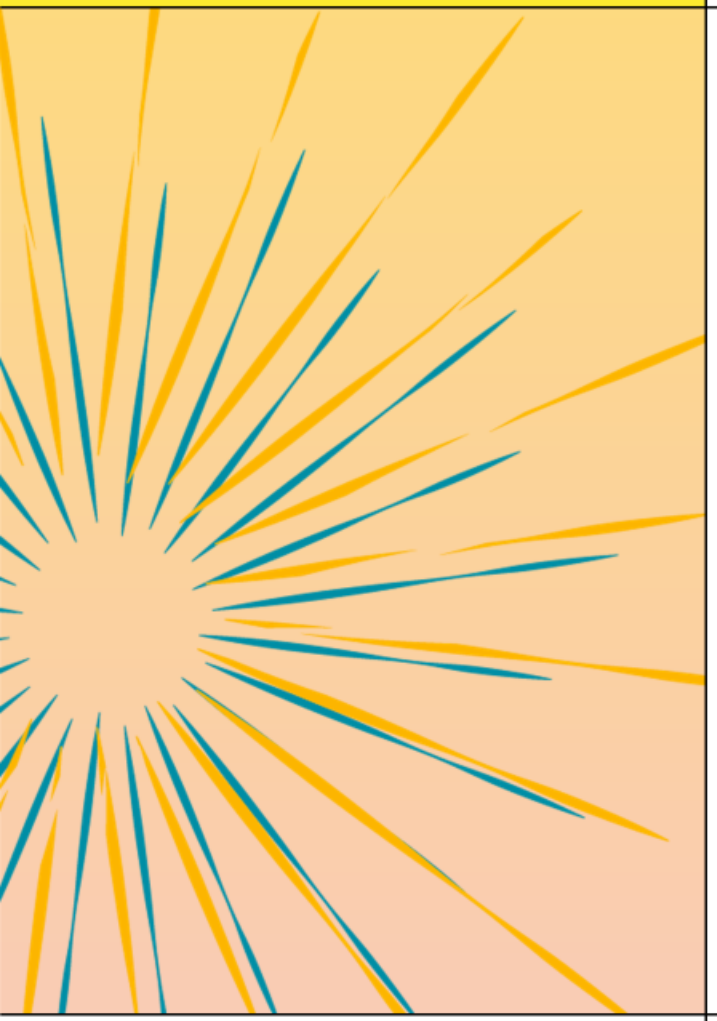
Eastside People

The Festival of Trusteeship 2026



What is a trustee and how do I become one?

6.00pm Tuesday 10th November

Aspiring trustee strand

Trustees' Week

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Welcome! We're so pleased you're joining us for this session.

This session will be recorded. Please stay muted unless we ask you to unmute. It helps to make sure everyone can clearly hear who is talking.

Closed captions are available; you need to enable these.

Please use the chat to ask questions and share experiences. We'd love to hear from you. Please keep your comments respectful, useful and accurate.

Please also feel free to ignore the chat and focus on the discussion if you'd prefer. We always read out questions fully.

If you don't already have one, you can still purchase a weekly pass. Please visit the Eastside People website for details.

