

Candidate Briefing Pack
Recruitment of:
Treasurer / Board Members

Sustainable
Northern Ireland





Your Application

Thank you very much for your interest in a Board member opportunity with Sustainable NI. This is an exciting opportunity to make a real difference.

On the following pages, you will find details of the Board member roles we are recruiting and the selection process.

In order to apply you should submit your CV and a short supporting statement specifying which position you are interested in via email to:
recruitment@sustainableni.org

All applications will be acknowledged on receipt.

Please do call us on +44 7849150045 if you wish to have an informal discussion about the role and organisation or if you have any other questions relevant to the opportunity or the appointment process.

Should you require this information in an alternative format please let me know.

Thank you

Nichola Hughes, Sustainable NI

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Foreword from the Chair

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for expressing an interest in joining the Sustainable NI Board at a very exciting, though equally challenging time within the sustainability sector.

Sustainable NI plays a pivotal role in advancing sustainable development in Northern Ireland by providing high-quality advice, expertise, and advocacy to support long-term policies and decisions that balance environmental, social, and economic needs.

The Board has a vital leadership role in ensuring Sustainable NI is best positioned to deliver on its ambitious strategic plan in the years ahead. There are many opportunities along with some challenges that will present over the coming years which include: growing our operations, delivering new and exciting projects and services, and ensuring we deliver impact in everything we do.

We are seeking to make new Board appointments as part of an ongoing Board renewal process. Currently we are seeking expressions of interest for those interested in the position of **Treasurer** and **Board Member**.

We are looking for board members with a range of skills, not necessarily from within the sustainability sector, to bring a diverse mix of experience and insights to board debate, with the ability to effectively contribute to board decisions.

We are particularly interested in individuals that have held senior leadership positions with direct experience in the following areas:

- Corporate Finance (for the role of Treasurer)
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Fundraising / Business Development

Thank you for taking the time to read this brief which outlines the responsibilities of these roles, which in conjunction with our Strategic Plan, will give you further insight into our purpose, our values, the work we do and the significant ambition we hold for the future.

For a confidential discussion you can speak with Nichola Hughes our Executive Director to find out more about current Board requirements and expectations initially.

Yours faithfully,

Debbie Caldwell,
Chair, Sustainable NI

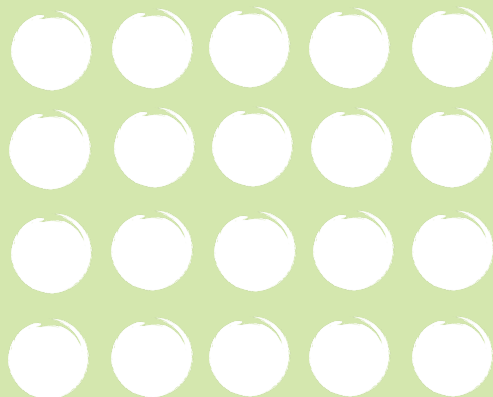


About Sustainable NI

At Sustainable NI we are passionate about meeting our needs without compromising the planet.

Sustainable NI was established as a collaborative initiative by WWF and Northern Ireland Environment Link to help build a sustainable future for Northern Ireland through a range of education, advocacy and advisory services.

Working across Northern Ireland and in close partnership with the eleven councils, we are proud to have influenced local area plans and climate action plans as well as national policies and legislation such as the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022.



In addition to our role advising public bodies, we also offer a range of tools and service to businesses to help them. Support ranges from training and workshops to mentoring and strategic plan development.

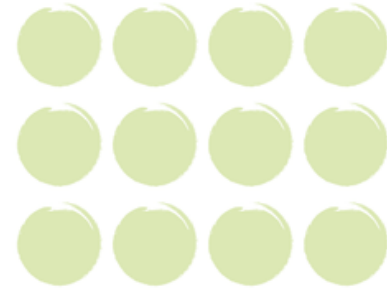
Our advocacy services aim to strengthen sustainability ambition in policy and as part of this work, we facilitate the All-Party Group on Climate Action in Stormont. We also deliver collaborative projects, for example the Enterprise Digitalisation And Transformation Alliance collaborative project which aims to support businesses across Northern Ireland and the border regions in embracing digital transformation, sustainability and decarbonisation.

