

Recruitment Pack for Trustees

SEPTEMBER 2026

Help shape the next chapter of Plunkett UK



Contents

3

A Welcome from our Chair

4

About Plunkett UK

5

Our Values

6

Why join our Board now?

7

Our Commitment to Inclusion

8-9

Role Description

10

Application Process





A Welcome from our Chair

Dear Prospective Trustee,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of Plunkett UK. This is an exciting time to join our Board.

Over the past five years, Plunkett has continued to support communities across the UK to protect and strengthen the services and spaces that matter most to them through community ownership. Community businesses have shown **remarkable resilience, determination and creativity**, helping rural communities thrive despite continuing economic and social challenges.

At our AGM in 2026, we will launch a new organisational strategy, setting out our ambitions for the years ahead. As we look to this next chapter, **we are seeking up to two new Trustees** who share our belief in the power of communities to create positive change and who want to play a role in shaping the future of Plunkett and the wider community business movement.

Our Trustees provide strategic leadership, oversight and constructive challenge. They help ensure that Plunkett remains a strong, effective and financially sustainable organisation while staying true to our values and mission.

We are not looking for specific professional backgrounds or technical expertise. What matters most is that you understand and support what we are trying to achieve, bring good judgement, and are committed to helping rural communities flourish.

Whether you are an experienced trustee or considering your first board role, we would love to hear from you if you feel inspired by our work and our vision.

I hope this pack gives you a sense of who we are, where we are heading and the important role Trustees play in our success.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes

Alison Jeffers
Chair, Plunkett UK



About Plunkett UK



Plunkett is the UK's leading organisation supporting community ownership and represents the largest membership of community-owned businesses in the country.

As the only organisation providing dedicated UK-wide support for rural community businesses, Plunkett is proud to support and represent a movement of almost 900 community-owned businesses across the UK. These businesses range from village shops and pubs to community farms and woodlands.

Our work spans the entire community ownership journey.

- **We raise awareness** of the community ownership business model and inspire communities to take action.
- **We provide practical business support** to help community businesses establish, grow and thrive.
- **We strengthen the wider environment** in which community businesses operate through membership, networking, policy, and research.

For over a century, Plunkett has seen first-hand that community ownership is one of the most powerful ways of achieving our vision for thriving, inclusive and resilient rural communities. By enabling local people to work together to own and operate businesses, community ownership creates better outcomes for people, the economy and the environment.

Better Businesses for People – Businesses that improve quality of life by providing access to essential services, strengthening social connections, supporting health and wellbeing, creating opportunities for employment, volunteering and skills development, and enabling people to play an active role in shaping their community.

Better Businesses for the Economy – Businesses that strengthen local economies by creating employment, supporting local supply chains, retaining spending within communities and helping rural places become more economically resilient.

Better Businesses for the Environment – Businesses that support more sustainable rural communities by reducing travel, shortening supply chains, encouraging responsible use of resources and contributing to environmental improvement and net zero ambitions.

Our Values



We place the following values at the core of our operations and decision making:



Fair: We believe rural communities deserve the same opportunities, investment and recognition as any other place. We champion equity, diversity and inclusion to ensure everyone can access, benefit from, and participate in, community ownership.



Accountable: We listen first and act second seeking to understand the needs of our members and use their insight and evidence to shape our work.



Collaborative: We achieve more together. We build trusted relationships with partners who share our values; we share knowledge openly and bring people, organisations and communities together around a shared purpose.



Why join the Board now?



This is a unique moment in Plunkett's development.

In 2026 we launched an ambitious new strategy that sets out our vision for creating thriving, inclusive and resilient rural communities through community ownership.

Building on more than 100 years of experience, the strategy marks a significant evolution in Plunkett's role - placing greater emphasis on strengthening the rural community business movement, building deeper relationships with our members, growing our influence and developing new sources of sustainable income.

Joining the Board now means becoming part of the team that will help shape and oversee this next chapter.

As a Trustee, you will help us:

- Shape the future direction of Plunkett and support the successful delivery of our new strategy.
- Strengthen the rural community business movement, helping us build deeper relationships with community businesses and ensure members play a greater role in shaping our future.
- Expand our reach and influence, helping us tell our story more effectively and position community ownership as a mainstream solution to rural challenges.
- Open doors to new partnerships, particularly with corporate partners, funders, policymakers and placemaking organisations that can increase our impact.
- Support a more commercial and financially sustainable organisation, helping us diversify income, develop new opportunities and build long-term resilience.
- Bring fresh perspectives, experience and networks that will challenge, inspire and strengthen our thinking as we continue to evolve.
- For people who care about rural communities and community-led solutions, this is an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to a national organisation at an exciting and pivotal stage in its development.



Our Commitment to Inclusion

At Plunkett, we believe better decisions are made when a wide range of experiences, perspectives and voices are represented around the table.

We are committed to building a Board that better reflects the communities we exist to serve and actively welcome applications from people of all backgrounds.

