



# TREASURER RECRUITMENT 2026

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Join the Board of an inspiring community land trust and help shape a positive, sustainable future for our world



# WELCOME

We are at a genuinely exciting phase of our work and are looking for trustees who can support our best hopes for building communities in London.

We have an inspiring, diverse initial community living in our first, completed project - a beautiful setting in Lewisham. We now see the scope to transform our wider neighbourhood.

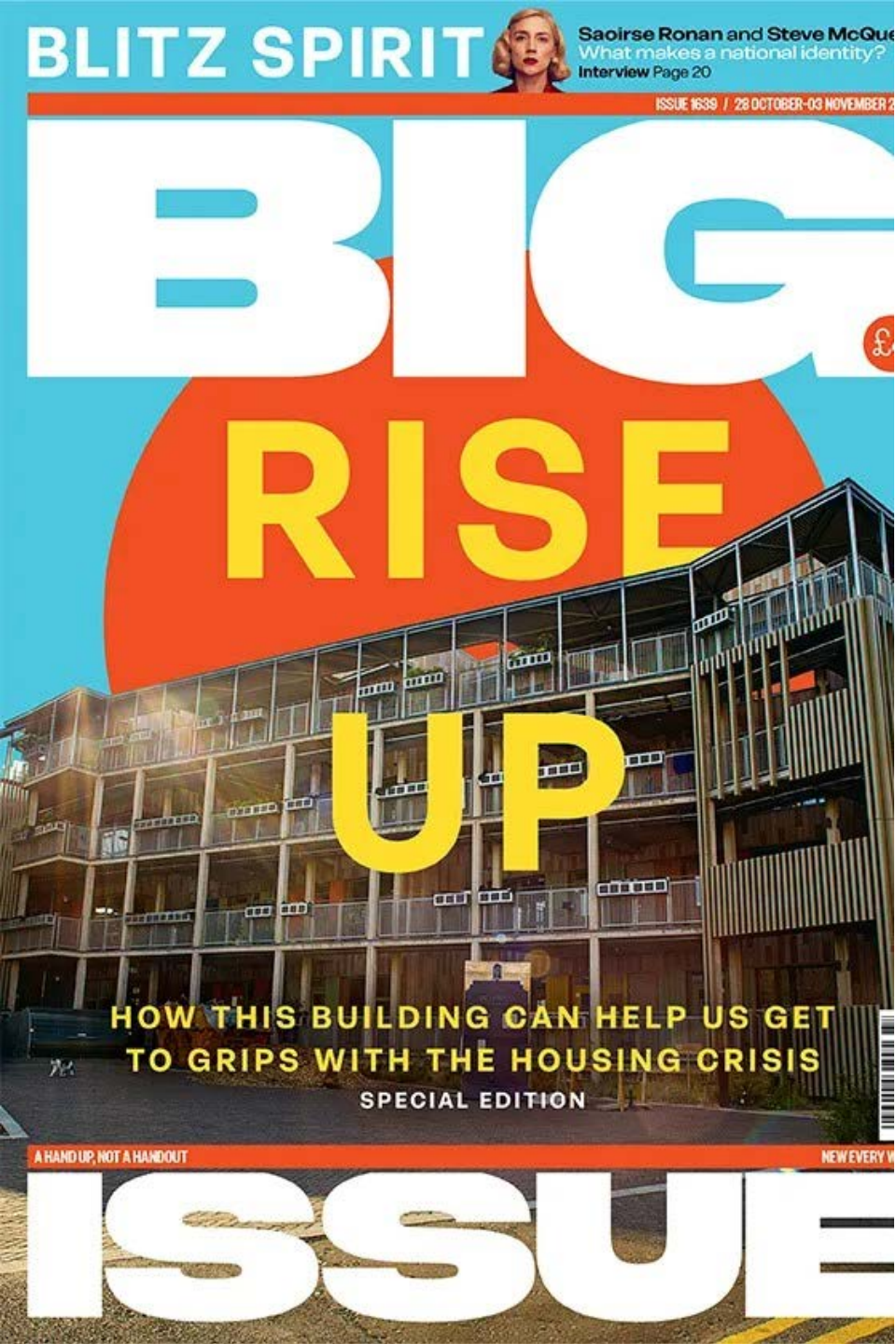
So we are looking for a new Treasurer to replace our current Treasurer, Phil Morris, who completes his second term of office in 2026. We are looking for someone with the enthusiasm and skills to join our Board and play an active role in shaping our future.

