



FAN – Friends and Neighbours

The FAN Charity

An Introduction to the FAN Charity for potential Trustees

The FAN Charity is a small registered charity governed by volunteer Trustees, with a small team of part-time paid staff and volunteer FAN Facilitators. FAN is also a registered Company so that Trustees are also Board Members. The duties of the Trustees are to

- Safeguard and promote the values and mission of the organisation
- Determine the strategy and structure of the organisation
- Ensure the organisation operates in an effective, responsible and accountable manner

The FAN Charity Board of Trustees would welcome new members from all age groups and backgrounds. This guide provides you with information about the FAN Charity, what being a Trustee involves and the process for expressing an interest to become a Trustee.

What is the aim of the FAN Charity?

FAN stands for Friends and Neighbours.

The FAN Charity supports the development of independent FAN Groups, which follow the principles of the charity.

The FAN Charity supports weekly meetings of FAN Groups in South Wales and elsewhere to promote the building of community, belonging and diversity, the overcoming of loneliness and alienation, and to assist with informal language practice. We create a friendly and

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relaxed way for local people and those from around the world to meet, listen and talk to each other.

We strive to develop and strengthen good relations between individuals of all ages, beliefs, races and cultures, thus fostering a spirit of kinship, mutual understanding and respect among the peoples in our neighbourhoods and in the world.

Each FAN Group holds a meeting on a regular, usually weekly, basis. Traditionally, this is a face-to-face meeting, but since March 2020 and COVID-19 lockdown FAN has also offered Virtual FAN Groups via Zoom. The aim of a meeting is to allow new people to an area (either new residents or visitors) to meet longer term residents or locals, and to encourage communication and understanding between those of different ages, backgrounds, religions and cultures. FAN meetings are held in a spirit of friendliness and informality. They are especially beneficial for people learning English. Welsh learners and fluent speakers also meet in a Welsh language FAN Group.

Each meeting takes a standard format and lasts approximately one hour. One person (the FAN Facilitator) will take the lead / chair – we sit in a circle and read the introductory guidelines ('ground rules'). We then listen as each person speaks in turn for a short time – to introduce themselves, talk about their week and talk about the chosen topic of the day. People do not interrupt each other. The Facilitator will sum up and close the meeting. Informal, interactive discussion is then encouraged.

FAN is not affiliated to any other organisation and sees its independence as a strength. FAN is non-political and non-religious.

What do trustees at the FAN Charity do?

Trustees have overall control of the 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

At the FAN Charity we use the term Trustee, although formally we are also Directors because the FAN Charity is a registered Company. Trustees are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run.

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We have small finances in the FAN Charity and Trustees do not get paid for their role – we act out of a desire to help people and make positive changes. The Charities Commission says that volunteering as a trustee should be rewarding and enjoyable – and we agree with this.

Your role is voluntary but you should not be out of pocket for the work you do and you should receive payment to cover any expenses.

The role is not permanent. Trustees may put themselves forward for re-election at the end of each year. The AGM of the FAN Charity takes place during the summer months of each year.

Occasionally, Trustees will also seek Co-optees to the Board to help with specific tasks. Co-optees are elected for a maximum of one year. After that a Co-optee would have to stand for election at the following AGM.

Legal responsibilities of trustees

Trustees make sure the charity is running well and is doing what it was set up to do. This includes ensuring the charity:

- follows the law and the rules in the FAN Charity's governing document (its constitution, trust deed or articles), including preparing reports and accounts to send to the Charity Commission
- acts responsibly and only in the interests of the FAN Charity
- uses reasonable care and skill
- makes well-informed decisions, taking advice when you need to
- ensures the FAN Charity has the money it needs
- spends the money the FAN Charity has sensibly, on the activities it was raised for and for which the Charity was set up for

Trustees of smaller charities might take on all or most of the work of running the charity. In larger charities, trustees often delegate the day-to-day operations to the staff and senior management. At the FAN Charity we have a small amount of professional assistance, while also individual trustees take on specific tasks as required.

Traditionally, the FAN Charity has not been a major fund-raising organisation. However, as the activities of the Charity expand and there is a need to manage the Charity efficiently and professionally, with regularly reviewed policies, and an appropriately resourced staff structure, the Charity does need to fund its activities through grant funding from external

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bodies and other fund-raising activities. Currently, FAN receives funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and Track 2000.

Periodically, Trustees discuss and adopt a Strategic Plan for the Charity outlining the direction of FAN over the coming three years and its financial needs. Our current Strategic Plan covers the period 2022-2025.