Sustainable NI is a Company limited by guarantee and a Charity. We are governed by a Board of Directors. We value lived experience and diversity of thought which is why our board consists of Directors from within and outside of the environment and sustainability sector. We are currently enjoying a period of modest growth and have an ambitious plan to deliver significantly more impact during the five years of our strategic plan.

We are proud of our values, culture and approach. If you share a similar desire and want to be part of our exciting next phase, we encourage you to play a role in shaping our vision. Together we can make a difference.



Our Purpose and Values



Inform people to
make better
choices



Reform policy to
ensure it
supports
sustainability



Transform how
organisations
deliver
sustainability



Grow our
capacity and
influence

Our Purpose

We promote and support sustainable
development in Northern Ireland

Through education, advocacy and partnerships for sustainability.

Our Values Guide Us

Whilst what we do is vitally important, we think how we do it is equally important. Our values guide the way we behave and the decisions we make and underline what is important to us as an organisation.

We are Sustainable NI and we are....

- Trusted
- Passionate
- Collaborative
- Fair

[Click here](#) to read more about our purpose and values

Our Financials



Here's a summary of our most recent Income and Expenditure statement to 31 March 2025. You can click on the links below to access more information on our financial performance for the last three years.

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds £	Totals 2025 £	Totals 2024 £
Income					
<i>from donations and legacies</i>					
• Donations	3	-	-	0	-
• Grants	3	30,019	-	30,019	72,449
<i>from charitable activities</i>					
• Business income and sponsorship	3	1,180	-	1,180	21,050
• Other sources	3	95,000	-	95,000	60,000
<i>from other activities</i>					
• Investment income	3	397	-	397	459
Total income		126,596	0	126,596	153,958
Expenditure					
<i>on raising funds</i>					
• Promotional costs	4	-	-	0	179
<i>on charitable activities</i>					
• Employee costs	4	107,368	-	107,368	143,898
• Premises costs	4	6,878	-	6,878	5,474
• Travel & training costs	4	724	-	724	1,319
• General administration costs	4	6,011	-	6,011	21,899
• Programme costs	4	2,472	-	2,472	1,166
<i>On other items</i>					
• Legal & professional fees	4	4,095	-	4,095	9,625
• Other expenses	4	161	-	161	742
• Depreciation of assets	4	-	-	0	-
Total expenditure		127,709	0	127,709	184,302
Net income / (expenditure) for the year		(1,113)	0	(1,113)	(30,344)
Transfers between funds	10	-	-	0	-
Net movement in funds for the year		(1,113)	0	(1,113)	(30,344)
<i>Reconciliation of funds</i>					
• Fund balances brought fwd at 1st April		45,629	-	45,629	75,973
• Fund balances carried fwd at 31st March		44,516	0	44,516	45,629

[Click here](#) to read our Annual Report March 2024

[Click here](#) to read our Annual Report March 2023

[Click here](#) to read our Annual Report March 2022

Our Board

Our organisation is led by a voluntary board comprising experts from the private and public sectors. The Board provides challenge, leadership and support through Board meetings. Delegated authorities are set out in a clear scheme of delegation.



Debbie Caldwell, Chair

Debbie is the Belfast Climate Commissioner, a role in which she leads the climate change agenda in Belfast, maximising opportunities for sustainability interventions to contribute to city growth, skills development and innovation.



Jac Callan, Vice-Chair

Jac is Sustainability & Impact Manager for Visit Belfast, where she works alongside Belfast City Council and tourism stakeholders to help Belfast become a leading sustainable tourism and events destination.



Keith Patterson, Treasurer

Keith is a waste and recycling specialist at WRAP where he uses an evidence-based approach to develop resource management strategies, behaviour change campaigns, tools, and resources aimed at maximising the value and use of materials.



Robert Clements

Robert is Head of Sustainable Development at the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, where he leads the team responsible for residential energy efficiency, decarbonization and mitigating fuel poverty.