We would love you to step forward.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ed Mayo'.

Ed Mayo MBE

Chair, RUSS



# WHO ARE WE?

- RUSS (Rural Urban Synthesis Society) is a community-led housing cooperative that creates permanently affordable, sustainable homes by empowering local people to design, build and steward their neighbourhoods.
- RUSS operates as a volunteer-led Community Land Trust with deep roots in Lewisham, with 1,000 members. We bring a unique combination of community passion and proven professional delivery.
- In 2024, after a long campaign kick-started by Kareem Dayes, we successfully completed 12 Church Grove, with 36 affordable flats, mixed tenure, with communal space, including The Hub.
- We are currently London's largest community-led, 100% affordable housing scheme.
- This project received national acclaim, including being named one of The Guardian's Top 3 Architecture projects of the year.

# OVERVIEW

## **Purpose of Recruitment**

RUSS is expanding its Board to guide the organisation through registration as a social landlord and future growth phases. As a key part of this, we are looking for a new Treasurer.

## **Role of Trustees**

Trustees shape RUSS's strategic direction, ensure governance, and support sustainable housing missions.

## **Collaborative Work Ethos**

Trustees work closely with staff, residents, volunteers, and members emphasizing participatory democracy.

## **Inclusive Recruitment Approach**

RUSS encourages open questions and informal conversations to foster inclusivity and race equality in recruitment.



# 12 CHURCH GROVE

## Affordable Housing Model

Church Grove offers 36 affordable homes under an 'affordability in perpetuity' model, ensuring long-term accessibility.

## Mixed Tenure and Inclusivity

The development includes shared ownership, affordable rent, and social rent to promote inclusive, mixed communities.

## Community Amenities and Design

Shared amenities like a communal garden, playground, guest flat, laundry, and office space were designed with resident input.

## Resident Participation

Future residents co-designed the scheme and actively manage community life, fostering strong engagement and ownership.



"THE LONDONERS WHO ARE  
BUILDING SUSTAINABLE  
COMMUNITIES."

BIG ISSUE, NOVEMBER

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2025



# THE LADYWELL PLAYTOWER...



## An Opportunity

By working together, we have a vision to transform the east side of Ladywell, opening up the space, providing improved access and safety, creating new affordable housing and a vibrant new community resource.

Following our engagement with around 400 local people, with support from community in a crowdfunder raising £8,000, and in concert with a range of partners, in February 2026, we submitted an Expression of Interest to Lewisham Council.

# GOOD GOVERNANCE

## Democratic Membership Structure

RUSS is led by members who each have one vote, ensuring equal democratic participation regardless of shareholding. In legal terms, we are a Community Benefit Society. We are a proud member of the Community Land Trust Network.

## Board of Trustees Role

The Board sets strategic direction, oversees performance, ensures compliance, and safeguards assets and values. Board meetings, around eight annually, are currently being held in our Community Hub in Lewisham SE13, with hybrid/online options open for those that can't make each meeting in person.

## Supportive Sub-Committees

Trustees are supported by sub-committees focused on finance, projects, education, and community engagement. The Finance and Audit Committee is chaired by the Treasurer and includes trustees, volunteers and our bookkeeper.

## Accountability and Leadership

The governance model emphasizes accountability, shared leadership, and opportunities for trustees to influence the organisation's future.



