



Community
advice and law service

Trustee recruitment pack | 2023



Contents

Contents.....	2
1. About CALS.....	3
1.1 What we do.....	3
1.2 CALS vision and mission	4
1.3 Our values	4
2. About the roles	6
2.1 Positions and experience required.....	6
2.2 Your commitment to CALS	6
2.3 CALS’ commitment to you.....	7
2.4 Current trustees	7
3. How to apply and timescale.....	8
4. Role descriptions.....	9
4.1 Role Description for Trustees/Directors.....	9
4.2 Role description for Chair of the Board of Trustees.....	11
4.3 Role description for Treasurer	13
5. Contact.....	16

1. About CALS

1.1 What we do

Community Advice and Law Service (CALs) has been working to support the people of Leicester and Leicestershire for more than 40 years through the provision of independent, confidential advice, casework and representation on a range of social welfare issues. Last year, we dealt with nearly £13 million in problem debt, and we put over £2.5 million back in the pockets of local residents.

Our services include:

- Specialist level advice and casework with regard to debt, housing, welfare benefits and immigration
- Outreach services at community venues in order to reach the most vulnerable clients
- Representation at Leicester County Court on debt and housing matters
- Representation at welfare benefits tribunals
- Advice on energy matters

We work closely with statutory agencies and other voluntary sector organisations to ensure that we are reaching the individuals and communities who are most in need. We deliver our services from our premises in central Leicester; from our office at Leicester County Court; from a range of outreach locations such as foodbanks, libraries and community centres; and by telephone/video call. We are also able to offer home visits in exceptional circumstances.

CALS plays a leading role in the regional advice sector. We have been the lead agency for the East Midlands Money Advice project since 2006, and we also coordinate the East Midlands Immigration Network. We proactively seek to influence decision-makers on issues that affect our clients through our participation in local, regional and national networks. We are a member of [Advice UK](#) and we currently in the process of applying to join the [Law Centres Network](#).

Our services are externally accredited through [Lexcel](#), the legal practice quality mark. Our debt advice is regulated by the [Financial Conduct Authority](#) and we are authorised by the [Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner](#) to provide specialist level immigration advice. CALs is a registered charity (no. 1087214) and a company limited by guarantee (no. 04096574).

Our work is currently funded by the Money and Pensions Service; the Access to Justice Foundation; Leicester City Council; the Energy Redress Scheme; Independent Age; the Justice Together Initiative; the NHS; and our legal aid contract. We are constantly seeking to develop and diversify our income streams in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of our services. More information is available on the [CALs website](#).

1.2 CALS vision and mission

Our vision is of a fair and inclusive society in which everyone has access to justice and the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Our mission is to empower people to live happier lives by providing professional advice and advocacy that enables them to resolve their problems effectively.

In doing this, we aim to:

- Enable people to assert and enforce their rights
- Empower people to improve their circumstances
- Give a voice to those who are unheard
- Support people to make positive changes in their lives
- Enhance people’s overall sense of wellbeing
- Build resilience in individuals and at a community level
- Promote a fairer and more inclusive society.

We seek to deliver this mission by:

- Providing free, independent, confidential and quality-assured legal advice services to individuals across the area of benefit, for the advantage of the public, subject to funding constraints
- Promoting self-help where appropriate and offer casework support for those unable to deal with legal matters alone
- Ensuring that all services are available to all sections of the population irrespective of sex, gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, and social class, and challenging all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

1.3 Our values

Our values were developed by our staff team and agreed by the board.

Values	What does this mean in practice?
Making a positive difference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are ambitious about the positive impact that CALS can have for our clients and for the community as a whole ▪ We are leaders in our sector, and we believe that we can influence local and national decision-making ▪ We work hard to demonstrate the value of what we do ▪ We celebrate our successes

<p>Collaborating effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We listen to each other; to our clients; to our partners; and to other voices within the community ▪ We value teamwork, and we work constructively and collaboratively with others, both within the team and with partners/other stakeholders ▪ Staff, trustees and volunteers feel valued as part of a community within CALS
<p>Respecting the dignity of individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We ensure that everyone is treated with respect and dignity ▪ We adopt a holistic approach to supporting our clients ▪ We strive to ensure that our services are genuinely inclusive and accessible to all ▪ We work hard to ensure equality of opportunity for our staff and volunteers
<p>Pursuing excellence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We work hard to develop our knowledge, skills and competence ▪ We each take personal responsibility for our work ▪ We share best practice within the organisation and beyond ▪ We take pride in what we do
<p>Working with compassion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are caring, empathetic and non-judgemental towards our clients ▪ We treat each other with patience and kindness ▪ We are compassionate towards ourselves
<p>Acting with integrity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are consistently guided by our values ▪ We deliver on our promises ▪ We own our mistakes ▪ We hold each other to account ▪ We communicate openly, honestly and transparently, but with respect for the feelings of others ▪ We work hard to build trust with each other, with our clients and with our partners
<p>Being open to change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We monitor and respond to the changing needs of the community ▪ We are committed to learning and continuous improvement ▪ We welcome new ideas and actively seek them out ▪ We are creative, resourceful and resilient in our response to challenges ▪ We embrace change and new ways of working

