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Chair

Brief for candidates

March 2026

Starfish



WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in Drinkaware and in becoming our next Chair.

Drinkaware is the UK's leading alcohol charity. Our mission is to use our expertise to give government, industry, communities and individuals the knowledge and support to make informed decisions about alcohol and how to reduce the harms it can cause. We deliver our work through public facing campaigns; digital services, information and guidance; evidence-led advice to governments and industry, and independent research and consumer insight.

We're a unique charity, with bold ambitions to reduce alcohol harm in partnership with those around us. We have strong brand awareness for a small organisation, great digital tools and services and a motivated and capable staff team. We're also supported by over 300 industry organisations. As our current Chair, Lucy Armstrong, reaches the end of her final term in 2027, we are seeking an exceptional successor to lead our Board and work with our executive team to progress ambitious plans.

An evolving public health context, changing consumer preferences and a changing drinks industry, will make the management of communication with the public, and our ability to influence a broad stakeholder community, even more important. In addition to this, technology is already changing how people get their information. All our insights and knowledge are informed by rigorous evidence-based research, placing us as the leading voice on alcohol harm reduction in society. As we seek to become an even more authoritative force for change to public sector policymakers, our next Chair will help us amplify our message through media channels and networks.

We are ideally looking for a proven chair; you will also be a gifted strategist and someone with their own Government, policy and industry connections. The highest levels of personal credibility are essential for this role, and you will act as a confident and trusted spokesperson. Our longer-term impact and sustainability relies on rigorous governance, and you will ensure that our oversight and scrutiny arrangements are as strong as possible, leading the Board and executive team to respond to new opportunities and risks as they emerge.

Our work in the coming years is set to continue, but with our funding derived from a broader range of contributors. We will be focused on forging meaningful partnerships that deliver real and practical outcomes. This is a great time to join us, as we work more dynamically and collaboratively across a complicated landscape, harnessing the power of partnerships, of behaviour change campaigns, and of high-quality research and insight that helps more people drink below the low-risk drinking guidelines.

If you want to be part of this, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

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OUR PURPOSE

Together with our network of researchers, industry experts, governments, and other key stakeholders, we are capitalising on conversations around alcohol and making it possible to share our advice, tools, and evidence with many more people.
We deliver our work through:

- Independent, evidence-based public-facing campaigns and digital services, information and guidance
- Evidence-led advice to governments and industry
- Independent research, consumer insight and evaluation

As a society, our relationship with alcohol has shifted over the last 20 years. Many things have improved, particularly the number of young people choosing to drink less, the significant increase in the uptake of low alcohol and alcohol-free products and a reduction in binge drinking. However, some trends are moving in the wrong direction, such as alcohol specific deaths.

We believe that everyone has a shared responsibility for the culture of the society we want to live in. Our work is helping to shift the conversation around alcohol, making it more normal to talk about our drinking habits and reducing the stigma. A cultural shift is needed where addressing alcohol-related issues is met with empathy and understanding rather than judgment.

Alcohol related harm is also not experienced evenly across the population. People on lower incomes, or living in the most deprived communities, are disproportionately affected – experiencing a significantly higher rate of alcohol-specific deaths and alcohol-related hospital admissions than those living in more affluent communities.

As a society, community, and as families, we need to be able to talk more confidently, openly, and honestly about alcohol and the part it plays in our lives. Making that more possible is our task.

Find out more

You can read more about our work at www.drinkaware.co.uk



OUR BOARD



Lucy Armstrong, Chair
Lucy Armstrong is the Chair of the Board of Trustees. She has spent more than 30 years working with businesses to accelerate their development and success. She is currently Chair of the Port of Tyne Authority, Chair of the Cumbria based Holker Estate, and a Director of the Business Banking Resolution Service.



David Hutchinson, Trustee
David's career spans over 30 years across multiple business sectors and brands where he has held leadership roles in marketing, commercial, operations and management in both FTSE, ASX and private equity-backed businesses.