# TREASURER ROLE

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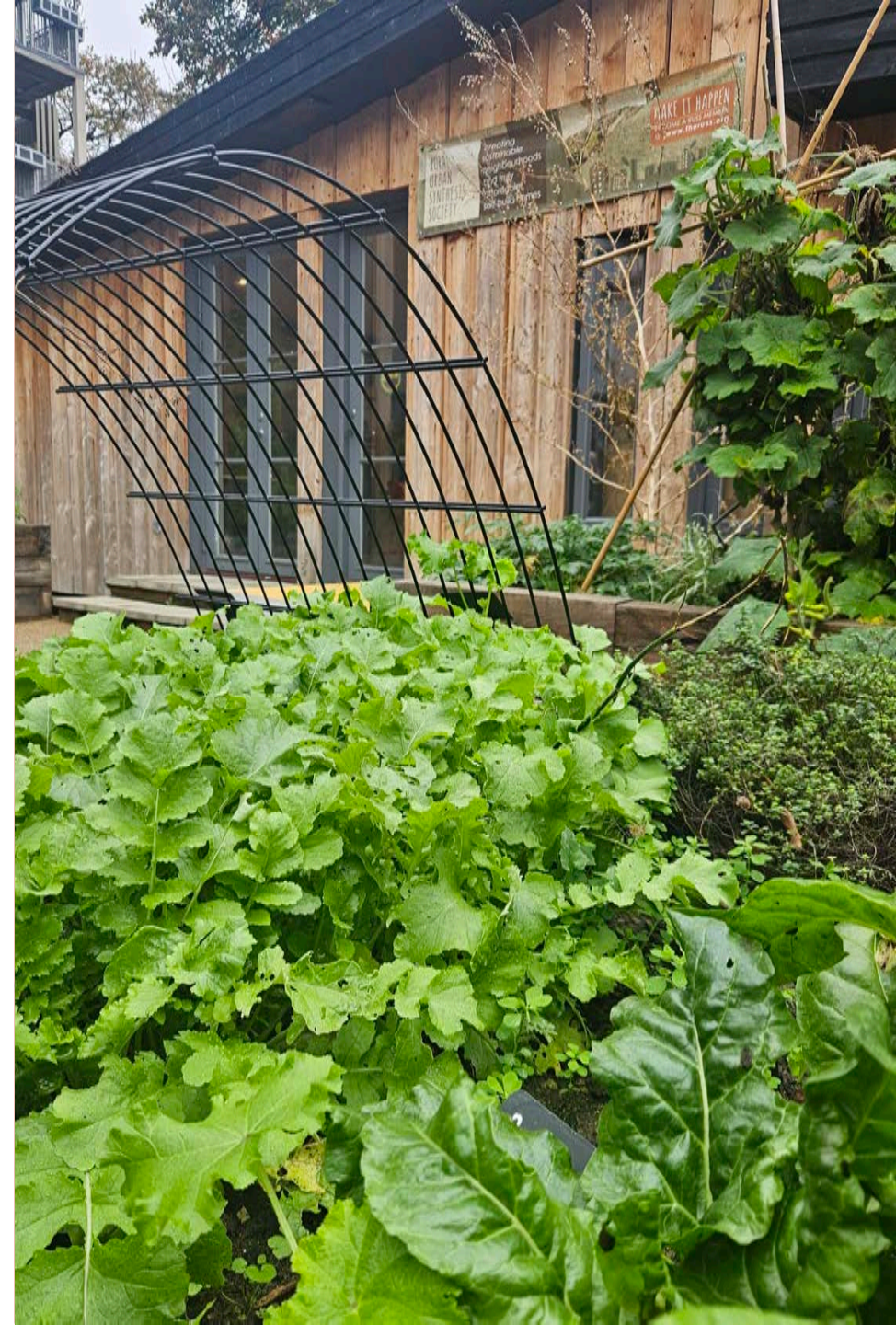
The Treasurer is a trustee and volunteer director with overall responsibility for financial stewardship at RUSS. The role supports the organisation as it transitions from delivering its first development into long-term housing management and future growth.

The Treasurer ensures that financial decision-making underpins affordability, resilience and social mission, while meeting regulatory and governance requirements.

This is a hands-on strategic role in a values-led, community-controlled housing organisation.

RUSS is now managing completed homes, service charges and long-term assets for the first time. The organisation carries social investment debt and must plan clearly for refinancing and future projects. Strong financial leadership is essential to protect residents, affordability and community control. The Treasurer plays a key role in shaping RUSS's next phase of stability, growth and impact.

The full Role Profile is set out in the Annex below.





# RURAL URBAN SYNTHESIS SOCIETY WIDER TRUSTEE ROLE

## **Trustee Responsibilities**

Trustees ensure the organisation achieves its charitable goals and manages finances, people, and resources responsibly.

## **Active Board Participation**

Trustees attend regular meetings, strategic sessions, and contribute actively through projects and committees.

## **Time Commitment**

RUSS is volunteer led and the role of a trustee is therefore both hands-on and strategic. We estimate this requires you to commit to around two days monthly. With the possibility of more during the audit period.

