

CAG OXFORDSHIRE BOARD RECRUITMENT PACK

SEPTEMBER 2025



- ★ Are you passionate about climate justice?
- ★ Do you enjoy meeting new people who bring new ideas and enjoy working together?
- ★ Does contributing to conversations about the future Oxfordshire you/we want to see excite you?
- ★ Do you want to flex your brain muscles and learn new skills through Board experience?
- ★ If so, read on!

1. ABOUT US

CAG Oxfordshire and the CAG Network

Community Action Groups Oxfordshire (CAG Oxfordshire) is an organisation which exists to benefit the wider community by supporting a strong, well-connected network of local changemakers. From climate action to social justice, and from registered charities to unincorporated grassroots groups, our members are improving their communities, delivering locally relevant and meaningful projects and initiatives of all sorts. There are more than 120 groups in our network, and we're still growing.

The CAG Oxfordshire vision is an **Oxfordshire with resilient and empowered communities, working together so that people and planet can thrive within ecological limits**. For years, the groups within this network have been at the forefront of community-led climate action, organising events and projects to take action on issues including waste, transport, food, energy, biodiversity and social justice. Increasingly, we are including social justice issues into our lens recognising climate justice cannot be achieved without social justice.

CAG Oxfordshire is in its sixth year as an established Community Benefit Society, but takes on the work of 'The CAG Project' which has been running in Oxfordshire since 2001. You can find out a bit more about what we do on our website

<https://cagoxfordshire.org.uk/about/>

OUR VALUES AS AN ORGANISATION ARE:

- ★ Respecting the natural environment
- ★ Building relationships and supporting each other
- ★ Demonstrating practical change
- ★ Being community-led
- ★ Being proactively inclusive and valuing diversity
- ★ Prioritising equality and social justice
- ★ Experimenting, learning and working imaginatively
- ★ Looking after our own wellbeing, and that of others
- ★ Being part of wider movements for change

As a co-operative, we subscribe to this [Statement on the Cooperative Identity – the Values and Principles](#) and are members of [Co-ops UK](#). Our co-operative identity is important to us in that we are led by our member groups, who then have a stake in the network as a whole. We attempt to maintain a non-hierarchical structure instead seeking decisions by consensus both on the Board and in our staff team.

THE ROLE OF THE BOARD

The role of our Board is similar to that of a Board of trustees in a charity. We refer to the members of our Board as 'Board members' or 'directors'.

The Board has oversight of the organisation, makes key decisions to help steer the strategic direction, and are responsible for supporting staff on operational matters. This means a chance for you to influence a whole network of community groups!

Currently our Board is made up of three members elected from CAG member groups (individuals that are part of their local community action groups), one member co-opted for their previous experience as a CAG-member, plus two staff members elected from the staff team.

HOW DOES THE BOARD WORK TOGETHER?

The Board currently meets quarterly online, with some work/meetings taking place between meetings online, via email and in person. When making decisions we aim for consensus (agreement from all Board members) on proposals, but may fall back on majority voting if we are unable to reach consensus.

BENEFITS OF BEING A BOARD MEMBER

Being a Board member is an unpaid, voluntary role. However, Board members will benefit from annual training sessions. In the past Board members have attended training on topics such as financial management, consensus decision making, and 'How to be a good trustee'.

Additionally, Board members may benefit from professional reference and CV experience; those who may wish to set up their own CAG may wish to join to gain experience of how a Board operates; others may wish to join to gain deeper clarity on the impacts of a network-support organisation.

There are opportunities to learn from each other, share your experience, gain access to wider discussions and debates around climate impacts, and the possibility of working at a network level means a multiplier effect of the benefits to the input you make!

Reasonable expenses will be paid – we offer childcare and transportation support for our AGM and other in-person strategic meetings.

CURRENT ROLES WE'RE RECRUITING

- ★ Chair or Co-Chairs
- ★ General Board Member (from CAG membership only)

We are primarily looking for a Chair to join our current make up of six Board Members. We are open to either one person holding the Chair role or if two-people want to hold the role jointly, we welcome a Co-Chair structure.

We also have space to add a general Board Member, but at this time only those individuals who are already a member of a CAG group. You can find a [list of our groups here](#).

In either role, we are looking to bring in new people with skills and experience that complement those of our existing Board members.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

We are looking to bring in new people with skills and experience that complement those of our existing Board members.

Additionally to the role descriptions below, the key skills and experience we're looking for in new Board members at this time are:

- ★ Lived experience within communities most impacted by climate injustice
- ★ Strong analysis of the issues around climate injustice
- ★ Line management of senior leadership or a third-sector executive
- ★ HR, management experience, and employment law
- ★ Accounting or financial management experience
- ★ Business development and business planning (ideally in social enterprise/community business)
- ★ Individuals that are well networked with strategic partners/funders/institutions locally and beyond

We recognise no one individual has all this experience, but we're keen to hear from anyone who has some of these things to offer, particularly the first two criteria. Why not you?!

