



ST. JOHN'S FOUNDATION

CHANGING LIVES. FOR GOOD.

Candidate Pack for Chair



Welcome

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in becoming our next Chair of the Board of Trustees at St John's Foundation.

St John's Foundation was established in 1174. For 850 years, our organisation has been changing people's lives, for good.

Our city and the neighbourhoods around it are beautiful and age-old. However, divisions and inequalities are concealed behind the veneer of Bath stone and rural beauty. That's why we're here to provide crucial support for those who have reached a crisis point in their lives, helping them with the most essential needs.

We're looking for our next Chair. This is a prestigious appointment within our charity and one that's visible to the communities in which the Foundation is best known. The role is to lead and develop our Board, and to provide support, stretch and strategic oversight to a talented executive team. You will understand how our sense of place in our region naturally impacts on our priorities.

As we enter a period of significant change and development, we're seeking an exceptionally accomplished individual in their field, who can reconcile our distinctive heritage with the modern role we must play in the context of changing needs and pressures.

You'll bring an intuitive appreciation of the role the Foundation plays within its Bath and North East Somerset context, and a deep respect for our mission. We recognise that the opportunities and challenges ahead are endemic in society and not specific to our area. So we're open to applicants from further afield, where they understand the importance of their personal presence within our organisation.

With a sophisticated grasp of good governance and board development, the successful candidate will be genuinely engaged with and interested in life at the Foundation. Wherever you are now, you'll be known for your integrity and personal credibility and will be recognised as a trusted and influential leader, with emotional intelligence, sound judgement and a strategic outlook.

The Foundation will always consider applicants who have lived or personal experience of poverty or other challenges faced by our beneficiaries.

If you believe you can offer the skills, experience and approach we are looking for, we very much look forward to hearing from you.



Ken Scott
Chair of the Board Selection Panel

Our organisation in brief

As one of the UK's oldest charities, we're proud to serve Bath and the surrounding area. Yet we're still facing many of the same problems today as we have throughout the centuries.

It's a dilemma that prompted us to launch our Best Start in Life initiative (formally known as the Foundation Fund) in 2020. This work focuses on making sure every child under 12 has the chance to grow up as a healthy, happy, and educated member of our community; that they have the support they need to lead fulfilling, independent lives beyond school and into older age.

We're determined to narrow the primary school educational attainment gap, which is particularly acute in our area.

Alongside this, we continue our longstanding work of helping older adults age well through the provision of housing and outreach services. With older adults now outnumbering younger people in our region, it's more important than ever that we foster an age-friendly community, promoting independent living for longer.

By addressing the needs of under-served young people alongside this, we believe we can change the direction of their lives, so that when they're older, they won't need us.

We work to address these modern challenges, forging connections with like-minded charities and donors to boost our impact. It's a long-term strategy, but we're unwavering. After all, we've been around for 850 years.

Older adults 65+

St John's has created a thriving almshouse community to help older adults live well and more independently. In addition to providing housing, we offer a diverse activities programme and a tailored advice service to support older adults in our community.

It is important to us that we offer an environment that enhances the overall quality of people's lives. We are proud to support older adults whilst promoting individuality, friendship, and wellbeing within a safe and friendly community of mature adults.



Young people 0-12

St John's vision is for all children in our community to grow up into happy, healthy, and educated members of society. By focusing on closing the Key Stage 2 educational attainment gap, we provide crucial support through targeted interventions to help make this happen.

Our interventions focus on key areas of a child's development. These include a child's language development in nursery, mental health support for children and mothers, and further educational support at primary school.

St John's also provides nourishing meals through the Nutritious Food Programme to help families facing financial challenges.

Crisis Programme

Bath is a beautiful city but its wealthy veneer masks a city and surrounding area with its own share of poverty and deprivation. Although Bath is a highly popular tourist destination and a world heritage site, the region is no less immune to illness, unemployment, poverty and debt and the high cost of property here exacerbates the challenge. People in financial crisis need help, wherever they live.

That's why we operate a Crisis Programme, providing financial support to individuals and families in Bath and North East Somerset who are really struggling to make ends meet. It aims to meet the most essential needs, such as beds, white goods, furniture, counselling, debt support and basic employment skills and training.

Read more about us

To read more about us, and about our work, please visit our website at <https://stjohnsbath.org.uk/>



Chair Role Profile

About the Chair appointment

The Chair will lead trustees to work effectively as a team to secure high standards of governance, a productive culture, and independent decisions that ensure St John's Foundation's charitable objectives are met by:

- providing inclusive leadership to the trustees and the CEO.
- ensuring each trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the organisation.
- holding the trustees and executive team to account against the organisation's strategy and values and external best practice such as the Charity Governance Code.
- acting as an ambassador of the organisation externally and seeking to optimise relationships between trustees and staff internally in partnership with the CEO.