2. About the roles

2.1 Positions and experience required

We are looking for:

- A chair
- A treasurer
- Other trustees

These are voluntary roles for which reasonable expenses are available.

CALS current chair, Chris Smith, and Treasurer, Jim Munton, have both been long-term members of CALS. They have both stayed on longer than planned during a period of uncertainty, with a new Chief Executive and consultation on the recommissioning of our largest grant with the Money and Pensions Service. As CALS is currently more stable we are now in a position for change on the board.

We welcome people with a range of relevant skills and experience. In particular we are looking for the following:

- Finance and accounting
- Marketing, communications, PR, social media
- Business skills such as experience director or senior manager level
- Social enterprise
- High net worth, corporate and community fundraising
- ICT and cybersecurity
- Human resources and employment law
- Property management

However, we are interested in applications from people with any skills and experience that could benefit CALS. We welcome people with lived experience of any of the issues that we advise on. We would also like to increase the ethnic diversity of our board.

2.2 Your commitment to CALS

Board meetings are held quarterly, currently in the evenings at CALS offices in Leicester, although there is also the opportunity to join virtually on occasion. There are currently two subgroups of the board that also meet quarterly: a strategy sub-group and a people sub-group, and board members will normally be expected to be a member of a sub-group.

There is at least one board awayday per year, and board members are also invited to attend staff awaydays.

The chair and treasurer will be expected to liaise with senior managers to carry out their roles effectively.

Being able to take on some work between meetings connected to the business of the board is desirable but not essential for ordinary members.

2.3 CALS' commitment to you

You will have the opportunity to work with a committed group of trustees, staff and volunteers who want to make a difference to people in the local area. This can include using the knowledge and skills that you have and gaining new ones.

Trustees will receive an induction to the organisation and its people. The board receives appropriate administrative support from staff to carry out its role. Although the role is unpaid, we can pay reasonable expenses, such as travel, to trustees.

2.4 Current trustees

CALS trustees are listed below.

- Becky Nixon
- Chris Smith
- Hannah Fountain
- Jim Munton
- Mary Collier
- Raj Gill-Harrison

Current trustees have a range of experience and skills including a family law barrister, deputy CEO in a local charity, delivering, managing and supporting advice services, the director of a small voluntary sector consultancy, anti-poverty work, community needs analysis and engagement, finance, ICT, commissioning and grants, research and impact assessment, unpaid caring, health and social care, equity, diversity and inclusion, organisational development and partnership work, and volunteer management.

3. How to apply and timescale

To discuss this role further with the CEO or our current Chair, please contact Liz Chahal, CEO at trustee.recruitment@advice-cals.org.uk or 07706 737110.

To express your interest, please send your CV and a covering letter of up to 500 words that adds anything extra to your CV about your experience and why you are interested in being a CALS Trustee to at trustee.recruitment@advice-cals.org.uk

We are accepting applications on an ongoing basis between now and October, but for an opportunity to attend our next board meeting to find out more about us, we have set the following schedule:

Monday 17 July	Close of applications
Monday 24 July pm	Informal discussion with the CEO and two board members
Wednesday 16 August 6.15pm	Attendance as an observer at board meeting
Wednesday 15 November 6.15pm	AGM to be formally accepted onto the board

Please let us know if you are unable to meet this timescale, as other arrangements can be made.

4. Role descriptions

There is a general role description, which all Trustees/Directors need to meet. There are then specific role descriptions for the Chair and Treasurer roles.

4.1 Role Description for Trustees/Directors

We are seeking new trustees to join the board at the Community Advice and Law Service in Leicester help with the governance and strategic direction of the charity. This position offers an opportunity to make a significant impact on the lives of those in need in our community and to the charity.

Who are the Charity's Trustees?

