

Trustee Recruitment & Information Pack

2023



This pack contains information about Rite to Freedom (R2F) and our ways of working. We are looking for people who feel intrigued and excited by the possibility of becoming part of our organisation. Your questions and ideas are very welcome throughout the process to ali@ritetofreedom.org.uk.

Contents:

About Us	1
Why We Want New Trustees	1
Seeking Diversity	2
Role Description - Trustee	3
Role Description - Trustee Treasurer	4
Person Specification	5
What is it like to be a Trustee in Rite to Freedom?	6
Practicalities	7
R2F Community Council	7
Trustee Recruitment Schedule	8
Appendix 1: Matters reserved for the Trustees	10

About Us

Rite to Freedom (R2F) supports those in recovery from addiction through mentoring, self-empowerment, wilderness experiences, and the power of personal stories. By offering opportunities for creativity, nature connection and mindfulness, we support a thriving and growing recovery community to live with meaning, purpose, and enjoyment.

Our vision is of a society where people's actions (such as substance abuse or crime) are understood as being an expression of dysfunctional families, communities, and societies – in which a healthy means of development and expression were not modelled or available. R2F believes that everyone should have equal access to supportive communities; natural environments; opportunities to learn healthy ways of expressing and untangling confusing life stories; and exciting, creative, and inspirational experiences.

We encourage you to explore our website to fully understand the who, why, what, how, and when of our work. Our most recent Trustees Report and Financial Statements are also available [here](#).

Why We Want New Trustees

The wisdom brought by our trustees often comes from the sense of perspective available from stepping back from the day-to-day work, as well as **drawing on their own lived experience or their work** in potentially aligned social, cultural, or economic fields. We seek to recruit several new trustees who will **support the ongoing evolution and development of the charity**.

Trustees are part of:

- Exploring and guiding our strategic direction
- Exercising the responsibilities required by [England & Wales charity law](#)
- Taking other roles in our team and structure as skills, capacity, interest and opportunity allow.

Currently R2F has three trustees: [Chris](#) (chair), [Lynsey](#), and [Virginia](#). Chris has already served two terms (8 years+) and Lynsey is leaving due to other commitments/change of circumstances. We are hoping to recruit **two Co-Chairs** who would offer ongoing mutual support as part of the running of the board. We are also looking for a **Treasurer** and at least one more new trustee.

Chris Lomas (current Chair) has provided an account of his experience as a trustee:

“The cornerstone of a trustee’s duties is to always act in the best interests of the charity itself. It is our experience over the years that part of acting in the best interest of the charity is knowing when to step down as a member of the board. As current trustees our wish was to hand

*the custodianship of R2F over to new board members in a state of good health. Over the last 2 years particularly, R2F has grown in terms of its reach within the addiction recovery community and diversified in terms of what it is able to offer members of the community. The charity itself is financially stable and the staff team is well embedded and highly skilled. **It feels the right time to hand the baton over to new trustees with a new focus, a new energy and new ideas to ensure the long term stability of the charity in order that it can continue to enhance the recovery journey of participants and change lives.***

*“I came to R2F as a voice of the recovery community, a link between the board and those of us in recovery. I was unemployed and I was uncertain I was in the right place. I leave as a fully qualified Psychotherapist with 8 years as a board member and certain I have been in the right place. There have been considerable financial challenges over that time period, we have come within weeks of closing the charity down, there have been personal challenges.....managing conflict, finding that elusive work life balance and trusting my voice in making strategic decisions. **I have however always believed in the work, believed in R2F’s capacity to change lives, because it helped change mine.**”*

Seeking Diversity

We are actively seeking to recruit individuals whose background or lived experiences will bring extra depth and/or a diversity of perspectives into the R2F team, particularly those who may have direct experience of addiction recovery - in the widest sense e.g., substance, behavioural, mental health. Other forms of diversity might include people:

- From a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- From working class backgrounds
- Living with disabilities
- From a range of ages and sexualities
- Who have experienced disadvantage in society or their lives

