

northchurch
social centre

Board and Committee Pack

2024

Introduction

With an estimated annual footfall of 30,000 people, Northchurch Social Centre is the most heavily used community facility in our village, and we take our responsibility to maintain and develop it very seriously. The centre is truly a bridge where widely diverse individuals can come together to exercise, march, eat, worship, play, paint, sing, sew, learn and so many other things.

Our staff and volunteers are what make our work possible, and our trustee and committee members are a vital part of this.

This pack explains how our trustee board and committee meetings operate and what they try to achieve. It also explains how you can apply to join the team and become a part of this thriving community asset.

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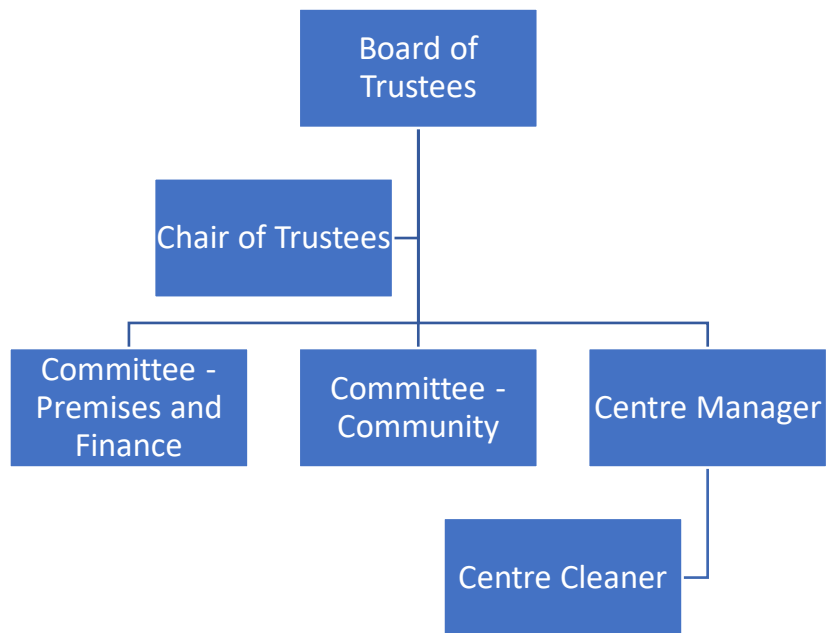
Aims of the charity

The publicly stated aims or objects of the charity are:

- *To promote the well-being of the residents in Northchurch and surrounding areas by associating public authorities concerned, voluntary organisations, other parties and residents in a common effort to further health, to advance education, to provide facilities for physical and mental training and recreation, and social, moral and intellectual development, and to foster a community spirit for the achievement of these and other charitable objects.*
- *To maintain, manage and develop the community centre (hereinafter called the "centre") or to co-operate with any local statutory authority, authorities or other parties in the community in the maintenance and management of such a centre, for activities promoted by the Association and its constituent bodies in furtherance of the foregoing objects or any of them.*

The Social Centre is far more than a building that needs to be run at a financial profit or surplus. It is a community asset that is here to enable different people and groups to meet so that the village can be a healthy and resilient place to live.

Overview of our structure



The **Board of Trustees** is a group of between three and five people who collectively hold the legal responsibility for the charity. They are personally insured against liabilities that the charity might face.

The **Premises and Finance Committee** manage the finances and the maintenance and development of the building.

The **Community Committee** is responsible for engaging with the community and maximising usage of the building in a way that supports the health of the community.

The **staff** have individual role descriptions and are line managed by the **Chair of Trustees**.

Trustee role

The purpose of the role is to be part of the trustee board that collectively take independent and legal control of the charity to ensure that:

- The charity's objectives are met.
- The charity complies with its governing document.
- The charity operates in the public interest in a safe and responsible way.
- The charity remains solvent and avoids unnecessary risk.
- The charity is well run and that adequate accountability is in place for staff.
- The scope of delegated responsibilities of the committees and staff are clearly defined.
- They approve significant expenditure above the levels authorised to the committees.
- They vote to appoint new board members.