Alan McVicker

Alan leads the Strategic Investment Board's Council Support Unit which supports councils in the delivery of their capital programmes, with a particular emphasis on waste and the circular economy.



Alison Curtis

Alison is Head of Administration for Ards and North Down Borough Council. She is responsible for corporate governance, risk management, customer service and democratic services and has a background in waste management.

Our Board



Mark Latuske

Mark is a people change and development specialist. He is currently Director of Employee Experience at Ulster University where he leads a team across a range of HR disciplines.



Hannah Martin

Hannah is an economist, business consultant and advisor with extensive commercial experience including advising senior bank leadership on key decisions based on short and long-term strategic priorities.



Leigh Greer

Leigh is currently Head of Supply and Markets Regulation at the Utility Regulator and has worked as a regulatory affairs specialist within the energy industry for 15 years.



Jill Laughlin

Jill is an experienced lawyer having practiced as a corporate solicitor for 20 years. She is currently a lecturer in Corporate Governance and Corporate Compliance at Ulster University.



Ciara O'Connor

Ciara leads marketing, communications and membership within a professional services organisation. She has over 20 years' experience across multiple private sector industries, working with senior teams on strategy and stakeholder engagement.

The Role of Treasurer

The Treasurer shares the collective responsibilities of all Board members. In addition, the Treasurer takes the lead on the Board's oversight of Sustainable NI's financial affairs, helping to ensure the organisation's resources are managed responsibly, that it stays financially viable, and that it meets its financial, legal and regulatory obligations.

The Treasurer will balance strategic focus with financial scrutiny. They will be able to analyse and interpret financial information and explain what it means for the organisation in terms of challenge, opportunity and risk, so that Board colleagues can make informed decisions.

The Treasurer does not replace the Board's collective responsibility for financial matters. Instead, they give the Board assurance, act as the main link between the Board and the Executive Director on financial matters, and exercise the specific financial authority delegated to them under the scheme of delegation.

Key Responsibilities

Financial Oversight & Planning

- Lead the Board's oversight of Sustainable NI's financial strategy, making sure financial planning supports the Strategic Plan and the organisation's long-term sustainability.
- Work with the Executive Director to prepare the annual budget and any medium-term financial plans, and present them to the Board for approval.
- Review regular management accounts, cash flow forecasts and variance reports. Report to the Board on financial performance against budget and highlight any significant issues, trends or concerns.
- Advise the Board on the financial implications of strategic plans, new projects, funding bids and major decisions.

Financial Authorisation & Delegated Authority

- Approve expenditure above the Executive Director's delegated limit, in line with the scheme of delegation.
- Make sure any expenditure approved under the Treasurer's delegated authority is properly documented and reported to the next Board meeting, so the Board can monitor how delegated powers are used.
- Act as an authorised signatory for bank accounts and payments, as set out in Sustainable NI's financial procedures.
- Keep the scheme of delegation and financial approval limits under review and recommend changes to the Board where appropriate.

Financial Controls and Compliance

- Make sure appropriate financial policies, procedures and internal controls are in place, followed and regularly reviewed. This includes controls on income, expenditure, procurement, payroll, pension and banking.
- Oversee the preparation of the annual accounts and support the Board in approving them. Make sure they are prepared in line with the relevant accounting standards, the Charities SORP and the requirements of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and Companies House.
- Act as the main Board contact for the independent examiner (or auditor), help resolve any issues they raise, and make sure recommendations are acted on.
- Make sure funding received is used in line with funders' terms and conditions, and that restricted and unrestricted funds are properly accounted for.
- Oversee compliance with tax obligations, including VAT, PAYE and Gift Aid where applicable.

Reserves, Investment and Financial Risk

- Lead the development and regular review of Sustainable NI's reserves policy and monitor reserves against the agreed target.
- Oversee any investment policy and make sure funds are managed prudently and in line with charity law.
- Identify, monitor and report on financial risks, including funding dependency, cash flow and going concern. Make sure these are reflected in the organisation's risk register and that appropriate mitigations are in place.