Role Description - Trustee

By becoming a trustee, you also **become a member of the R2F team and wider community**, and are expected to:

- Bring your skills, experience and knowledge into discussions exploring/agreeing changes to R2F's strategic focus or organisational changes, in consultation with the wider R2F community - such uses of your skills, experience, qualities, and interests are usually outside of trustees meetings and could involve online meetings, emails, drafting documents, commenting on documents, representing or speaking on behalf of R2F, and/or attending events.
- Be able to attend trustee meetings/strategy gatherings, as well as other online or in-person meetings as required. This may include some weekend and evening working.
- Support the growth of R2F as a community-led, grassroots organisation including the growth of all current and new funding initiatives and income stream developments.
- Be able to respond to messages via various comms channels and/or comment on online documents relating to the work of R2F.
- Maintain a prompt and accountable communication line between board and wider R2F team to ensure relevant and important decisions needed on the ground are responded to and made in a timely manner.
- Be part of a board that acts as 'elders' with a focus on pastoral care, who can be consulted in an objective, supportive capacity.

The legal role of trustee in relation to England & Wales charity and company law involves:

- Matters reserved for the trustees relating to finances, funding, risks, policies and other aspects of their legal responsibilities:
 - Analyse, consider and discuss information prepared for the group of trustees
 - Make recommendations and agree actions
 - Take collective decisions.
- Being able to attend at least four x 2-hour online Trustees Meetings per year, as well as any other online or in-person meetings required.
- Being able to respond to emails and comment on online documents relating to matters reserved for the trustees. (See appendix)

Role Description - Trustee Treasurer

In addition to the general trustee responsibilities listed above, the specific responsibilities of R2F's Trustee Treasurer:

- Offer broad perspective and recommendations from your financial management and organisational experience to the group of trustees on financial matters. This would include general financial stability and fundraising - offering support and guidance on the financial development and strategy of the charity.
- Meet with relevant members of the R2F team ahead of trustee meetings to review and understand R2F's financial position and agree on the information to be presented to trustees.
- Receive and respond to any relevant updates/reports about financial matters, for example in relation to audit, bank accounts, money transfers and financial controls.
- Be the key trustee maintaining an overview of:
 - Any changes to R2F's financial controls, financial reporting arrangements financial records, or significant changes in accounting policies or practices
 - Any changes to R2F's reserves policy
 - Any changes to a different pension scheme for R2F staff than the NEST workplace pension scheme
 - Any change of external accountants/auditors
- Be one of three trustees (two Co-Chairs and the Treasurer) to whom the following responsibilities are delegated:
 - That at least one of these three trustees reviews and approves funding bids before they are submitted, giving all trustees assurance that the funding proposals R2F submits are aligned to our organisational purpose/charitable objects and do not give rise to unacceptable risks
 - That at least one of these three trustees gives prompt email authorisation for expenditure of amounts above £500.00

Person Specification

The following skills, experiences and qualities are ones we see as important to have within and across our group of trustees. It is not expected that any trustee will meet all of these criteria, but **skills and experience that are desirable are highlighted in bold**.

In addition to the below, if you have financial/accounting experience and would like to offer these skills as a Treasurer, please refer to the role description above.

- Understand and align with the aims, values, principles, and practices of R2F. **This might include first hand experience of active chemical or behavioural addiction/addiction recovery (or the addiction/recovery of a loved one)**, participate in 12 step meetings or other spiritually-based recovery programmes and/or direct work experience within a related field e.g. drug support agencies, rehabs, halfway houses, social work, probation services etc.
- **Willing to experiment, access creativity, and bring your whole self to the role.**
- **Experience of fundraising, connections with funders, and/or experience of income generation or social entrepreneurship.**
- **Experience of developing and applying Human Resources practices and policies, particularly around equalities and diversity.**
- **Ability to listen to and collaborate with people from a wide variety of backgrounds and lived experiences.**
- **Experience of evaluating and monitoring an organisation's impact and effectiveness**
- **Mentoring/coaching skills and experience, and/or skills and experience in conflict resolution.**
- Commit to maintaining high levels of trust and openness between trustees, the R2F team and the wider R2F community.
- Understand the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship, and/or previous experience of charity or voluntary organisation governance.
- Experience of financial management of an organisation.
- Legal experience or knowledge.
- Personal resilience - a commitment to self-care and the ability to remain grounded in the midst of uncertainty.
- Willingness to engage in an ongoing exploration of healthy collaborative culture and the skills, attitudes and practices which support us to work effectively.