As a trustee, you will use your skills and experience to make sure the charity runs efficiently. But trustees are allowed to get advice from external sources like solicitors or other experts if they need to.

All trustees make decisions about the charity collectively, working as a team. Decisions don't usually need to be unanimous – so long as the majority agree.

Why become a trustee?

You agree with the objectives of the FAN Charity. Being a trustee means making decisions that will impact on people's lives. Depending on what the charity does, you will be making a difference to your local community or to society as a whole.

Trustees use their skills and experience to support FAN, helping us achieve our aims and objectives

Board Member Person Specification

Each trustee must have:

- integrity
- a commitment to the organisation, its values, mission and its objectives
- an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a trustee
- strategic vision
- good, independent judgement
- an ability to think creatively
- willingness to speak their mind
- an ability to work effectively as a member of a team

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The FAN Charity Board of Trustees would welcome new members with skills and /or experience in some of the following areas:

- financial management
- legal matters
- fundraising
- recruitment and personnel management, including a knowledge of employment legislation
- setting targets, monitoring and evaluating performance and programmes
- marketing and communication
- education and learning

Trustees also often learn new skills and develop into new areas during their time on the board.

New Trustees will be mentored by an experienced Trustee for a period.

Time commitment

Trustees meet approximately six times a year at Trustee Meetings either on Zoom or Face to Face in a central Cardiff location.

Each Trustee also contributes to Working Groups focusing on specific matters such as Strategy and Planning, Core funding, Fundraising, Marketing and communication, FAN Groups, Safeguarding, Staff and employment, Staff recruitment and Welsh.

Frequency of Working Group meetings varies depending upon need but each Group may meet from 1-3 times a year – most meetings are held virtually often after 5pm on weekday evenings.

While the FAN Manager takes minutes at Trustee meetings, a Trustee usually takes notes / minutes of a Working Group meeting and distributes these after the meeting to fellow members of the Working Group. A Trustee would also need some time to prepare for meetings or other tasks.

Some FAN Charity Trustees have special roles as officers, such as the Chair and the Treasurer.

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- The FAN Charity Chair
 - helps plan Trustee meetings with FAN Charity staff
 - may represent the FAN Charity at events
 - might also work as a link between trustees and staff
 - chairs FAN Charity Trustee Meetings and the AGM
- The FAN Charity Treasurer:
 - makes sure the charity is keeping the proper accounts
 - takes the lead on making policies for finances and investments

The FAN Charity officers do not have any extra powers or responsibilities than the other trustees. All trustees are equally responsible for finances, for example.

As a Trustee of the FAN Charity what is my financial liability?

People who become Trustees often worry about this. Like any organisation those running it are responsible if they deliberately do something or act in a way to harm others. The reason we became a company is so that we limit our liability. There is very little risk for Trustees due to the size of our operation and due to the fact that the Charity does not actually run or take ownership for the Groups. However we have liability insurance which covers the charity.

Who are the current Trustees of the FAN Charity?

Peter Akers (Treasurer), Deepika Bagga, Jane Booty, Sara Jones, Katherine Kanyeihamba, Huda Khiralsied, Susan Morris, Ian Thomson (Chair), Jane Tooby.

Are there other aspects to the role beyond Trustee meetings?

As the FAN Charity develops and grows Trustees will continue to manage and support staff, participate in group support and training, identifying likely partners and supporting new groups; using their talents and interests to help develop FAN.

Where can I find out more about the FAN Charity?

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You can get further information from the FAN Charity website:

<https://www.thefancharity.org/> or by contacting sarah.duncan-jones@thefancharity.org

In conjunction with the information in this guide you should also read:

Charity Commission: Setting up and running a charity: Trustee role and board

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/running-charity/trustee-role-board>

The next step

If you wish to become a Trustee please fill in the *Expression of Interest to become a FAN Charity Trustee* form. The form should be downloaded from the FAN Charity website or by contacting sarah.duncan-jones@thefancharity.org . Please fill in the form electronically.

You are also requested to take part in a number of different face to face and / virtual FAN Groups before submitting your Expression of Interest form.

Please note that as part of the process of selecting new Trustees an interview will take place, and references requested.

If you are selected and accept to become a Trustee you will be required to complete and sign the Charity Commission form *Charity trustee: declaration of eligibility and responsibility* to confirm eligibility to be a trustee.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/confirmation-of-charity-trustee-eligibility>, and a separate Conflict of Interest Declaration.