https://eastsidepeople.org/resource/festival-of-trusteeship/

Trustees' Week

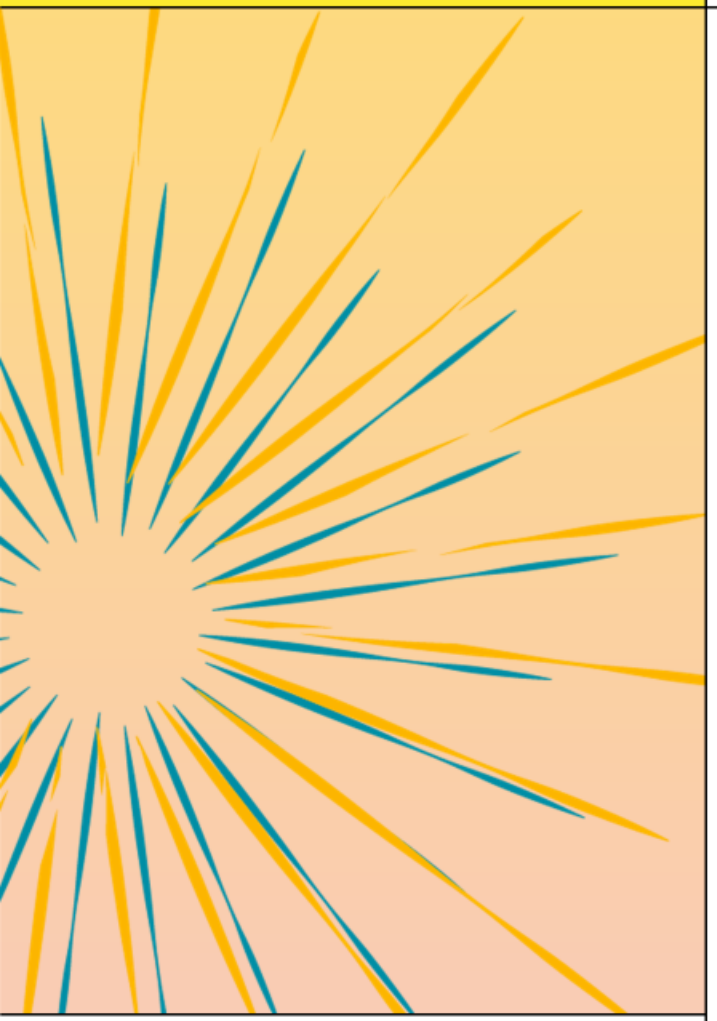
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Trustees' Week

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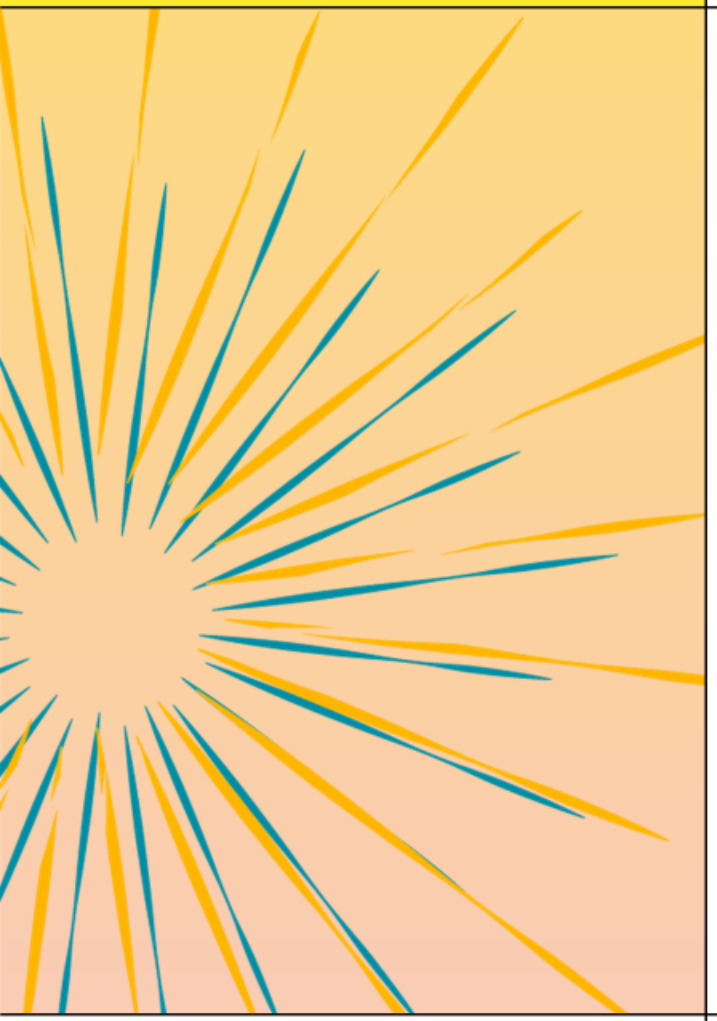
Charity Excellence Framework

