

VICE CHAIR / CHAIR DESIGNATE

The Friends of Abingdon Abbey Buildings Trust is the modern incarnation of the charity which rescued the remaining Abbey Buildings from demolition in the 1940s, restored them and has cared for them ever since, over a period of more than 75 years.

As part of its succession planning, the Trust is looking to recruit a Vice Chair / Chair Designate. You will be joining the Trust at an exciting time as, thanks to National Lottery players, the Trust is embarking on a major project to transform the Abbey Buildings into the premier community centre for the visual and performing arts in Abingdon.

Building on 800 years of history, the attractive mediaeval location will be upgraded to form comfortable, year round meeting, exhibition and performance spaces, with access provision for all. In addition, those visiting will be able to see and understand much more of the history of the Abbey through a new permanent exhibition.

What will you be doing?

Initially as Vice Chair you will focus on leading the Trust's relationship with the professional team implementing the development project by:

- Chairing the Project Board
- Attending design meetings with the project director, conservation architect and other consultants
- Working with the entire trustee group, ensuring we consult widely on our plans with current and future users, volunteers and the wider community
- Working with the current Chair to undertake fund raising activities to support the next phase of development

Within 6-12 months we intend that the candidate will assume the Chair role of the Trust which will additionally involve :

- Providing leadership to the whole organisation and the board by ensuring that everyone remains focused on delivery of the charitable purposes and objectives
- Combining the different strengths of trustees, staff and volunteers to create a stronger organisation for the benefit of our visitors and the client organisations who use our facilities
- Chairing and facilitating board meetings and giving direction to board policy-making
- Representing the organisation at functions and meetings across various communities in Abingdon, and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate
- Alongside other trustee board members, attracting new trustees and volunteers as required

What are we looking for?

The Chair designate should have several of the following attributes:

- A good working knowledge of charitable organisations, preferably as a Chair or Vice Chair.
- An understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities of trusteeship, together with an understanding of the financial aspects of running a charity (preferably a CIO)
- Strong leadership/ people management skills and the ability to lead a board and chair meetings effectively.
- A willingness to devote the necessary time to the commitment.
- Strategic vision and a proactive forward thinker.
- Good independent judgment and the ability to think creatively in finding solutions
- The ability to articulate and communicate points of view effectively, for the good of the Board and the Charity in general.
- Although not mandatory, it would be beneficial to have
 - a passion for history and an interest in the conservation of historical buildings.
 - an appreciation of the needs of the creative community
 - an understanding of running a business funded largely by facilities rental and hospitality services

While we estimate a time commitment of 8-12 hours per week, as a small charity there will be times when the Vice Chair / Chair Designate will need to be actively involved in the work of the Trust beyond preparation and attendance at planned Board meetings (currently every other month) and regular liaison with the Project Director and the Buildings Custodian. This may require meeting with funders, business planning, reviewing practice and procedures, or advising on operational or other issues.

What difference will you make?

You will help to ensure that 800 years of history are secured in to the future by seeing that the Abbey Buildings continue to develop as a vital resource for the local community, providing a focus for Abingdon's creatives and ensuring a sustainable and resilient financial operating basis.