## **Developing you**

You will learn through your engagement as a trustee, developing your skills and your curiosity. The role offers leadership growth and impact opportunities.

# PERSON SPECIFICATION



## Values and Behaviours

You don't have to have been a trustee before, but we do expect you to be a team player and have an interest in our core purpose. We are looking for trustees with a commitment to values of integrity, equality and collaborative working – in short, to contribute to a collaborative and open culture that upholds RUSS' guiding principles.



## Desired Skills and Expertise

**Experience:** Professional background in finance, accounting, or housing management.

**Skills:** Ability to explain complex financial data to non-experts; experience with social investment or CLT models is a plus.

**Commitment:** Ability to lead a "sprint" during peak periods (e.g., audit season or new project launches).

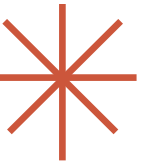


## Commitment to Diversity

As an international movement, Community Land Trusts emerged out of campaigns for civil rights and race equality. So, we warmly welcome applications from diverse or under-represented groups - as well as those connected to Ladywell, Lewisham or London more widely.

Note too that we have a linked recruitment out for other trustee roles on REACH Volunteering so take a look at this if more suitable.

# HOW TO APPLY



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## Application Requirements

Applicants need to submit a CV and a supporting letter setting out your motivation and relevant skills. We will ask for two referees, if your application goes forward. Applications should be completed through the REACH platform on <https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/opp/treasurer-community-land-trust-0>. (We are grateful to REACH which is a brilliant free platform for smaller charities like ourselves).

## Equal Opportunities Commitment

We support equal opportunities, so please do flag any adjustments that we can offer to ensure an accessible process for your application.

## Open Communication

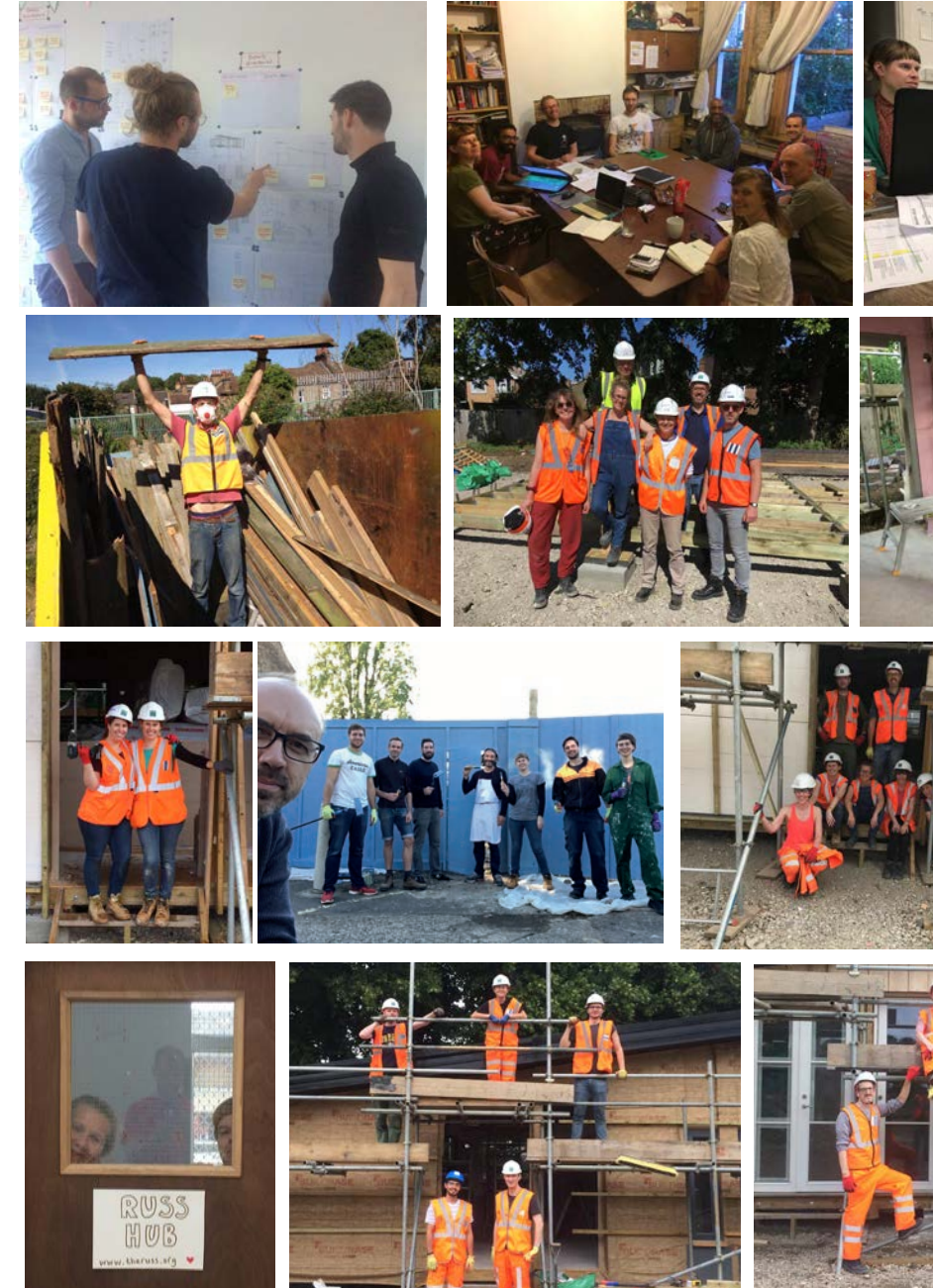
You are warmly encouraged to ask questions or arrange informal conversations if there are things that can help you to understand the role better.