- Experience of organisational capacity-building, and/or strategic planning.

We hope to make appointments that reflect a rich range of perspectives within the group of trustees. **We therefore encourage applicants to suggest other experiences and skills that could be equally or more important than those listed above.**

What is it like to be a Trustee in Rite to Freedom?

Applicants with previous trustee experience may find that being a trustee for R2F is a different experience. For example, trustees have the opportunity to work much more closely with staff and/or experience first-hand some of the programmes we offer to participants. Being a trustee is easiest to understand through experiencing it, so to give you a flavour, here are a few quotes from our trustees:

*“Growth! Being a R2F trustee means growth, **you will grow personally with the professional and interpersonal challenges you will face**, you will grow as a team and as a board and as you find your particular ways of working, you will watch participants grow in their recovery journey, bringing stories of hope and finally if managed in the right way you will watch an organisation grow, **seeding new recovery communities and new connections.**”* (Chris Lomas – Chair)

*“For me the rewards have been about the **growth and learning** that has come to me from being part of an aware and nurturing charity. I love how Rite to Freedom operates and it has meant I have always felt very **included and valued** on my first journey of being a trustee.”* (Lynsey Tiplady - Trustee)

*“I joined Rite to Freedom as I love the work, especially the approach to recovery from addiction and wanted to **give back to the recovery community that helped me with my own journey.** My time as a trustee has been inspiring as I've seen the organisation go from strength to strength and become more secure in purpose and funding. I love the spirit of **constructive and open dialogue which has carried us through some challenging and changing times.** I leave R2F with some sadness, but also a lot of hope that it is finally finding its feet in the recovery community in Devon.”* (Jenny Salmon- previous Trustee)

Practicalities

Being a trustee is an **unpaid, voluntary role** (as generally required by charity regulations). Ideally, R2F have agreed that ideally, trustees serve an **initial minimum term of three years** and may then apply for reselection for a further term. The chair/co-chairs of the board may serve more than two terms with the agreement of both R2F staff and trustees.

We are open to appointing trustees living anywhere in the UK, though the 'core' trustee role needs to comply with England & Wales charity law. We welcome prospective trustees who have an international perspective. Trustees need to be fluent in English to contribute fully to the role.

We seek to minimise unnecessary travel so a very high proportion of our meetings and other collaborative activities take place online. We experiment with ways to bring creativity and heart to our virtual meetings. Trustees will need access to good IT equipment and a high quality broadband connection, and be comfortable working online.

All R2F trustees are expected to:

- Participate in online trustee meetings which are held at least three times a year.
- Attend occasional R2F gatherings in person* where possible (Covid-19 permitting).
- Participate in email discussions/decisions or other online or in-person meetings. Trustees may volunteer to take on additional roles or tasks.

Trustees may claim reasonable expenses for meetings/in-person gatherings. Repeated non-attendance at meetings and/or gatherings may result in the trustee being asked to resign.

R2F Community Council

The Community Council (CC) is a living, growing bridge between the R2F community, staff and Board of Trustees. Formed in 2021, this new group is made up of members of the community who have been with us for two years or more. Each member signed up to the R2F Health and Wellbeing Agreement - ensuring that they have multiple levels of support, supervision and therapy outside the community, and agree to accountability for themselves, their recovery, and the wider R2F community. The CC represents the whole of the R2F community and will ensure its vision is maintained and updated as needed. **The Council will work with the Board of Trustees** (responsible for ensuring our core aims, objectives and legal obligations are met). If the community feels any changes are needed to the vision and overall strategy of R2F, the CC will be a key consultant in any change process. In summary: **the Trustees vote, while the CC informs and guides.**

There will be a Trustee and CC member in regular contact, which rotates over an agreed period. A minimum of three CC meetings will take place per year, which are open to trustees to sustain communication and relations.