The Charities Act 1993 defines charity trustees as the people responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity, regardless of what they are called. For the Community Advice and Law Service (CALs), the charity trustees are known as Directors and are members of The Board of Directors (The Board).

The Role of the Board of Directors

Directors have and must accept, ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of CALs and ensuring that it is solvent, well-run and meeting the needs for which it has been established. The Board must act as a group and not as individuals.

The Statutory Duties of a Director of CALs

The statutory duties of a Board Member are:

- To ensure that CALs complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that CALs pursues its charitable objectives as defined in its governing document.
- To ensure CALs uses its resources in pursuance of its objects.
- To contribute strategic direction to CALs, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of CALs.
- To ensure the financial stability of CALs.
- To appoint and support the Chief Executive Officer and monitor his/her performance.

Other Duties

In addition to the above statutory duties, each Director should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board reach sound decisions. This may involve:

- Leading discussions
- Scrutinising papers
- Focusing on key strategic issues
- Providing guidance on new initiatives
- Other issues in which the trustee has special expertise

Person specification

In line with “[Nolan’s Seven Principles](#)” (Committee of Standards in Public Life established in 1994), which these principles underpin the CALS Trustee/Director role.

Selflessness

- Directors should take decisions solely in terms of CALS’s interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

- Directors should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

- In carrying out CALS business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, Directors should make choices on merit.

Accountability

- Directors are accountable for their decisions and actions to CALS and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate.

Openness

- Directors should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions.

Honesty

- Directors have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects CALS's interest.

Leadership

- Directors should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Other requirements

In addition to the principles above, each Director must:

- Be committed to the mission of CALS
- Be willing and able to devote the necessary time and effort to the role
- Respect confidentiality
- Develop and share the strategic vision
- Have good, independent judgement
- Speak their mind but also work as a team and support decisions made by Directors collectively
- Understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.

4.2 Role description for Chair of the Board of Trustees

We are seeking a dynamic and experienced individual to assume the position of Chair of the Board of Directors/Trustees at the Community Advice and Law Service in Leicester. As the Chair, you will provide strategic leadership, guidance, and support to our charity, ensuring the fulfilment of our mission and the effective operation of the organisation. This position offers a unique opportunity to make a significant impact on the lives of those in need in our community and to the charity.

Responsibilities

Leadership and Governance

- Provide strategic vision, direction, and leadership to the organisation, ensuring alignment with its mission, values, and objectives.
- Ensure that the trustees set overall strategy and policy objectives.
- Oversee the governance structure and ensure compliance with all legal and regulatory duties of charities, including Charity Commission guidelines and best practices.
- Ensure that the organisation has appropriate procedures compliant with current employment, equal opportunities and anti-discrimination legislation and good practice.
- Regularly review performance of individual Directors/Trustees and the Board as a whole.

- In co-operation with the CEO and other board members, to ensure that all Trustees receive appropriate advice, training and information relating to their role.
- Chair board meetings, fostering an inclusive and collaborative environment, and actively engage with board members to maximize their contributions.

Relationship Management

- Represent the charity and act as an ambassador, building and nurturing strong relationships with stakeholders, including donors, partners, government agencies, and the public.
- Assist in the recruitment and selection of new trustees and in their training and induction.
- Develop and maintain strategic partnerships and collaborations to advance the charity's goals and expand its reach and impact.
- Collaborate with the CEO, Senior Management Team, and other staff to facilitate effective communication and teamwork within the organisation.

Strategic Planning and Development

- Work closely with the board and Senior Management Team to develop and refine the charity's strategic plans, goals, and objectives.
- Ensure that the Trustees set overall strategy and policy objectives.
- Ensure that the organisation's financial dealings are prudently and systematically accounted for, audited and publicly available.
- Monitor progress against the strategic plan, assess risks, and identify opportunities for growth and improvement.
- Ensure that appropriate resources (personnel, financial, material) are secured with which to achieve the agreed goals.
- To be responsible for the recruitment and induction of the CEO together with other members of the Board as appropriate, and in consultation with current post holder.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of fundraising strategies to ensure financial sustainability and support the charity's programs and initiatives.

Advocacy and Public Relations

- Serve as a spokesperson for the charity, effectively communicating its mission, achievements, and impact to various stakeholders, media, and the public.
- Advocate for the charity's causes and represent its interests in relevant forums, conferences, and public events.
- Build public awareness and support for the charity's work through media engagement, public speaking, and networking.