As part of this recruitment, we are particularly seeking to broaden the diversity of our Board by welcoming applications from people who can bring:

- A younger perspective, helping ensure our Board reflects the aspirations, expectations and experiences of future generations.
- Lived experience of marginalisation in rural communities, including people whose experiences have been shaped by disability, poverty, ethnicity, caring responsibilities, social exclusion or other barriers to opportunity.

We also warmly welcome applications from people considering their first trustee role. Support, mentoring and training will be provided throughout induction and beyond.



The Role of a Trustee

Trustees are collectively responsible for the governance and strategic direction of Plunkett UK.

Working alongside fellow Trustees and the Executive Team, you will:

- Help shape Plunkett's strategic direction.
- Ensure effective governance and compliance.
- Monitor organisational performance and impact.
- Safeguard the charity's financial sustainability.
- Support and constructively challenge the Executive Team.
- Champion Plunkett's vision, mission and values.
- Act as an ambassador for the organisation where appropriate.

Trustees are expected to uphold the principles of good governance and fulfil the legal duties of charity trustees as set out by the Charity Commission.

Who are we looking for?

We are seeking people who understand and believe in the power of community ownership. Rather than specific professional expertise, we are looking for people who:

- Share Plunkett's vision, mission and values.
- Believe in the importance of thriving rural communities.
- Understand or are interested in the community ownership model.
- Can think strategically and see the bigger picture.
- Bring sound judgement and curiosity.
- Are willing to contribute constructively and collaboratively.
- Are comfortable providing support and challenge when required.
- Value inclusion, diversity and respectful debate.
- Can commit the time necessary to fulfil the role effectively.

Board experience is not essential.

What support will you receive?

All new Trustees will receive:

- A structured induction programme.
- Meetings with the Chair, Chief Executive and senior leadership team.
- Opportunities to meet fellow Trustees.
- Governance training where required.
- Ongoing support and mentoring.
- Additional development opportunities throughout your term.

We are committed to ensuring that first-time trustees feel confident and supported in the role.



The Role of a Trustee

Time commitment

The Board currently meets formally up to five times per year. To support participation from trustees based across the UK, meetings are usually a mixture of online and in-person sessions, with typically two meetings held in London and two online.

In addition, trustees participate in an annual two-day planning meeting at Plunkett UK's offices in Woodstock, Oxfordshire.

Trustees are also expected to:

- Attend the AGM.
- Participate in at least one Board committee or working group where appropriate.
- Read Board papers in advance of meetings.
- Support occasional events and stakeholder engagement opportunities.

Most committee meetings take place virtually.

Remuneration and expenses

Trustee roles at Plunkett UK are voluntary and are not remunerated. Reasonable expenses incurred in fulfilling trustee duties will be reimbursed in accordance with Plunkett UK's expenses policy.

We believe that financial circumstances should not be a barrier to participation and encourage trustees to claim eligible expenses.

Governance and finance

Plunkett UK is the operating name of Plunkett Foundation, a registered charity and company limited by guarantee.

The organisation has an annual turnover of approximately £1.2 million and maintains healthy unrestricted reserves. We continue to diversify our income through grants, partnerships, membership, fundraising and earned income activities.

Further information about our governance, finances and impact can be found at:
<https://plunkett.co.uk/annual-reports-and-accounts/>



Application Process

How to apply

If you are interested in becoming a Trustee of Plunkett, please send a copy of your CV, together with a short letter of interest (one side A4) outlining:

- Why you fulfil the person specification of Plunkett UK
- The nature of your experience in the community business or wider community sector
- The nature of or experience and understanding of the needs, issues and opportunities of rural communities
- What you think your major contributions to Plunkett would be
- A declaration that you are not disqualified from becoming a Trustee
- A list of any Directorships or Trusteeships that you currently hold.
- Full contact details (name, job title, organisation, phone and email) for two referees. Please note we will not take up references without your prior permission.

Please apply by email to Plunkett's Chief Operating Officer, Kathryn Morrison, at kathryn.morrison@plunkett.co.uk with the title "Trustee Application – Confidential" in the email header.

Your application will be acknowledged and treated with strictest confidence. Plunkett recognises that your privacy is important, and we take our responsibility for the safety of personal data seriously. Should you require a copy of our privacy policy please contact Kathryn Morrison.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to discuss their application with the Nominations Panel.

Recruitment timetable

- Deadline for applications: 9am, Monday 28 September 2026.
- Virtual interviews will take place during w/c 12 October 2026.
- Notification of successful applications by Wednesday 21 October 2026.
- Successful applicants will be invited to attend, as a guest, a strategy session and Board meeting on Wednesday 4/ Thursday 5 November 2026.
- Successful applicants would be co-opted at the December Board Meeting and remain as co-opted Trustees until the next AGM.
- Subject to the agreement of the Board, successful applicants would be put forward for formal election at the AGM in 2027.

Queries

If you wish to arrange an informal discussion with Alison Jeffers, Chair, or James Alcock, Chief Executive, about this role; or, if you have any queries please contact kathryn.morrison@plunkett.co.uk

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Plunkett Foundation is a registered charity, numbers CC 313743 (England and Wales) and SC 045932 (Scotland). It is a company limited by guarantee, registered number 00213235.