Remalie Comport, Trustee
Remalie Comport is a Global Business Lead at Google. She joined Google eight years ago working in Google Dubai & Singapore before relocating to London. Her experience spans multiple functions across Google from working with engineering and product teams, to leading APAC media agency business and strategy as well as building and launching Google's creative agency platform, Create with Google.



Simon Stephens, Trustee
Simon serves as Partner at Deloitte; he currently leads the Portfolio Audit and Assurance practice, and has spent 25 years at Deloitte providing audit, assurance and advisory services to a range of clients in the financial services and private equity industries.

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OUR BOARD



Bruce Ray, Trustee
Bruce is a Public Affairs Advisor providing support for clients in the hospitality industry. He has worked in the hospitality industry for 35 years and brings a wealth of experience from his time as a senior manager with Carlsberg, Bacardi and Brown-Forman. He started his career in off-trade retail and has also worked with the UK pub trade throughout.



Chris Jowsey, Trustee
Chris has worked in the hospitality industry for 25 years. He is currently CEO of Admiral Taverns, the leading UK community pub business. He is a Non-Executive Board member of the British Beer & Pub Association and North Yorkshire brewer, T&R Theakston. Prior to Admiral Taverns, Chris was a Director of Heineken UK for five years and prior to that, Director of Star Pubs & Bars.



Rosie Donachie, Trustee
Rosie Donachie is Head of Public Affairs at the British Business Bank. She has spent over two decades working in policy and public affairs in the EU, the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit and for FTSE 20 businesses in the energy and financial services sectors.



Emma Reynolds, Trustee
Emma Reynolds is Global Vice President for Corporate Affairs at Mars Food & Nutrition, sitting on the Global Food & Nutrition Leadership Team, as well as the Mars, Inc Corporate Affairs Leadership Team. She is responsible for external and internal communications, public affairs and sustainability. Prior to Mars, Emma was Director of Communications, Sustainability and Regulatory Affairs at Vodafone.

To find out more, please follow this link.

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ROLE PROFILE

Job title
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Key relationships
Trustees, CEO and Executive Leadership Team; stakeholder community

Role purpose
The primary responsibility of the Chair is to ensure that the activities and plans of Drinkaware fulfil its charitable objects. Chair provides leadership to the Drinkaware Board with prime responsibility for ensuring it has agreed priorities, appropriate structures, processes and a productive culture and has trustees and senior staff who are able to govern well and add value to the charity. The Trustee Board is responsible for setting the strategic aims, objectives and direction of Drinkaware, delegating day-to-day management to a Senior Leadership Team (SLT) led by the Chief Executive, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the charity. The Chair's main role is to provide clear leadership to the Board; to demonstrate an ability to set the Board agenda, and lead trustees in playing a full role in the development and determination of the charity's strategy.



ROLE PROFILE

Main responsibilities of the Chair role

In addition to those duties and responsibilities performed by all trustees, the Chair has a set of specific, additional accountabilities as follows:

- Lead the Board, providing clarity of vision to the Board in fulfilling its charitable objects and encouraging all trustees to contribute their skills, experience and opinions, creating a Board environment with strong working relationships and where challenge, scrutiny and diversity of perspectives are welcomed;
- Ensure that the Board of Trustees has the necessary and diverse range of skills, expertise and life experiences; that new Trustees are properly inducted, and that appropriate Board development and annual Board appraisal is undertaken;
- Provide support, stretch and guidance to the Chief Executive and their team;
- Ensure effective governance and efficient administration of the Charity and its trading subsidiary, and ensure financial stability and legal compliance within the Charity Commission's regulatory guidelines and within regulatory frameworks of the devolved administrations, as appropriate;
- Guide and oversee the approval of strategic plans and discussions on the strategic development of Drinkaware, ensuring that the Board has agreed strategic priorities;
- Lead in the annual appraisal of the Chief Executive, support her/him and delegate the day-to-day management of the Charity to the CEO and SLT;
- Build and maintain close relations between the Charity's various constituencies as needed, meet with senior key external stakeholder groups to promote Drinkaware and represent Drinkaware and its Board at functions and events;
- Chair Board meetings, liaise with the Chief Executive and Company Secretary, where appropriate, with the drafting of agendas and supporting papers for trustee meetings and ensure that business is covered efficiently and effectively in those meetings;
- Ensure, in liaison with the Company Secretary, that appropriate Board procedures, processes and controls are in place and are followed;
- Undergo an individual and Board performance appraisal, undertake evaluations of the performance of trustees and direct remedial actions where required;
- Safeguard the reputation of Drinkaware, upholding the values of the charity by example;
- Ensure that the organisation promotes diversity and inclusion for all its stakeholders;
- In moments of crisis, between full meetings of the Board, authorise action to be taken as necessary to protect the people, work and reputation of Drinkaware in furtherance of its charitable objects;
- Use her/his networks and connections to further Drinkaware and its aims.