Roles and Responsibilities

The CC, Staff and Trustees will work together on key decisions affecting the overall aims and objectives of the charity. If the CC wishes to propose a change to the vision and aims of the charity, or to propose new ideas/projects, they may do so to the quarterly trustee meetings (which CC members are welcome to attend as non-voting members). Legal responsibility for the charity's governance remains with the Board of Trustees.

Any concerns raised will need to be heard and included following any proposals put forward. Concerns are welcomed as ways to strengthen any proposal, and every effort will be made to reach consensus. However, if this is not possible, and the delay is impairing the work of R2F, then the Board of Trustees will have final approval subject to a majority/unanimous vote. All discussion on changing any aspect of the current aims and objectives of R2F will need to include a representative of the CC alongside a quorum of the Trustee board.

The CC will also be the foundation of a new volunteer structure within the charity, which will oversee key roles and responsibilities to support the running and development of our work. Specific CC roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are now being formalised. This will give a focus to each member of the group who will in turn work with, communicate, and update the wider R2F community of all progress and proposed developments/changes. Any member of the existing R2F community can attend the CC meetings, and we invite their input. Only existing members of the CC are able to vote on any proposals, and the CC will be responsible for recruiting new CC members through a voting process.

Responsibility for daily running of the charity remains with the Creative Director and staff, supported by the trustees in accordance with the charity's established working practices

Trustee Recruitment Schedule

1. The trustee vacancies will be advertised from **Summer 2022**. The vacancies will remain open until at least 4 trustee positions have been successfully filled (5 new trustees in total with Virginia having joined in Sep 2022).
2. Applicants are asked to send a CV and a covering letter, **of a total of no more than 4 pages please**, or alternatively an audio or video application of no more than 8 minutes. The covering letter should address the following questions:
 - a. Why would you like to become a trustee of Rite to Freedom, and what do you hope to gain from the experience?
 - b. What perspectives, skills and experiences will you bring?
 - c. What support will you need in order to effectively contribute as a trustee?

Applicants may refer to the [person specification](#), but are also encouraged to bring their own perspectives on what they will bring to the role.

Applications should be sent to ali@ritetofreedom.org.uk.

3. Applicants have the opportunity to contact us via the trustee recruitment email above if they have queries before they submit their applications.
4. An appointments panel made up of at least one trustee and one R2F staff or wider community member will review the applications and conduct informal online discussion meetings with potential applicants.
5. Further discussions and opportunities to meet team members or observe meetings can be arranged for the short-listed candidate/s. R2F and the short-listed candidate/s will be given time to explore and review both separately and together before the panel makes a final decision to offer an appointment as trustee.
6. As part of the induction process, the new trustee/s will be assigned a steward who will develop an induction plan appropriate to their needs and experience.

Appendix 1: Matters reserved for the Trustees

The statutory responsibilities of Rite to Freedom Trustees

Rite to Freedom has a paid staff team (currently 3 people on PAYE, all part-time), trustee members and the wider community of R2F volunteers/participants who are regularly consulted for their feedback/questions/concerns on various matters relating to Rite to Freedom. These various strands make up the decision-making body for:

Domain: Rite to Freedom, the organisation.

Mission: By offering opportunities for creativity, nature connection and mindfulness, Rite to Freedom supports a thriving, growing recovery community to live with meaning, purpose and enjoyment.