## Timings

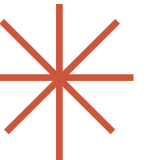
Please apply by 5pm Friday 12th June 2026. Interviews will be in person or online on Friday 19th June. The new Treasurer will be invited to observe a first Board meeting on 8th July. The first formal Board meeting is 2nd September.

## THANK YOU!

To our wonderful volunteers, both pre-build and during the build



# ANNEX – ROLE PROFILE



# ROLE PROFILE (1)

## **Strategic Financial Oversight & Compliance**

The Treasurer ensures that RUSS meets all statutory and regulatory financial obligations:

- This includes oversight of annual accounts and submission to the Financial Conduct Authority as a Community Benefit Society.
- The Treasurer acts as the lead liaison with external accountants and auditors, supporting annual examination or audit processes.
- They proactively identify financial risks, including liquidity, covenant compliance and debt maturity, and escalate these to the Board.
- They maintain and update the financial governance sections of the RUSS Rule Book.

## **Operational Finance & Volunteer Leadership**

The Treasurer provides leadership across RUSS's mixed volunteer and staff finance model:

- They act as a bank signatory and authorise payments, ensuring expenditure aligns with approved budgets.
- They oversee budgeting, cashflow forecasting, reserves planning and financial controls.
- They provide direction to the Bookkeeper and finance volunteers, supporting good practice and prioritisation.
- They oversee and improve financial systems, including QuickBooks Online and banking arrangements.

# ROLE PROFILE (2)

## Residential and Asset Management

With Church Grove complete, RUSS now has long-term responsibilities as a housing steward:

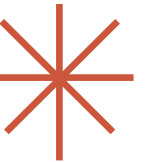
- The Treasurer oversees calculation and setting of annual service charges for residents.
- They establish and monitor sinking funds to ensure long-term maintenance and asset integrity.
- They oversee shared ownership rent reviews and high-level arrears monitoring.
- They work with CDS and internal teams to resolve financial issues fairly and transparently.