Queer Trustees

Trustees' Week

Eastside People

The Festival of Trusteeship 2026



Presenter **Leon Ward**, Chief Executive Officer, TaxAid; Chair, Let Me Know

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Bloomin' Good

Trusteeship | Leadership | Strategy

Becoming a charity trustee

Leon Ward

Festival of Trusteeship

November 2026

me: explained

- **Trustee since 18**
- **CEO, TaxAid (from October 2026)**
- **Former CEO, Money Ready (2023-2026)**
- **Chair, Let Me Know (appointed 2025)**
- **Deputy Chair for six years**
- **Board committees of Refuge and The Children's Society**



What we will cover today

- The trustee landscape
- What type of charity are you looking for?
- Selecting a charity to focus on during the course
- How to present your skills and experience



Charities need you

Charities facing ‘trustee crisis’ with four in five reporting a vacancy

04 Nov 2024 News



Chongyang Zhang

115 articles

Email Twitter



By HBS / adobe

NCVO has said there is a “trustee crisis” after reporting that four in five charities in England and Wales are operating with at least one vacant position on their boards.

LATEST ARTICLES MOST READ

1 **Naomi Campbell wins permission to appeal charity trustee ban**

6 Feb 2025 NEWS

2 **Four major charities sue probate firm over £1m bequest dispute**

6 Feb 2025 NEWS

3 **Charity leaders criticise ‘tokenism’ in sector’s diversity efforts**

6 Feb 2025 NEWS

4 **BBC’s charity stresses independence from broadcaster after Elon Musk post**

6 Feb 2025 NEWS

"Trustees are **the backbone** of the charity sector"

What is a charity trustee?

- *"Trustees have overall control of a charity and are responsible for making sure it's doing what it was set up to do. They may be known by other titles, such as: directors; board members; governors; committee members.*
- *Whatever they are called, trustees are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run."*
- (The Charity Commission for England and Wales)

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

OSCR Scottish Charity Regulator

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland

"Trustees are 'the persons having the **general control and management** of the administration of a charity’."

6 core duties of trustees



The Governance Jigsaw – The Essential Trustee (CC3)



It's about knowing:

- what your charity can and can't do within its purposes
- how your charity is fulfilling its purposes and benefiting the public
- what difference your charity is really making

It's about being:

- familiar with your governing document
- up to date with filing accounts, returns and any changes to your charity's registration details
- aware of other laws that apply to your charity

It's not about being:

- an expert - but you do need to take reasonable steps to find out

It's about:

- making balanced, informed decisions
- recognising & dealing with conflicts of interest
- ensuring trustee benefits are allowed
- being prepared to question and challenge
- accepting majority decisions

It's not about:

- preserving the charity for its own sake
- serving personal interests

It's about:

- managing risks, protecting assets (reputation) and people
- getting the resources your charity needs
- having and following appropriate controls and procedures
- dealing with land and buildings
- responsibility for, and to, staff and volunteers

It's about:

- using your skills and experience
- deciding when you need advice
- preparing for meetings
- getting the information you need (financial, management)
- being prepared in case something does go wrong

It's about:

- meeting legal accounting and reporting requirements
- being able to show that your charity complies with the law and is effective
- being accountable to members and others with an interest in the charity
- ensuring that staff and volunteers are accountable to the board
- welcoming accountability as an opportunity not a burden

Governance Code 2025

- Refreshed November 2025: the sector’s benchmark
- Equity, diversity and inclusion is now a principle
- Boards should have a policy on technology and AI
- Tip: review yourselves against it?