Support & Communication

- Support and constructively challenge the Executive Director and staff on financial management, providing guidance where needed.
- Help Board colleagues understand the organisation's financial position by presenting financial information clearly and accessibly.
- Chair or attend Finance and Audit Committee / Task and Finish Group meetings as appropriate.

NOTE: The aforementioned duties are not intended to be exhaustive but are provided as an indication of the role and responsibilities of the Treasurer. They may change from time to time depending on the needs of the organisation.

Person Specification - Treasurer

The role of Treasurer is a hugely rewarding opportunity to use your financial expertise to help secure Sustainable NI's future and to drive positive environmental and societal impact across Northern Ireland.

Essential Criteria

- Meet all the essential criteria for the role of Board member.
- A professional accountancy qualification (e.g. ACA, ACCA, CIMA, CIPFA) or equivalent, and/or significant experience at a senior level in financial management.
- Proven experience of budget setting, financial planning and monitoring, and interpreting management accounts and annual financial statements.
- A strong understanding of financial controls, risk management and good financial governance.
- The ability to explain financial information clearly and confidently to people without a financial background.
- The confidence and judgement to exercise delegated financial authority and provide appropriate challenge to the Executive Director and Board colleagues.

Desirable Criteria

- Knowledge of charity finance, including the Charities SORP, fund accounting (restricted and unrestricted funds) and the reporting requirements of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.
- Experience of managing or overseeing grant funding, public sector contracts or funder reporting.
- Previous experience as a Treasurer, Finance Director or member of a Finance or Audit Committee, in an executive or non-executive capacity.
- An understanding of the current policy, economic, regulatory and legislative environment in which the sector operates.

Additional Information

Commitment

The Sustainable NI Board meets four times a year. In addition, the Treasurer will be expected to meet with the Executive Director to review the organisation's finances quarterly, deal with expenditure approvals as they arise, and support the annual budget and year-end accounts process. Generally, it is expected that the commitment will be approximately 12 days per year (flexibly). These roles are non-remunerated. Out of pocket expenses are reimbursed.

Term

The Treasurer position is offered on an initial 3-year term, subject to periodic review, and subject to mutual agreement and effective performance may be extended. The maximum tenure is 2 x 3-year terms. The Treasurer will be offered a full induction programme and supporting materials, including a handover of financial procedures, the scheme of delegation and recent financial reports.

Governance and Inspection

Sustainable NI must comply with regulations set down by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and Companies House. This includes the preparation of annual accounts, a trustees' annual report, and an independent examination of the charity's accounts each year. The Treasurer plays a lead role in supporting the Board to meet these requirements.

Conflict Of Interest

Applicants cannot be considered for the role of Treasurer if there is a perceived or actual conflict of interest. This includes any financial or business relationship with Sustainable NI, its suppliers or its funders. Should you have further concerns on this matter please do not hesitate in seeking a clarification from the Executive Director who will communicate the issue to the Sustainable NI Appointments Panel for consideration.

The Role of a Board Member

The role of a Board member of Sustainable NI is one that demands appropriate balance between strategic focus and operational scrutiny. Board members are fully encouraged to challenge, collaborate and actively contribute to debate and to express their views.

Board members will have the ability to think objectively and strategically. They will have the ability to analyse and interpret data and information and identify what it means in terms of challenge, opportunity, and risk for the organisation.

The Board will ensure effective governance, and compliance with Sustainable NI rules and with all legal and regulatory obligations.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

Provide strategic leadership and direction to the work Sustainable NI.

Work collaboratively with all colleagues, building excellent relationships, developing a collaborative approach between Board colleagues, the Executive Director and stakeholders providing support and challenge, understanding the constraints and helping Sustainable NI deliver on its mission and vision.

Always act with independence and integrity and promote a culture of openness, trust and transparency and one that values diversity and provides equality of opportunity and inclusion.

Good Governance and Compliance

Ensure that the organisation is governed efficiently and effectively.

Ensure that Sustainable NI meets its legal and regulatory obligations.

Comply with the code of conduct for Board Members, including declaring all conflicts of interest.

Sound Decision Making

Establish a constructive working relationship with Board colleagues and provide the necessary support to the Executive Director.