## Investment and Projects

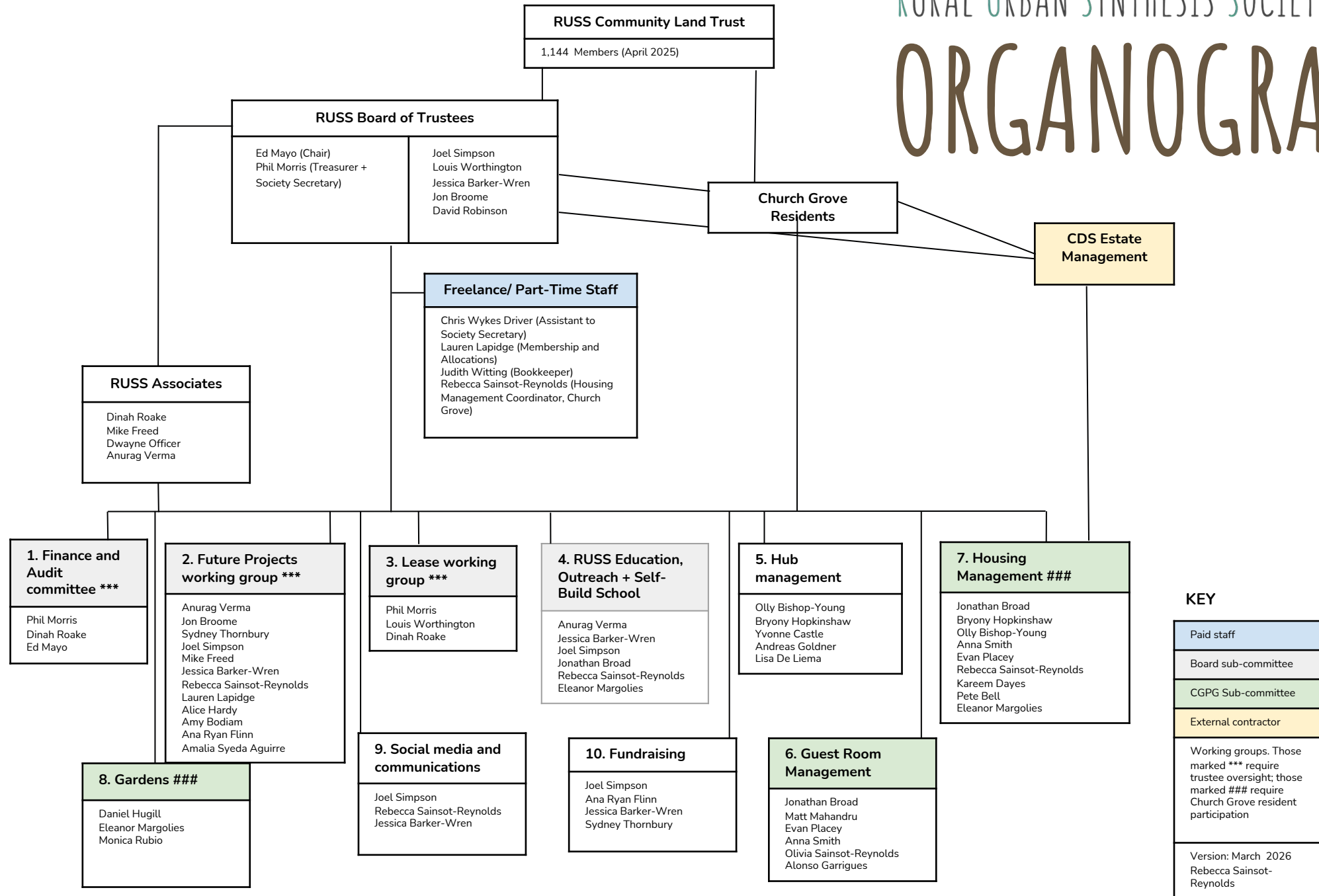
RUSS is supported by social investment and grant funding and will continue to blend finance sources.

- The Treasurer manages relationships and reporting with social investors such as Big Issue Invest and Triodos.
- They support refinancing, repayment planning and future capital strategies.
- They oversee financial health of projects such as the Ladywell Playtower.
- They contribute to business planning and potential community share offers.