Charity criticised for employing convicted killer



Rashid Zaman started working with children in 2021, and carried on doing so despite being added to the barred list in 2023

Louise Fewster

BBC Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Investigations

23 October 2025

A charity which employed a convicted murderer and allowed him to work with children for nearly two years despite him being banned from doing so made a "serious error", a regulator has found.

A report by the Charity Commission said it had reviewed evidence about Rashid Zaman, 44, from Bradford, who had worked for St Giles Trust, visiting schools and children's homes, after his release from a prison sentence for his part in killing a man in Halifax in 2001.

St Giles trustees had "breached their duties and responsibilities" and put children "at risk of harm", the report found.

Case study: Coventry City of Culture Trust

- Charity Commission findings, September 2026
- Trustees did not adequately oversee the charity’s finances
- They relied too heavily on the executive team for financial decisions
- They did not properly test whether the charity was financially sustainable
- A late £1m council loan it could not repay. The charity went into administration

Charities

- 171,539 charities in England and Wales (June 2026)
- Many trustees sit on more than one board



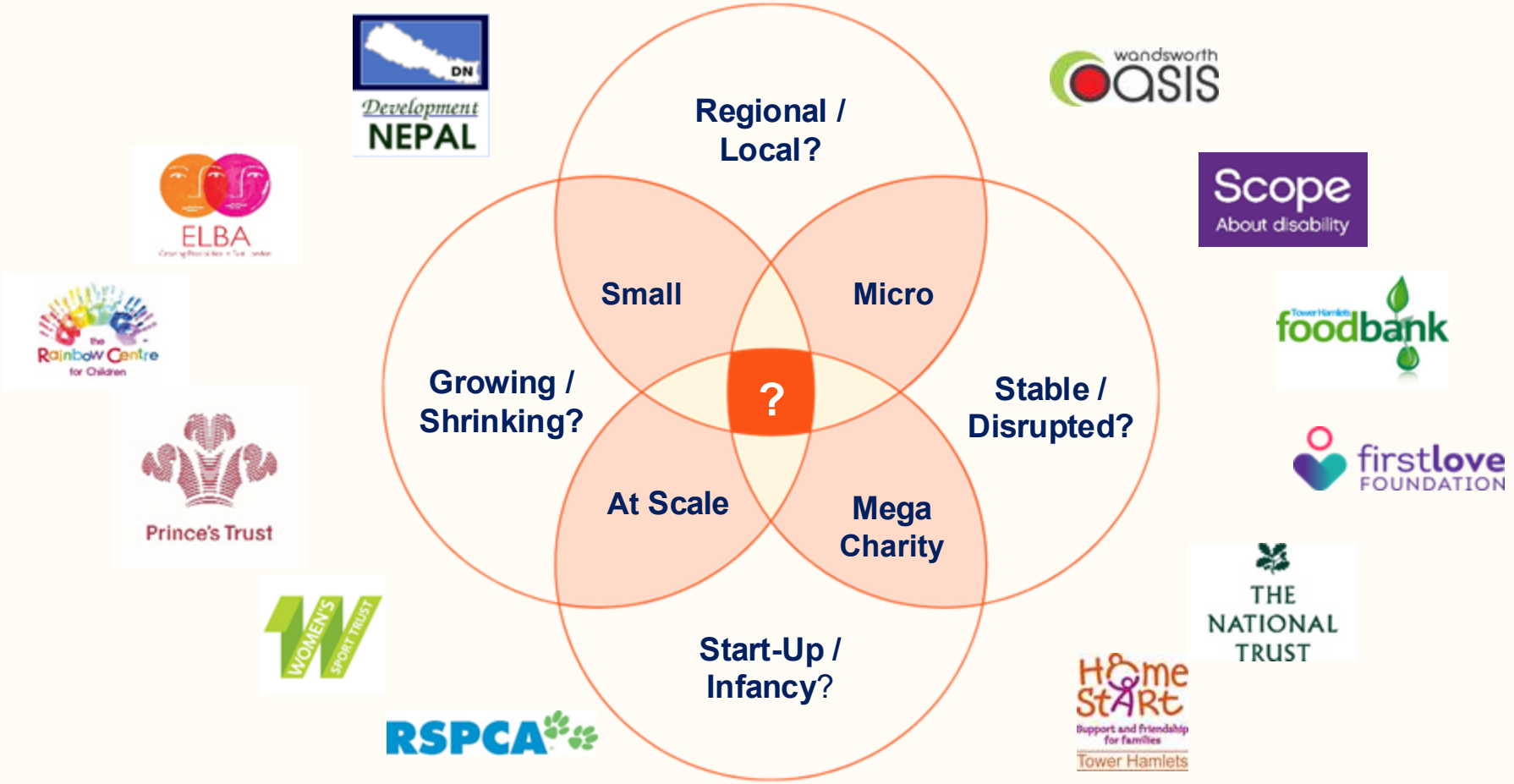
People

- 921,886 trustee positions
- 7,011,569 volunteers

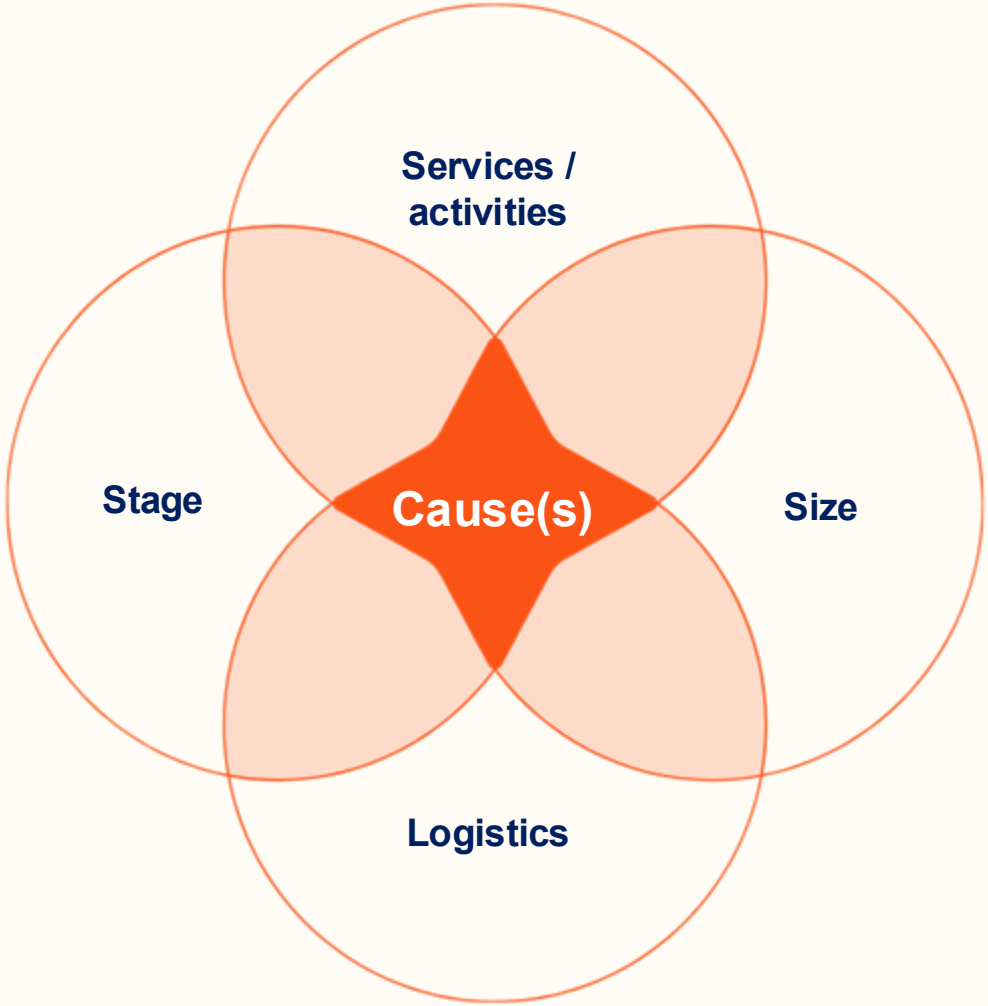
Most are very small

Income band	Name	Number of organisations	% of all organisations
Less than £10,000	Micro	74,242	44.79
£10,000 to £100,000	Small	58,546	35.32
£100,000 to £1m	Medium	26,253	15.84
£1m to £10m	Large	5,872	3.54
£10m to £100m	Major	782	0.47
More than £100m	Super-major	64	0.04
All organisations	**Total**	**165,758**	**100.00**

Let’s find your fit