2. HOW TO APPLY

Apply by sending a letter (no more than 2 pages), or audio or video (no more than 8 minutes), accompanied by a CV or short summary of your work and voluntary experience and interests.

The covering letter or audio/video submission should:

1. Explain why you are interested in becoming the Chair or a general Board member.
2. Outline which bits of the ideal person specification you meet (below).
3. Highlight if you have any of the key skills and experience we're looking for at the moment.
4. Share why becoming involved with CAG/climate work interests you.

Please indicate whether you are specifically applying for the role of Chair (or Co-Chairs) or general Board member.

Applications should be sent to info@cagoxfordshire.org.uk by 24th October 2025.

BOARD MEMBER RECRUITMENT SCHEDULE

1. Vacancies for 2+ Board members will be advertised from September 2025. The closing date for applications is midnight 24th October 2025.
2. Candidates have the opportunity to speak with any of our Board Members if they have queries before they submit their applications. Please contact katherine@cagoxfordshire.org.uk who can arrange a chance to connect.
3. Applicants apply as outlined above.
4. An appointments panel of Board members Nicola Shafer, Billy Maxwell and Katherine Chesson will review the applications and conduct informal discussion meetings with applicants, expected to take place on 4 November, between 7:00-9:00pm (subject to applicant availability).
5. The Board will decide based on the information and recommendations from the appointments panel, who they would like to co-opt as Board members. We aim to make the decisions by the middle of November.
6. Upon being offered the role, new Board members would join our next Board meeting in January, diaries permitting, to make sure this is a good fit!

3. CHAIR DESCRIPTION

This is a role description for the Chair of Trustees. If Co-Chairs, the role will be shared between the two Co-Chairs in a manner mutually agreed by the Co-Chairs.

Note: Board members who hold the role of Chair/Co-Chair will need to be able to give more time to the role than a general Board member. This description is in addition to the general Board member role description detailed below.

ROLE SUMMARY

Provides leadership and direction to the Board in fulfilling their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of CAG Oxfordshire.

- Ensures that the society pursues its objects as defined in the society's primary rules and other relevant regulations.
- Works in partnership with the staff Director (and all staff) to support effective communication and a strong working relationship between the Board and the staff.
- Facilitates the Board in carefully considered strategic decision-making.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

In relation to the Board:

- Ensure the formulation of strategic plans and the regular review of long-term strategic aims of the charity.
- Ensure there is monitoring of the organisation's progress against our strategy and goals.
- Ensure the development of key organisational policies.
- Work with the staff Director on meeting agendas, and monitor decisions taken at meetings and ensure they are implemented.
- Chair and facilitate Board meetings, as well as general meetings of the society.
- Liaise regularly with the Treasurer to maintain a clear grasp of CAG Oxfordshire's financial position and to ensure full and timely financial transparency and information disclosure to the Board.
- Support other Board members to fulfil their responsibilities and enable individual and collective access to training/coaching/information to enhance the overall contribution of the Board.

- Regularly review the Board structure, role, staff relationships and ensure implementation of agreed changes/developments are carried out.
- Support the development of individual Board members and ensure the effectiveness of the Board through annual review/end of tenure meetings.
- Ensure the effective operation of the Board by dealing with performance/conduct issues relating to Board members (see code of conduct) and addressing conflict within the Board in a timely and appropriate way.
- Look for ways to make the organisation appropriately and effectively accountable and transparent.
- Lead the Board in fostering relations with potential partners, funders, or donors.

In relation to the staff Director:

- With support from other Board members, lead the appointment of the Director. Hold regular appraisal and objective review meetings, with an annual performance review.
- Develop and maintain a positive working relationship with the Director, acting as a sounding board, critical friend and source of advice and support to enable them to operate effectively.
- Consult with them on matters of strategy, governance, finance and HR.
- Assume guardianship of the legal and financial integrity of the organisation.
- Maintain careful oversight of any risk to reputation and/or financial standing of the organisation.

In relation to the conduct of the Society:

- Act as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required.
- Ensure adherence and compliance around key policies including equal opportunities, health and safety in all decisions and discussions of the Board and its working groups.

In relation to their Co-Chair (if applicable):

- Discuss shared responsibilities at the start of their term of office - agreeing areas where one or other might lead and what they might share responsibility for. Some areas (such as line management of the staff Director) need a single lead, others can be shared.
- Review division of responsibilities each year (or before, if issues arise).