# ANNEX – RUSS PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

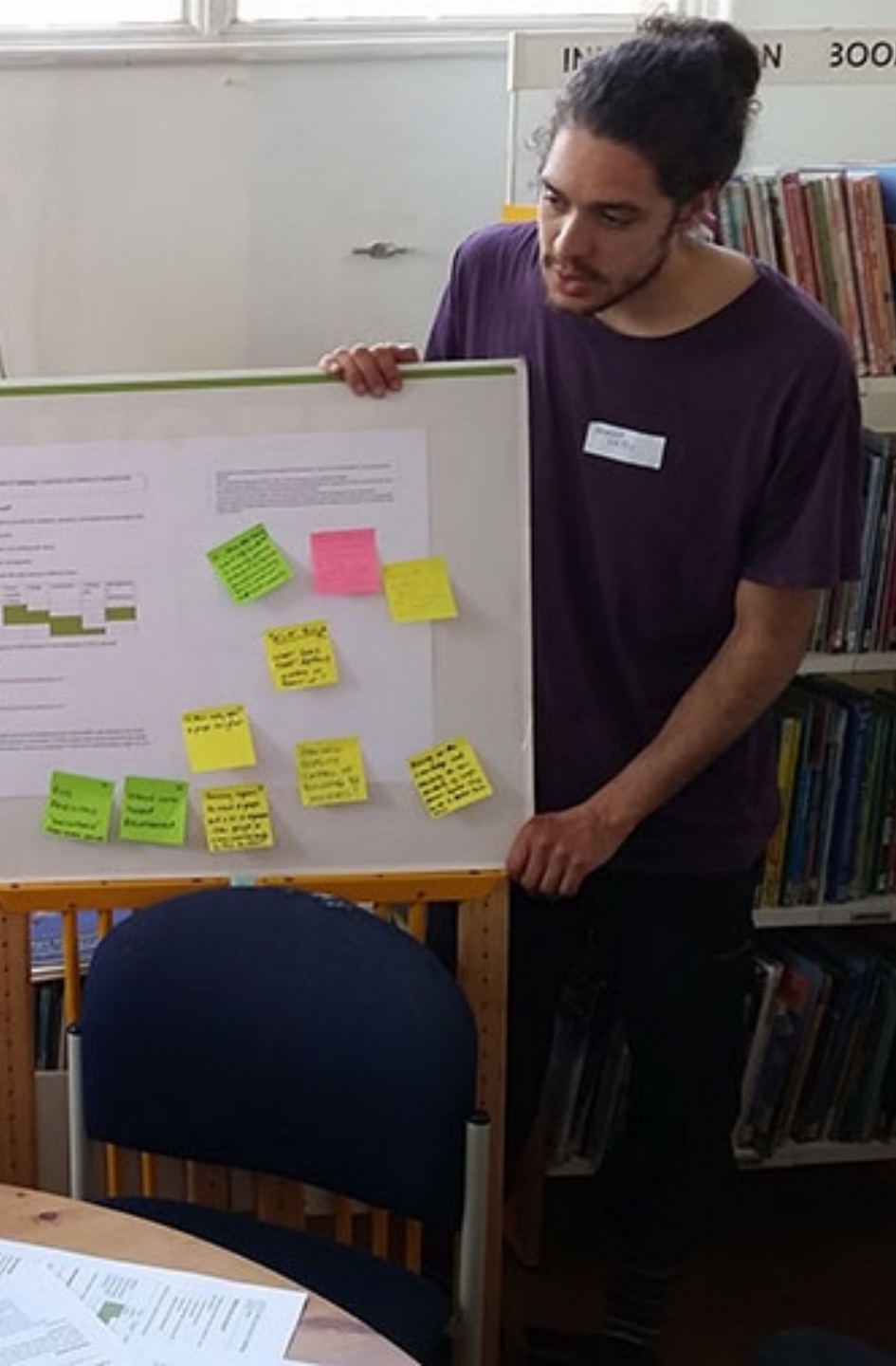


# ORGANOGRAM



**KEY**

- Paid staff
- Board sub-committee
- CGPG Sub-committee
- External contractor
- Working groups. Those marked \*\*\* require trustee oversight; those marked ### require Church Grove resident participation
- Version: March 2026  
Rebecca Sainsot-Reynolds



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. RUSS will create **socially, environmentally and economically sustainable neighbourhoods** in the city.
2. Our neighbourhoods should **balance the interests of residents, the wider community and the Council** as landowner.
3. RUSS should build **truly affordable homes**.
4. Decisions that affect our neighbourhoods should be **under the control of residents**.
5. Our developments should be **embedded in the local community and include space for community use**.
6. The neighbourhoods **should reflect the local population** with a mix of families, couples and single people, both young and old, and with a range of incomes.
7. RUSS neighbourhoods should **not only reduce environmental impacts** by efficiently using energy and building materials, but should proactively **create resources** of power, water and food.
8. Residents should have the opportunity to **be involved in the design, construction and management** of neighbourhoods.
9. RUSS developments should create opportunities for **training** in organising and building for residents and others.
10. Our projects should be **self-financing with robust financing and delivery systems**.



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<https://www.theruss.org/>