The duties of trustees are:

- To personally prepare for and attend quarterly board meetings.
- To act collectively with the board to ensure that items are budgeted for and accounts are created.
- To act with reasonable care and skill to extend the scale and quality of impact in both the short and long term.
- To be available, from time to time, during the working week, to support the Chair and staff team on specific areas where the Trustee has skills.
- To declare any conflicts of interest.
- To support and mentor other trustees when they join.

All prospective trustees should also read the following information from the Charity Commission before applying for a place on the board:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-what-you-need-to-do>

People who apply for a place on the board should show the following characteristics:

- A strong personal commitment to the aims of the Social Centre.
- A desire and capacity to make an active contribution to the charity outside of board meetings. We are a small charity and need active, available people who are willing to volunteer for necessary tasks and see that they get done.
- A desire to serve the wider needs of the community outside of their own personal preferences or the preferences of organisations they are currently involved in.
- A history of volunteering and helping within Northchurch or other communities.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of a charity Trustee.

In addition we require applicants to have already served on one of the Social Centre's committees.

This is a voluntary post, although reasonable expenses may be reimbursed.

Although the charity is permitted to carry out business electronically, for example with video calls and emails, Trustees are expected to attend quarterly evening board meetings in person and be available to visit the centre as the need arises.

If you would like to discuss the role of trustee informally and in confidence, please contact Mark Kitson, our chair of Trustees, at mark@northchurch-social-centre.co.uk.

Chair's role

In addition to the responsibilities of a trustee the purpose of the chair is to keep the charity on track and moving forward; and ensure that trustees fulfil their roles.

The role of the chair is to:

- Plan and run trustee meetings.
- Take the lead on ensuring that meetings are properly run and recorded.
- Take the lead on ensuring that trustees comply with their duties and the charity is well governed.
- Act as a spokesperson for the charity.
- Act as a link between trustees and staff by line managing the Centre Manager.

A chair of trustees is normally given to someone who has previously served as a trustee at the Social Centre. They are appointed through a vote at the trustee board.

Committee responsibilities

The **Premises and Finance Committee** manage the finances and the maintenance and development of the building. The committee's responsibilities are:

- To meet at least once per quarter.
- Produce quarterly financial reports.
- Produce annual accounts.
- To have a continual awareness of the state of repair of the building and to find cost effective solutions to addressing them.
- To display good technical knowledge of the construction and maintenance requirements of the building, and to have in place a plan to address them.
- To manage all aspects of investment and refurbishment projects defined by the trustees.
- To take on any other tasks which are delegated by the trustee board.
- To seek board approval for spends over £400.

The **Community Committee** is responsible for engaging with the community and maximising usage of the building in a way that supports the health of the community. The committee's responsibilities are:

- To meet at least once per quarter.
- To have a continual awareness of the hirers of the centre, their needs and any actions that need to be taken to support or respond to these.
- To engage with other groups and individuals in the community in order to create partnerships and opportunities for activities that will have a positive impact on the community.
- To organise community events from time to time.
- To take on any other tasks which are delegated by the trustee board.
- To seek board approval for spends over £400.

People who wish to join a committee should show the following characteristics:

- A strong personal commitment to the aims of the Social Centre.
- Availability to attend quarterly evening meetings in person.
- A desire and time capacity to make an active contribution to the charity outside of meetings. We are a small charity and need active, available people who are willing to volunteer for necessary tasks and see that they get done.
- Relevant skills which they feel will be of help to the committee and Social Centre.
- A desire to serve the wider needs of the community outside of their own personal preferences or the preferences of organisations they are currently involved in.

Anyone can volunteer to join our committees. To find out more information and to have an informal conversation please contact the Centre Manager at info@northchurch-social-centre.co.uk.