Person specification

We are looking for someone who can demonstrate some of the following:

- Demonstrated commitment to the charity's mission and values.
- Experience in a leadership role, preferably as a Board Chair, in either the non-profit or other sector.
- Experience as a trustee or senior executive in the non-profit sector.
- Good knowledge of governance principles, legal and regulatory requirements applicable to charities in the UK.
- Strong strategic thinking and planning skills, with the ability to translate vision into actionable plans.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills including tact and diplomacy with the ability to engage and inspire diverse stakeholders.
- Proven track record in building and maintaining effective relationships with donors, partners, and government agencies.
- Ability to be impartial, fair, and to respect confidences.
- Financial acumen and experience in fundraising, budgeting, and financial oversight.
- Ability to work collaboratively with the board, CEO, and staff to achieve organisational goals.
- High level of integrity, ethical conduct, and commitment to transparency and accountability.
- Ability to ensure that the Trustees set overall strategy and policy objectives.
- It is desirable that the Chair also has knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the organisation and a wider involvement with the voluntary sector and other network.

4.3 Role description for Treasurer

We are seeking a skilled and detail-oriented individual to take on the role of Treasurer at the Community Advice and Law Service in Leicester. As the Treasurer, you will play a vital role in managing the financial affairs of the charity, ensuring the effective and responsible stewardship of its resources. This position offers an opportunity to contribute your financial expertise and make a significant impact on the lives of those in need and the charity.

Responsibilities

Financial Management

- Oversee the charity's financial operations, including budgeting, accounting, and financial reporting.

- In collaboration with the Finance Officer, develop and implement financial policies, procedures, and controls to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, as well as good financial governance practices.
- Monitor and analyse the organisation's financial performance, providing regular reports and recommendations to the board and senior management.
- Budgeting and Forecasting
- Collaborate with the board, CEO, Finance Officer and relevant stakeholders to develop the annual budget, ensuring alignment with the charity's strategic goals and objectives.
- Monitor budget execution and provide regular updates on financial performance, variances, and forecasts.
- Identify opportunities to optimise financial resources and improve efficiency in collaboration with the board and senior management.

Financial Reporting and Compliance

- In collaboration with the Finance Officer, prepare accurate and timely financial statements, including income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements, in accordance with relevant accounting standards and guidelines.
- Ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements, including those set by the Charity Commission and other regulatory bodies.
- Liaise with external auditors and coordinate the annual audit process, providing all necessary financial documentation and information.

Risk Management

- Assess and manage financial risks, including identifying potential areas of vulnerability and implementing appropriate controls and mitigation measures.
- Keep abreast of changes in financial regulations, laws, and accounting practices that may impact the charity's financial operations and advise the board and senior management accordingly.
- Safeguard the charity's assets, ensuring the appropriate use and allocation of funds in accordance with donor restrictions and organisational policies.

Relationship Management:

- Collaborate with the Chair, board members, and other stakeholders to ensure financial transparency, address financial enquiries, and provide necessary financial information and reports.
- Foster positive relationships with banks, financial institutions, and external vendors or suppliers to optimise financial services and resources.
- Support fundraising initiatives by providing financial insights, assisting with grant applications, and maintaining accurate records of donor contributions.

Person specification

We are looking for someone who can demonstrate some of the following:

- A strong commitment to the mission and values of the charity.
- Experience in financial management, accounting, or auditing, preferably within the non-profit sector.
- A good knowledge of financial regulations, accounting standards, and relevant legislation applicable to charities in the UK.
- Some experience of charity fundraising and pension schemes.
- Ability to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences.
- Proficiency in financial software and systems, and in spreadsheet and data analysis tools.
- Ability to make unpopular recommendations to the board of trustees where, for example, a project is not financially viable or where the continuation of an activity or maintenance of paid staff role creates a financial risk to the organisation.
- Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills, with a keen attention to detail and accuracy.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to communicate financial information effectively to diverse stakeholders.
- Able to work collaboratively in a team environment and interact with individuals at all levels of the organisation.
- Integrity, ethical conduct, and a commitment to transparency and accountability in financial management.
- It is desirable that the Treasurer has a professional qualification in finance, accounting, or a related field.

5. Contact

Registered office:

1st floor, Epic House, Charles Street,
Leicester, LE1 3SH.

Registered Company Limited by
Guarantee 04096574. Registered
Charity Number 1087214.



0116 242 1120



enquiries@advice-cals.org.uk



<https://www.cals.uk.net/>



<https://www.facebook.com/cals4advice/>

<https://twitter.com/CALSfreeadvice>