Monitor Sustainable NI's performance in relation to plans, budgets, internal controls and decisions and ensure that the organisation is well run, holding the Executive Director to account.

Take delegated decisions in accordance with the rules of Sustainable NI and ensuring that the Board monitors the use of these delegated powers.

Keep specialist skills and knowledge up to date and share with colleagues to support sound decision making, develop understanding and join any Task and Finish Groups and panels as requested.

Risk Management

Ensure that the business is financially viable and at Board level, members clearly establish its appetite for risk to determine the nature and extent of the material risks that Sustainable NI is willing to embrace, to be reviewed on a regular basis.

Ensure that key risks are identified and mitigated and that relevant internal controls are in place.

Drive the development of strategic plans, balancing short term requirements and long- term interests and viability; ensuring full account of the opportunities and threats of the external environment and that they are fully assessed and potential risks identified.

Act as an Ambassador for Sustainable NI

Raise the profile of Sustainable NI and enhance its reputation by acting as an ambassador at key events/ interactions with colleagues, customers and stakeholders and maintain good working relationships to promote the image and reputation of Sustainable NI.

NOTE: The aforementioned duties are not intended to be exhaustive but are provided as an indication of the role and the responsibilities of a Board member and may change from time to time depending on the needs of the organisation.

The Role of Board Member continued overleaf.

Person Specification - Board Member

The role of Board member for an organisation in this sector is hugely rewarding and offers the opportunity to drive and deliver positive environmental and societal impact across Northern Ireland.

Essential Criteria

- Ability to effectively contribute at Board meetings, collaborate constructively while providing appropriate challenge.
- Evidence of successful senior leadership – either in an Executive or Non-Executive capacity - along with proven experience of shaping strategy, participating in the formulation of objectives, and applying evidence-based decision-making.
- Demonstrable enthusiasm and genuine interest in delivering environmental and social impact.

Desirable

- An understanding of the current policy, economic, regulatory, and legislative environment in which the sector operates.

Additional Information

Commitment

The Sustainable NI Board meets four times a year. Board members can also be invited to join a Task and Finish Group, depending on their skills and experience and these meet between board meetings, as and when required.

Generally, it is expected that the commitment will be approximately 10 days per year (flexibly).

These roles are non-remunerated. Out of pocket expenses are reimbursed.

Board positions are offered on an initial 3-year term, subject to periodic review, and subject to mutual agreement and effective performance may be extended. The maximum tenure of a Board Member is 2 x 3-year terms. All Board Members will be offered a full induction programme and supporting materials.

Board Meetings

The Board has embraced technology to adopt a more agile approach working at Board level. Whilst most board meetings are in person, it is anticipated that at least one board meeting per year will be virtual, to reduce travel.

Governance and Inspection

Whilst Sustainable NI is an independent organisation, managed by a voluntary board, it must also comply with regulations set down by the Charity Commission and Companies House. This includes the preparation of annual accounts, a trustees' annual report, and an independent examination of the charity's accounts each year.

Conflict Of Interest

Applicants cannot be considered for the role of Board member if there is a perceived or actual conflict of interest. Applicants should recognise that a perceived conflict of interest would prevent the applicant from taking up the role of Board member. Should you have further concerns on this matter please do not hesitate in seeking a clarification from the Executive Director who will communicate the issue to the Sustainable NI Appointments Panel for consideration.

Selection Process

Shortlisting based on eligibility criteria

Sustainable NI Appointment Panel interviews (Virtual)

Prior to interview, there will be an opportunity for candidates to engage with the Executive Director, Nichola Hughes, should they wish to discuss further detail of the Board requirements.

Recommendations for Board appointments will be ratified at the next Board Meeting, and the appointment of the Board members will commence from the following Board Meeting.

Supplementary Information

Sustainable NI Strategic Plan - Building a Brighter Future (2025 -2030)

[Click here to view the Strategic Plan](#)

Sustainable NI Annual Report and Accounts 2024-25

[Click here to view the Annual Report and Accounts](#)

Full details of Sustainable NI can be viewed at www.sustainableni.org



www.sustainableni.org

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Sustainable Northern Ireland is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (Registration No: NIC103426)