IDEAL PERSON SPECIFICATION

(KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE, SKILLS AND VALUES)

These are ideal standards, and we recognise that an appropriate Chair may not meet all or even most of them.

- Experience facilitating meetings, with a commitment to including different voices and perspectives.
- Experience on the Board of a social enterprise, community business, or charity.
- Experience of or skill in supporting/coaching team members (volunteers or staff).
- Skills in organisational development and capacity building.
- Knowledge of relevant funding environments (Oxfordshire, environment/climate change, community business and social enterprise).

COMMITMENT

The commitments for the general Board member role also apply. (See Section 4: General CAG Oxfordshire Board Member Role Description)

- A term of 2 years, with a review after the first 12 months.
- If applicable, exact time commitments will depend on how responsibilities are divided between the Co-Chairs. As mentioned above, we expect the Chair role will require an additional time commitment compared to the general Board member role description. At present, we expect Chairing will require an additional time commitment of about 1 day a month.

4. GENERAL CAG OXFORDSHIRE BOARD MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTION

ROLE SUMMARY

The Board of directors have oversight of the organisation, make key decisions to help steer the strategic direction and are responsible for supporting staff on operational matters. The Board is where all authority resides until some is given away (delegated) to others.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- With the rest of the Board, to have oversight of the strategy, including its development and implementation.
- Develop and maintain a positive working relationship with the Director, acting as a line manager, a sounding Board, a critical friend and source of advice and support.
- Financial oversight and, where needed, being a bank account signatory.
- Oversight of key organisational policies and procedures (including health and safety, HR, and others)
- Supporting the staff Director with staff recruitment.
- Monitoring legal and contractual compliance.
- Monitor key risks to the organisation and ensure appropriate risk mitigation where possible.
- Supporting the personal development and well-being of the staff team.
- Support with fundraising/partnership efforts, and building/maintaining relationships with current or potential funders/partners.
- Actively seek feedback from the network that we support and look for ways to make the organisation appropriately and effectively accountable and transparent.
- Represent CAG Oxfordshire as a spokesperson at appropriate events, meetings and functions.

IDEAL PERSON SPECIFICATION (KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE, SKILLS AND VALUES)

These are ideal standards, and we recognise not everyone will meet all or even most of them.

- Committed to the mission and values of CAG Oxfordshire.
- Specific skills and experience in organisational management and strategic development such as: financial management, administration, HR, health & safety, meeting facilitation, monitoring and evaluation, writing funding bids etc.
- Committed to maintaining high levels of trust and openness between Board members, the staff team and the wider CAG Network.
- Able to think strategically and realistically.
- Ability to communicate clearly and use digital communication methods such as email, online collaboration tools and platforms (such as Google Drive).
- Willing to speak their mind in a Board setting, to listen to others' views and be flexible, constructive and open to challenge.
- Understanding and accepting of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of being a member of the Board.
- Good interpersonal skills and the ability to be reflective and adapt your practice, actions and work accordingly.
- Experience of building and developing grassroots organisation/s for social change.
- Experience of creating partnerships with diverse organisations and understanding of issues around inclusion and power including race, class, gender, faith, global north/south.
- A love and passion for the CAG network, and experience being in a community action group.

Additionally: Board members must be over 18 years of age.

NB: According to our rules, at least a half positions on our Board (including staff members and co-opted directors) are for people who identify as women or as having a non-binary or gender non-conforming identity. Currently there is one man on the Board, so the current vacancies on our Board could be filled by people of any gender identity.

COMMITMENT

- A term of 2 years, with a review after the first 12 months.
- Attendance at quarterly Board meetings online, plus an annual strategy workshop with staff and Board as needed.
- Attending the Annual General Meeting (AGM) - normally an evening in July.
- Being in email communication with the staff team and other Board members about any urgent matters arising between Board meetings.
- Taking responsibility for particular issues or areas of work, specific to the Board role and beyond, if appropriate.

Repeated non-attendance at meetings and/or strategy workshops may result in the Board member being asked to resign. Other expectations are listed in our code of conduct for Board members (aka directors) which [you can view here](#). All Board members must agree to abide by this code of conduct.

NB. This is an unpaid, voluntary role. However, Board members may claim reasonable expenses for Board meetings. Expenses for other work may be payable with prior agreement.

Relevant resources:

Co-ops UK's '[essential society director](#)' (focus on legal aspects).

5. FINALLY

Thanks for reading to the end of this pack. We're glad you're interested in supporting CAG Oxfordshire! Do get in touch with us if you have any questions that aren't answered here, or would find it useful to chat to one of our team. Katherine Chesson, Director, katherine@cagoxfordshire.org.uk