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge and experience

- Experience of chairing another organisation is highly desirable; alternatively, you may have held a number of substantial board appointments, ideally across different sectors, in order to offer the transferable leadership skills this role requires.
- Track record of actively safeguarding and demonstrating independence, with experience of handling reputational scrutiny or contested legitimacy.
- Robust track record of leading and managing boards to achieve the highest standards of performance and UK governance.
- Track record of commercial thinking and of helping to bring in new funding opportunities; experience gained in a commercial environment is desirable.
- Successful track record of bringing people together around a common vision; outside the organisation, this will include significant experience of engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including Government and parliamentarians; you will already be well known, trusted and respected for having fostered high value networks and relationships previously.
- Keen interest in public health, and also in data and emerging technologies with regard to evidence-based insights that address behaviour change.

Personal style and behaviours

- Low ego leadership style with personal presence that garners trust and confidence.
- Collaborative in approach yet willing to offer challenge and stretch when needed.
- Brings a sense of perspective, sound judgement and capacity for self-reflection.
- Diplomatic style; happy to galvanise support personally for Drinkaware's work.
- A team player who enjoys working with others in a smaller organisational setting.
- Purpose-driven with a strong commitment to Drinkaware's priorities and values.

Skills and abilities

- Outstanding strategic leadership and board management skills.
- Able to operate in a politically sensitive, high-scrutiny environment and is highly skilled in persuading, influencing and negotiating.
- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills.
- An agile strategic thinker.
- Mentoring or coaching skills and the ability to inspire and develop others.
- High intellectual capacity and credibility

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TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Term and remuneration

Trustees may serve up to three consecutive terms of three years each.

This role is offered on a voluntary basis. All reasonable expenses incurred in the role are reimbursed.

Time commitment

The role requires up to three days per month. This includes:

- six Board meetings per year, including one “awayday” taking place across two days
- regular meetings with the CEO (in person and online)
- representation of Drinkaware at key external events
- one-to-one meetings with trustees, and
- attendance at other ad hoc meetings as appropriate.