To find your match:



Myths about charities

Myth 1: Trustees “manage” charities



Fact 1: Trustees lead charities



Myth 2: You will join the board of a large national charity

Oxfam

CANCER RESEARCH UK

British RedCross

Fact 2: You can expect to join a small or medium charity

mind for better mental health Lambeth and Southwark

Carers Hub Lambeth

THE FEATHERS ASSOCIATION

Link Age Southwark Communities supporting older people 25 YEARS

robes

Myth 3: You have to wait to be invited to become a trustee



Fact 3: You can apply to be a trustee

Trustee

- Manchester, Greater Manchester
- Voluntary position
- MANCHESTER PRIDE

Manchester Pride, the charity which exists to help celebrate LGBT+ life across Greater Manchester, is looking for new Trustees to join its Board.

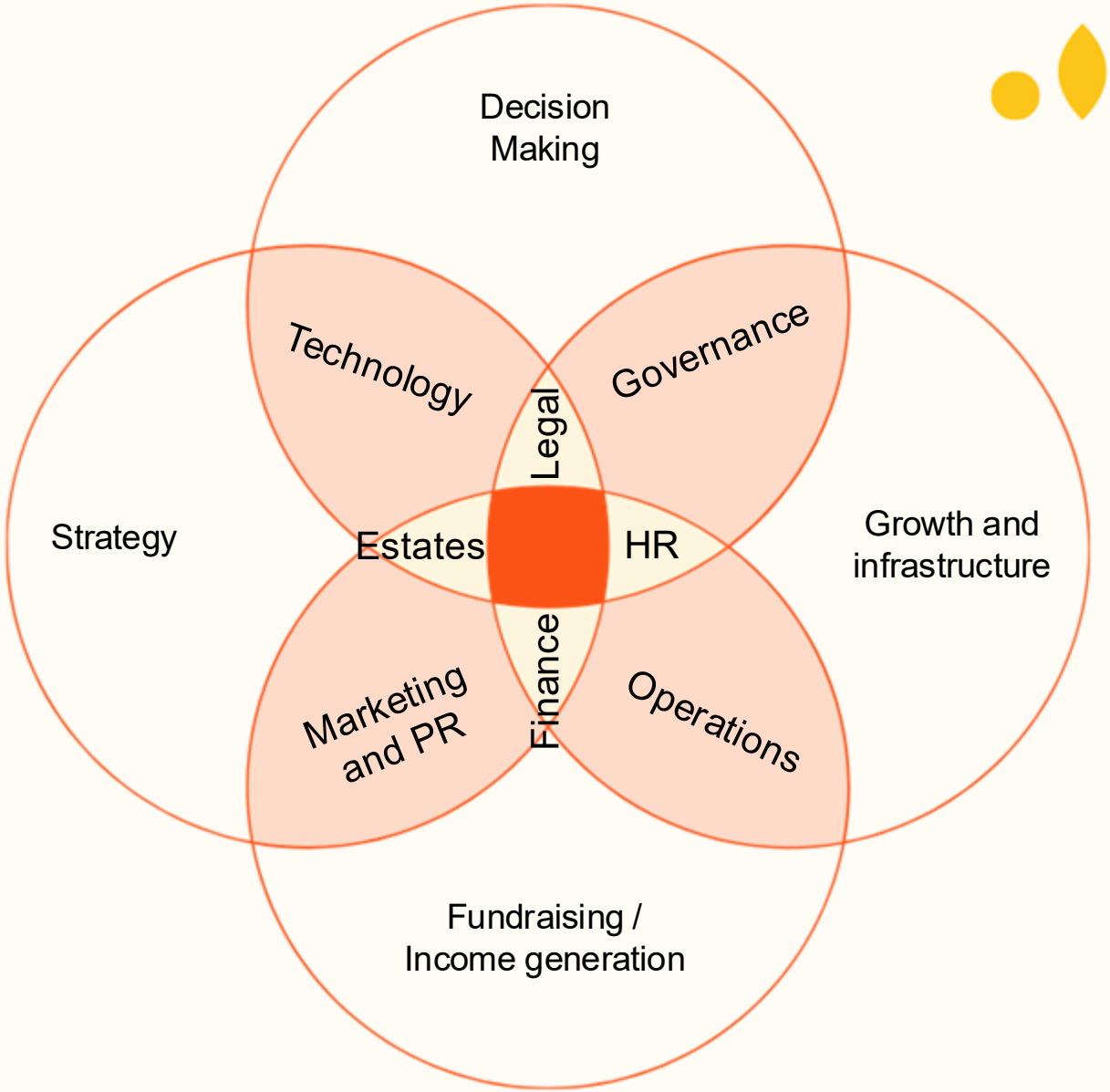
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However, there is work to do…
These groups are under-represented