Principal accountabilities of the Chair role

Organisational purpose

- Ensure that the Board operates within its charitable objectives (as set out in its governing document) and legal responsibilities, and provides a clear strategic direction for the organisation, working alongside the CEO and executive team.

Leadership and board effectiveness

- Provide leadership to the Board, ensuring that it works as an effective team using the appropriate balance of skills, experience, backgrounds, and knowledge to make informed decisions.
- Appraise the performance of the Board and its Trustees and ensure that the Board is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge, and experience.

Decision-making, risk, and control

- Lead the Board to fulfil its duties in guarding the financial health of the organisation, with systems in place for financial accountability.
- Ensure that decision-making processes are informed, rigorous, and timely and that effective delegation, controls, and management systems are set up and monitored.
- Ensure that the Board is able to regularly review major risks and opportunities and to satisfy itself that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities and mitigate risks.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

- Take an equitable approach when managing Board affairs, including chairing meetings, to ensure the Board is inclusive and able to meet the needs of individual trustees.
- Recognise and address any imbalances in perspectives, attitudes and behaviour of trustees and lead the Board to benefit from its diversity, inclusive practices and good culture.

Integrity, openness, and accountability

- Chair meetings of the Board effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process.
- Ensure trustees are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the organisation and that the Board takes collective ownership.

Separation of duties

- Establish a strong, effective, and constructive working relationship with the CEO, Director of Finance, and Director of Commercial Operations, and ensure that they are held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives and to provide support as appropriate.

The Chair may be occasionally required to carry out additional duties and tasks as reasonably expected of this role.



What we require in the successful candidate

Knowledge and experience

- Strong experience gained as Chair, Vice Chair, Senior Independent Director or Committee Chair for another not for profit or public sector organisation and understands the Chair role, and respective Chair / CEO responsibilities.
- Successful experience of leading high-performing and diverse teams (your executive background may have been gained in any sector).
- Deep understanding of charitable activity and of the Chair role and responsibilities in this context, as well as the role of equity and inclusion.
- Appreciation of the various commercial, financial and governance priorities for complex charitable organisations such as the Foundation (knowledge of Charity Commission guidance and the Charity Governance Code is an asset).
- While a deep knowledge of almshouses, people in poverty, and / or our service areas is not strictly essential, it is likely that you have had experience of working to address complex social issues at Board level.
- Track record of working with, and representing organisations to, local stakeholders and communities.

The Foundation will always consider applicants who have lived or personal experience of poverty or other challenges faced by our beneficiaries.

Skills and abilities

- Outstanding skills in strategic leadership, influencing and diplomacy.
- Strong skills in board development, persuading and negotiating.
- Highly effective interpersonal and listening skills with an open, honest and transparent communication style.
- Able to reconcile competing views and agendas and to manage conflict.
- Able to apply the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life to the Foundation Board and to foster a culture that challenges unacceptable behaviour.
- High capacity to learn about new organisations and sectors quickly.

Leadership style and attributes

- Empathetic, 'low ego' style underpinned by integrity and respect for others, and grounded in trust, transparency, strong ethics and commitment to the highest standards of governance.
- High capacity for self-reflection.
- Strategic in outlook and sees the bigger picture.
- Deep interest in the work of the Charity and its tangible impact on the lives of beneficiaries.
- Personally flexible.
- A compelling role-model for values-driven behaviours.

Terms of appointment

Remuneration

This appointment is offered on a voluntary basis. All reasonable expenses incurred on Foundation business will be reimbursed.

Time commitment

The estimated time requirement for this appointment is up to one day per week on average throughout the year.

Location

The Foundation is based at 4-5 Chapel Court, Bath, BA1 1SQ.

Meetings are held in person, online and hybrid. Both the Chair and the Board are required to be present in and visible to the Foundation in order to fulfil obligations. This will naturally be a consideration for candidates applying from outside the Bath and North East Somerset area, although there is no requirement for the Chair to be of or from our immediate communities.

Term of appointment

Three years, with the possibility of extension for a second term of three years.

Conflict of interest

Candidates must not be conflicted in any way for the duration of their appointment as Chair.



How to apply

We hope you will consider becoming our next Chair at St John's Foundation. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/stjohn-bath-chair/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- your CV or equivalent biographical details (no more than three sides)
- a supporting statement that sets out why you are interested in this appointment and the specific experiences you believe you can bring to St John's Foundation that make you suitable.

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.

Closing date is Friday 15th November 2024.

Please also tell us about any dates when you are not available for interview.

Closing date	Friday 15th November 2024
First stage discussions for selected candidates	Late November / early December 2024
Agreement of the final shortlist	Likely to be early December
Informal conversations	Early to mid-December
Final panel interview event	Likely to be mid-December (TBC)





**ST JOHN'S
FOUNDATION**

Registered Charity No: 201476. Registered Office: 4-5 Chapel Court, Bath, BA1 1SQ