me of the saying "If you want something done, just give it to a busy person," I was also keen to talk to the numerous new trustees getting to grips with their roles & responsibilities, who were seeking shared knowledge. The workshop I attended proved equally interesting and stimulated a great deal of discussion and thought around email networks and support versus personal contact.

My general feeling at the end of the Conference was that many of us experience the same problems and it would be good to be able to share solutions in some way. If your trustee board is experiencing problems it can be very isolating and worrying for all involved. Information is more readily available than ever through a variety of sources and networks but we just need to learn where to find it.

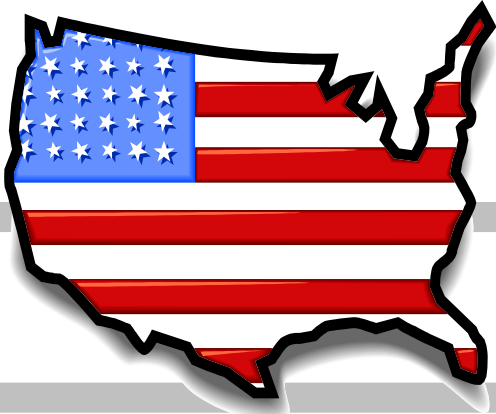


To keep Trustees Together: **ionne.hammond @savo.co.uk**  
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# CONFERENCE Perspectives



**NCVO's Governance that Works conference delegates received a USA view on Board performance**

## Boards Making A Difference

**William P Ryan a renowned academic and practitioner from the Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organisations, Harvard University.**

William Ryan described how forces such as board governance, access to capital, foundation grant making practices and competition with for-profit firms shape the capacity of nonprofits to deliver their missions. His own mission was to generate discussion about mission, strategy, problem solving and renewed purpose in leadership. He looked at three modes of governance (see below) that together enable effective trusteeship. A focus on creative/generative thinking, often neglected by Boards, enables the making of important decisions about mission and strategy, problem solve and fulfil potential.

<b>Board in Fiduciary Mode</b>	<b>Board in Strategic Mode</b>	<b>A Board Thinking Generatively</b>
<p><b>Board's Central purpose:</b> <i>Stewardship of tangible assets</i></p> <p><b>Principle role:</b> <i>Sentinel</i></p> <p><b>Board governs:</b> <i>The Productive Organisation</i></p> <p><b>Board's core work:</b> <i>Oversee operations Ensure efficient &amp; appropriate use of resources Ensure legal compliance &amp; fiscal accountability</i></p>	<p><b>Board's central purpose:</b> <i>Ensure winning strategy</i></p> <p><b>Principle role:</b> <i>Strategic partner to senior management</i></p> <p><b>Board governs:</b> <i>The Logical Organisation</i></p> <p><b>Board's core work:</b> <i>Scans internal &amp; external environments. Set priorities Reviews/modify strategic plan Monitors performance against plan</i></p>	<p><b>Definition:</b> <i>A cognitive process for deciding what to pay attention to, what it means, and what to do about it</i></p> <p><b>Familiar version:</b> <i>Paradigm shifts</i></p> <p><b>Less familiar:</b> <i>Organizational process</i></p> <p><b>Implication:</b> <i>Made explicit, generative thinking is governance</i></p>



## Conference Book Launch

**PICTURE THIS: a guide to scenario planning for voluntary organisations**  
By Caroline Copeman ISBN: 07199 1695 X



Ann Blackmore, Trustee of North Herts. CVS and Head of Policy at NCVO answers the \$64,000 question.

## Why did I become a Trustee?

All research on trusteeship finds that the reasons people volunteer are many and varied - and that is certainly true in my case. More a combination of reasons than one single one. I've an underlying belief that I should be doing something, and that it should be about my local community. I was aware of potential benefits for career development - volunteering and trusteeship offer the chance to develop skills and experiences not possible in normal jobs. But the real push came when I moved to a new town, I wanted to feel part of my new community and taking on a voluntary role seemed a good way to go about it. I decided on a trustee role as I work full time, and soon realised that I'd find it difficult to guarantee a weekly volunteering commitment. My increasingly feeble attempts to get to the gym regularly had established that I couldn't guarantee to be available on a specified regular evening. I needed a balance between a hectic demanding job, friends and family, and some form of voluntary activity. Trusteeship offered that. In addition, it seemed more likely that I could bring knowledge and skills which could be of value in such a role.

As to why a trustee of a CVS, well that was accidental. North Herts. CVS is based in Hitchin, where I live. So I rang Jackie Hime, their Director, to find out about local opportunities. The choice was pretty much the CVS or a local BMX club (appealing as I can claim to be a keen cyclist) For the last nine years I've worked for a large national infrastructure body - the National Council for Voluntary Organisations - developing policy on a wide range of issues affecting local organisations, such as good governance and relationships with local government. Taking a role at the local level was too good to miss. For the CVS, I could bring a detailed knowledge of the national policy agenda and good practice approaches to working. But in its turn, the trusteeship would give me the opportunity to gain a real understanding of what it all means in practice.

So, six months in, what have I learned? First, the huge difference between a relatively large, well resourced organisation and a small local organisation. In the latter, day-to-day activities take priority - there aren't people with spare time to review policies and procedures, let alone whole teams... and this is true for the Trustees too. Trustees volunteer to help run an organisation, rarely having the time or inclination to read their way through policy papers or best practice manuals from national bodies. Things taken for granted at the national level - the code of good governance, the Compact - may be completely unknown by local groups. I've also realised that it is not always clear what the role of a trustee is or should be. Despite coming with a degree of specialist knowledge, I still often feel that I'm groping around to understand what my role is.

In the long run I hope that there will be multiple benefits: that I bring useful skills to the CVS; that my work at NCVO benefits from a better understanding of the experiences of smaller organisations; but most of all that I will enjoy the experience.