- Young people: only 1% of trustees are 30 or under, and over half of trustees are retired. 8% of Trustees are 44 or under.
- Women: 43% of trustees, up from 36% in 2017.
- People of colour: 8% of trustees, against 17% of the population. No change since 2017.

Where do you fit in?



"**Diversity** is the art of thinking **independently together**."

Bringing your whole self to trusteeship

Work

Soft skills

Qualifications

Passion for the cause

Volunteering fundraising campaigning

Life experience



Three ways to find a role



Volunteering and shaking your network



Recruitment and vacancy listings



Speculative approaches

Vacancies

Trustees Unlimited

Young Trustees Movement

Guardian Trustee and Board Jobs

Reach Volunteering

Charity Job

Third Sector Jobs

Enter the Boardroom

Speculative approaches

- Look for charities working in your community
- Local press
- Volunteer in a different role first.
- Charity Commission website search

Does the charity meet your needs?

- Do you feel passionate about the charity's work?
- Logistics: When & where are meetings held? What's the time commitment & frequency?
- Are they asking for skills you have?
- Personal development: will it deliver what you want to get from it?
- Any conflicts of interest?

How to do due diligence

Due diligence



Is it incorporated?
Check Companies House. Directors now verify their ID



Existing board
Charity Commission entry, their website



Ask questions when you meet them



Annual report and accounts Charity Commission entry



General
their website

Questions to ask the charity



Can you share/talk me through the organisation strategy?



What are you looking for from new trustees?



What is the board culture like?



What are the key challenges over the next 3-5 years?



What does the ‘in tray’ look like for incoming trustees?



What is keeping you and the staff awake at night?

Self study

Refresh your CV

Explore some vacancies you are interested in

Apply

Bloomin' Good

thank you

leon@bloomingood.org
LinkedIn: Leon Ward

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The Festival of Trusteeship 2026

Thanks for joining us

Charity Trustee Hub: The one-stop shop for resources, events, and top tips for charity trustees.

https://bit.ly/4yY9Rtv

Trustee vacancies:
See current vacancies and sign up for updates.

https://bit.ly/4zr8u7S

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