Core Charitable Aims:

- To promote values of respect, equality, authenticity and trust.
- To create safe enough spaces where healthy communication and sharing can occur.
- To increase access to, and deepen people's connection with, natural environments.
- To promote meaningful self-expression through the creative process, including but not exclusive to: the written and spoken word, film, photography, music, arts and crafts.
- To provide positive, authentic, accountable role models.
- To offer contemporary 'rites of passage'.
- To demonstrate the use of story and narrative as a means of transformation.
- To support and guide the increase of participants' self-awareness, self-belief and self-compassion.
- To build stronger communities through intergenerational sharing and mentoring.
- To shift attitudes away from 'labels' and towards 'stories'.
- To prioritise engaging with people who are socially excluded, marginalised and would otherwise be unlikely to access similar interventions.

However, under England & Wales charity regulations, there are some decisions that the trustees cannot delegate, and are therefore "reserved for" the group of trustees; matters and decisions that need ultimately to come to the trustees as a collective, regardless of where else within the structure the proposals might be created and/or discussed.

The schedule below is a list of those matters that the trustees cannot, or do not intend to, delegate:

SCHEDULE OF MATTERS RESERVED FOR THE TRUSTEES

Ensuring Rite to Freedom is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
To receive and approve decisions made by Rite to Freedom that relate to organisational purpose and strategy.
Complying with Rite to Freedom’s governing document and the law
To provide personal details in order that they may be registered, as requested, to the Charity Commission and Companies House where appropriate, or to advise if the charity ceases to exist.
To approve the charity’s annual Trustees Report and Financial Statements.
To satisfy themselves that Rite to Freedom is working effectively, and continues to be appropriate to the needs, responsibilities and charitable purpose of the organisation and does not expose the organisation or individual trustees to unacceptable levels of risk.
To approve changes or amendments to Rite to Freedom’s governance model, and/or the charity’s objects.
To annually review and approve this schedule of matters reserved for the trustees.
To approve and monitor a scheme of delegation recording the roles, powers and responsibilities that individual trustees hold in Rite to Freedom, in particular in relation to areas where trustees have duties, for example, HR, finance and legal.
To help create and then monitor an Annual Check List of policies and actions that underpin financial and legal compliance.
To ensure Rite to Freedom complies with relevant law including employment, pension, equality and health and safety law.
Establish/review/amend/approve key organisational policies. Current R2F Policies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer • Safeguarding • Equality & Diversity • Environmental • Complaints Procedure https://ritetofreedom.org.uk/r2f-policies
To make decisions relating to court proceedings against or on behalf of the charity.
Act in Rite to Freedom’s best interests
To require and receive the declaration of trustees interests that may conflict with those of the charity, and to determine the manner in which such conflicts will be managed.

Manage Rite to Freedom's resources responsibly

Establish, maintain and retain appropriate financial reporting arrangements, records and controls, and approve any significant changes in accounting policies or practices.

To receive and approve reports from the relevant role/roles/group and others, on the financial performance of the charity against agreed budgets and strategy, and to agree action where appropriate to ensure Rite to Freedom is financially responsible.

To decide on the number, purpose and mandates of bank accounts and other deposit media.

To review, amend and approve Rite to Freedom's reserves policy.

To consider, approve or reject proposals regarding salary reviews.

To approve any move to a different pension scheme than the NEST workplace pension scheme.

To approve and amend Rite to Freedom's policies and procedures for the management of risk and protection of the charity's property.

To regularly review, assess and manage risks to Rite to Freedom and avoid exposing R2F to undue risk.

Approve/reject proposals for the acquisition/disposal of land/buildings, or change in its use, following the receipt and consideration of professional guidance.

To agree and review strategies for investment.

To approve the transfer for charity property to another charity with substantially similar objects.

Act with reasonable care and skill

To nominate and elect trustees to serve in the positions of co-chair and treasurer as appropriate.

To put in place effective procedures for the succession planning of trustees.

Ensure Rite to Freedom is accountable

Responsible for the overall management of the charity, ensuring compliance with the charity's objects and relevant legislation.

To agree procedures for the effective evaluation of the trustees as a group and as individuals.

To approve the remuneration of external auditors, and professional advisors, their appointment, re-appointment or removal, in line with legislation and the requirements of the charity's governing document.