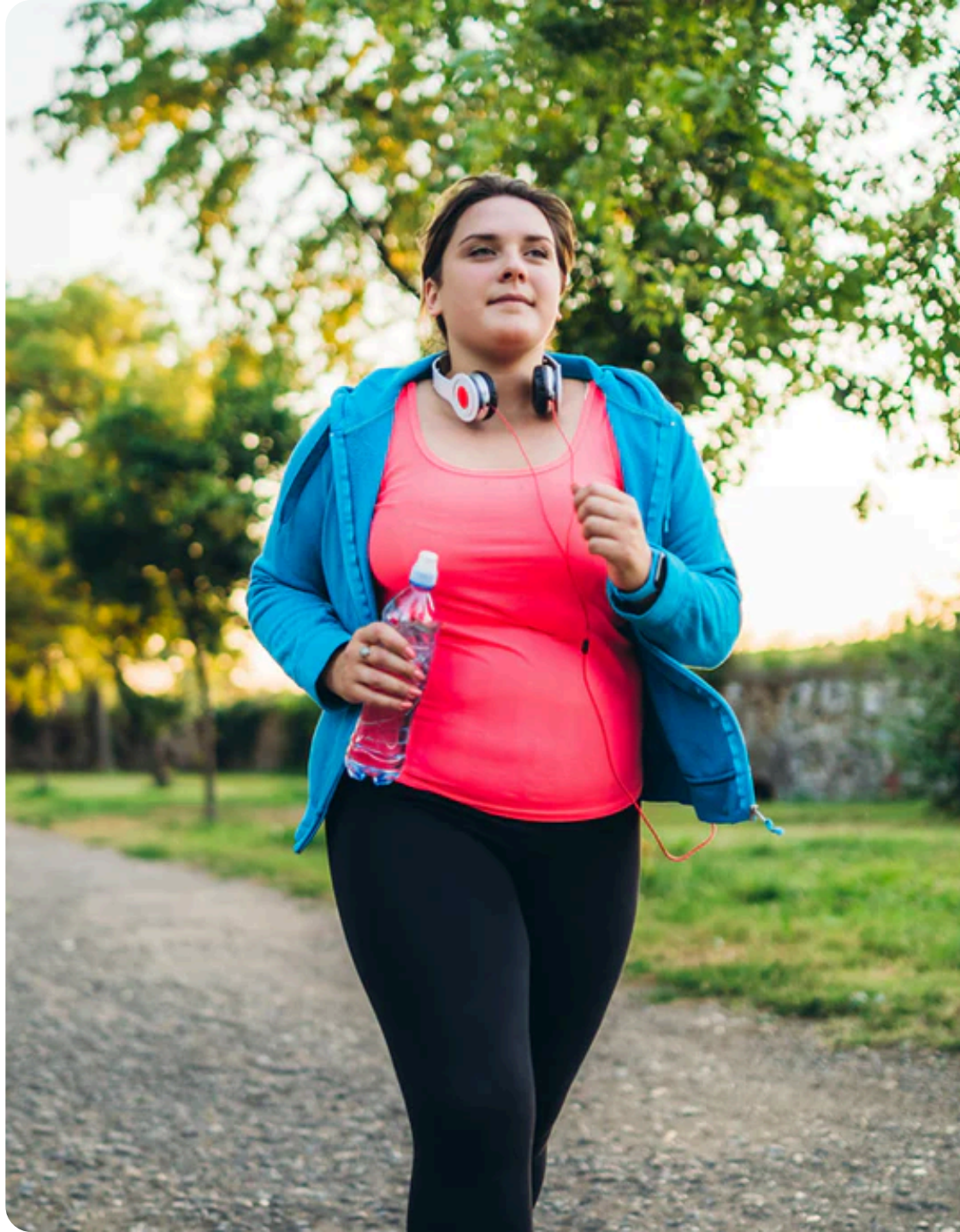
Location

Board meetings take place at 35 Chiswell Street, London, EC1Y 4SE and are a mix of in person and hybrid. We welcome applicants from across the United Kingdom, and will reimburse travel expenses should this be required.

Declarations of interests

Given our industry funding, Drinkaware has a comprehensive Conflicts of Interest Policy in place which is regularly reviewed.

All members of staff, advisors and trustees are required to sign a Declaration of Interests on an annual basis, and to declare interests at each meeting of the Board.



HOW TO APPLY

To make an application for this appointment, please go to https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/chair-drinkaware/ and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A covering letter that sets out your motivation for the role and describes the specific experience you can bring to the appointment to support Drinkaware's aims.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Deadline for applications is **Friday 16th October 2026.**

RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

Closing date	Friday 16th October 2026
Preliminary interview	w/c 26th October and 2nd November 2026
Final Panel interviews	Either early December 2026 or early January 2027

Drinkaware will cover travel expenses incurred as part of this recruitment process.

