



CANDIDATE PACK FOR CHAIR DESIGNATE

WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in becoming our Chair Designate at Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove (WSBH). As I come to the end of my own 12-year tenure as Chair, I'm reflecting on the fact that this role has been an absolute privilege. Age UK WSBH is an incredible charity which has always had older people at its heart. The people we serve shape everything we do.

We aim to help older people to remain healthy, stay independent, be informed and get connected. We provide a range of information, advice and services, alongside vibrant social clubs and centres that host enjoyable activities promoting camaraderie and physical well-being. Collaborating strategically with the NHS, local councils, and partners, we help people make the most of later life and manage any difficulties that come their way.

This is a challenging time for many older people, and for us as an organisation too. The pandemic cast a long shadow, affecting health, happiness and social confidence. Of course, the cost-of-living crisis also continues to hit people hard. We've taken some heart-breaking calls from people who were hungry, cold and suffering and we've been able to step in with emergency and longer-term measures. This work continues and we want over 50s locally to know that they can always turn to us when things get tough.

This is an important and exciting time to be joining the team. Our new strategic planning process will begin in January 2024 and will last until January 2025, with the new plan being launched in April that year. It takes time because we don't make assumptions about our clients or plan based on guesswork, we fully involve older people in the process. This way, we can be sure that our work is shaped around what they want and need from us in the coming years.

As Chair you will work with fellow Trustees to help guide the organisation as it works to achieve its mission. Our priorities include growing our income post-pandemic to allow us to reach as many people with services and support as possible. We're focusing on sustainability, improving our environmental impact and ensuring we're fit for the future.

Some of the key areas we're working on include dementia, loneliness and frailty. One in two of us will be affected by dementia in our lifetime, either caring for someone with the condition, developing it ourselves, or both. Loneliness and social isolation is associated with increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke – some reports suggest it can be as damaging to your health and smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Finally, frailty is an area where we make a huge impact with our work, building strength and confidence and helping to prevent injuries and falls.

You'll be pleased to hear that the team at Age UK WSBH is second to none. Our staff and volunteers are dedicated, professional and kind, regularly going above and beyond to ensure we make the biggest difference to everyone who needs us. If you can match this energy and you'd like to use your skills and experience to join them in making that difference, then we'd warmly welcome your application to become Chair. Thank you so much for your interest.

Best wishes,

John Dixon

P.s. We are also looking for Trustees to join our Board. Further details can be found [here](#).

ABOUT US

Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove is an independent local charity working in the local community to help older people. Initially, we were three separate organisations but merged in 2020 to become Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove.

Our mission is to improve the quality of people's later life through community and home-based services and enterprises. To do so, we aim to be the leading provider of services for older people (over 50) in West Sussex and Brighton & Hove. Our services are informed by and/or co-designed with our customers, staff and volunteers and aim to enhance customers' access to and experience of services provided by ourselves and our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

We are one of the larger organisations by size within the Age UK family, with a turnover of just under £5m per annum. We undertake contracts, generate our own income and fundraise to support and deliver our services across our area. We want to improve the quality of people's later life through community and home-based services and enterprises.

Led by our CEO and Senior Leadership Team, we employ 180 staff and 20 bank workers. They are supported to deliver services by 295 Home Helpers and 300+ volunteers. Our staff, from leadership to front line all have an absolute commitment to making older people's lives better. Our many volunteers give their time freely to help with everything from administration or cooking, to delivering prescriptions, checking on people at home after a hospital stay or offering dementia support. Our funders, charity partners, donors, fundraisers and campaigners are all also vital in enabling us to be there for as many people as possible.

THE AREA WE SERVE

West Sussex is bordered by Hampshire to the west, Surrey to the North and Brighton and Hove to the East. The county covers 768 square miles and has a population of 836,000. The 65+ population of the county is projected to grow to 305,193 by 2039, an increase of 65.9% from 2014 levels.

Brighton & Hove sits at the southeastern boundary of West Sussex and is bordered by East Sussex to the north and east. It has a population of 290,395 of whom 17% (50,819) are over 60. Although a predominantly younger city, the population is projected to get older with the greatest projected increases amongst 60 - 74 year olds (33%, 10,800 extra people) and the 75+ age group (30%, 5,300 extra people).



THE BOARD

AUKWSBH is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee which is governed by the Board which is comprised of up to 12 trustees. The Board has overall responsibility for the work of the organisation and has the following functions:

- To oversee the charity's governance.
- To establish strategy.
- To performance manage the achievement of the strategy.
- To contribute to the leadership of the charity.

The Board delegates to the Chief Executive who is supported by a Team comprising the Chief Operating Officer, Director of Partnerships and Localities, Director of Finance, Director of People and Director of Health. This enables the charity to draw on both trustee and officer skills and knowledge to maximise the quality of governance and leadership provided to the organisation. Trustees can serve up to two terms of office of three years each.

The Board is led by the Chair and is supported in its work by a Finance Sub Committee and two informal subgroups. The role of the Finance Sub Committee is to maintain an overview of the financial health and corporate performance of the organisation, its controls assurance mechanisms, and of its compliance with statutory requirements.

The two subgroups are:

- Governance - which role is to act as a reference point for the Board in the discharge of the board's responsibilities in relation to governance and procedures.
- Safeguarding - which role is to support the Board to discharge its organisational and front-line service safeguarding responsibilities.

These subgroups provide an opportunity to engage in more detailed scrutiny and discussion of the charity's work than would otherwise be possible in an ordinary board meeting.

The committee and groups are chaired by a trustee and comprise a small number of trustees and officers. The Board leads on development of the charity's strategy and ensures that it fulfils its governance duties by producing an Annual Trustee Report.



THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR

You will lead our Board in providing clear strategic direction to the charity and offer oversight, advice and support to our Chief Executive as well as our talented Executive team.

Primary Responsibilities

- Providing inclusive and exemplary leadership to AUKWSBH's Board of Trustees.
- Ensuring that the Board functions effectively to achieve the charity's purpose and strategic objectives.
- The charity's governance and regulatory compliance,
- Acting as an ambassador and one of the public faces of the charity, working in partnership with The Chief Executive.
- Conducting planned Board and Trustee performance reviews.

We're looking for someone with deep leadership experience and who will be a trusted and influential presence. You may already have chaired another organisation or likely held a substantial non-executive role such as Vice Chair, Senior Independent Director or equivalent. You will lead with common purpose and commitment to our goals. How you use your experience, skills and influence is more important than your immediate knowledge of us or the community we serve.

If you believe you can bring the experience, skills and leadership attributes we're looking for, we would very much like to hear from you.

HOW TO EXPRESS AN INTEREST IN THE ROLE

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/age-wsbh-chair/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- a CV (no more than three sides) or equivalent biographical information.
- a short covering letter that explains your motivation, suitability, availability and confirms that you would not be subject to any conflict of interest.
- please tell us if there are any dates during the selection process (outlined below) when you would not be available to participate.
- If you have a disability and identify any barriers in the job description or person specification, please tell us.

We would also be grateful if you would also 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.

The closing date for receipt of applications is **Monday, 1st April 2024**. Final interviews date to be confirmed.