



# ECT Charity – Chair Recruitment Pack 2024



**ECT Charity**

Making journeys possible

[www.ectcharity.co.uk](http://www.ectcharity.co.uk)

# Welcome

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Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of the Board of Trustees for ECT Charity. This pack aims to introduce you to the charity, its essential social mission and the critical role of the Chair in the delivery of that mission.

ECT Charity is one of the UK's leading providers of community transport, safely providing almost 401,000 passenger trips for our communities each year. We operate a wide variety of services, each based on a particular local need: from minibuses for community groups to transport for children with special educational needs and disability, from door-to-door services for older and disabled people to buses tackling rural social isolation – and many more.

Good governance is an essential part of ensuring that we thrive as an organisation, that we continue sustainably into the future and that we meet the promise of better access for our communities. As we believe in good governance and practice what we preach, I am standing down as Chair of ECT Charity in the near future. After six years as a Trustee and close to three as Chair, I am approaching the maximum term limits set by our governance codes, so I am beginning the search for a successor.

The Chair's role at ECT Charity is never dull. Over the course of my time at ECT Charity, we have managed the appointment of a new CEO after a long period of prior incumbency, conducted a governance review and implemented its findings, navigated our way through a consistently challenging regulatory environment, adapted to and recovered from the pandemic – amongst many other opportunities and challenges. All of these tasks have been completed with the aid of an active and engaged Board – and a talented, committed management team.

Our next Chair will need the skills and experience to meet the next set of challenges and opportunities, supporting the charity to thrive. More importantly, they will also need to share our passion for the social impact that Community Transport can create. If that sound like you, and you'd like to take the next step – or have questions – please contact our CEO John Chesters on [john.chesters@ectcharity.co.uk](mailto:john.chesters@ectcharity.co.uk). We look forward to hearing from you.



**David Tinnion**  
Chair of Trustees

# About ECT Charity

## What we do

At ECT Charity, community transport is not just a matter of getting people from A to B. Our aim is to make journeys possible for the most vulnerable and isolated people in our communities. Whether it's a GP appointment, a day out with friends, a minibus serving a special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) school or a simple trip to the shops, we connect people with the services that support them to lead active and independent lives, and when regular transport cannot provide the right solution.

We've been doing this for more than four decades – ECT Charity started as Ealing Community Transport in 1979, with a founding mission to provide transport for older and disabled people in Ealing, London. From our headquarters in Greenford, west London, we have expanded our operation to depots in Dorset and Cheshire.

As a leading charity in the community transport sector and one of the largest, we are not only known for the professionalism and commitment of our staff, but also for the innovative contributions we have made to national policy development, including building a sector-leading approach to social value and its measurement – you can find out more about this work [here](#).

### Find out more

You'll get a good sense of the range of support that we provide to our communities from the stories on our [website](#).

## Our services

ECT Charity provides a wide variety of services in the communities where we work – each based on an unmet local need with the aim of making a difference to people's lives.

**Transport for groups:** Our Group Transport service is a low-cost alternative to minibus hire for voluntary and community organisations including charities, social groups and schools, helping their members to travel together for their shared purpose.

**Community transport for individuals:** ECT Charity provides door-to-door journeys for people unable to use mainstream public transport due to mobility or other difficulties, or because ordinary public transport or other services have been withdrawn from their area.

**Commissioned services:** ECT Charity also provides services commissioned by local authority partners under contract. Each service we operate under contract provides a public benefit in its own right and falls within the scope of ECT Charity's charitable objectives.

**Training services:** ECT Charity provides a variety of training services, including Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) training – the nationally-recognised standard for people who need to drive a minibus, and Passenger Assistant Training Scheme (PATs) – the nationally-recognised standard for those who

# Our activities

ECT provides a wide variety of services across its three regions. Each service is designed to address a specific transport need in the community. Passenger figures are for financial year 2023/24.



## PlusBus

**34,515** passenger trips

Door-to-door journeys for people unable to use mainstream public transport due to mobility or other difficulties, or because ordinary public transport is not available.



## Group Transport

**40,756** passenger trips

A low-cost alternative to minibus hire for voluntary and community organisations including charities, social groups and schools, helping their members to travel together for their shared purposes.



## Day Trips

**228** passenger trips

Offered as social outings for PlusBus members, the journeys aim to tackle social isolation and bring people together.



## PlusBus for Health

**7,142** passenger trips

A service that helps patients travel between their homes and GP surgeries. Commissioned by North West London ICB, it aims to reduce the number of GP house calls and missed appointments.



## Local bus services

**14,500** passenger trips

Commissioned services that otherwise would not run, helping to tackle rural social isolation.



## Adult Day Centre

**35,235** passenger trips

Commissioned services taking adults with a variety of needs to day centres, each of which provides a vital service to their users.



## Dial-a-Ride

**43,723** passenger trips

Delivered on behalf of Transport for London, these services provide door-to-door transport for people who find it difficult to use public transport.



## Home-to-school

**225,434** passenger trips

Commissioned services that transport hundreds of pupils to mainstream and special educational needs and disabilities schools.



## Training services

**115** people trained

Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) and Passenger Assistant Training Scheme (PATS) – the nationally recognised standards for minibus driving and passenger assistant work respectively.



# Our social impact

## Making a difference

ECT Charity exists to make a positive difference in people's lives – and measuring the extent to which we have done this is a key part of our accountability to stakeholders. We do this in two main ways.

### Social Value

We are a pioneer in the use of Social Value measurement to demonstrate social impact.

**What is Social Value:** It is easy to see the benefits of services that tackle social isolation or poor access to services in terms of people's independence and wellbeing. However, these impacts can also be understood in terms of their economic benefit to society – for example, in savings to long term care or healthcare costs.

**What we do:** Each year, we use the CT Social Value Toolkit – a model developed by ECT Charity specifically for our whole sector – to calculate our Social Value. The toolkit lets us quantify the impact of increased access to services, improved wellbeing and reduced healthcare costs – amongst a range of other measures.

**Our social value:** Using the CT Social Value Toolkit, we calculated that during the 12-month period ending March 2024, ECT's charitable community transport activities across its depots have created an additional Social Value of £794,054.

## Impact reporting

If our CT Social Value Toolkit provides information on the amount of the Social Value we create, our first formal Impact Report (for calendar year 2023, published in 2024), explores the qualitative dimension of our work. It publishes the findings of beneficiary surveys, seeking to understand how people's lives have changed or improved as a result of the services that we provide. The report covers three dimensions of our services:

### Tackling loneliness and social isolation:

The report explores the views of our service users – whether using our services has made them feel connected to others, more satisfied with life, more sociable and less lonely.

**Building access to services:** Many of our service users face significant barriers to access and our services are designed to take those down. The report explores the views of our service users on whether their access to services, their independence and their confidence has improved as a result of what we do.

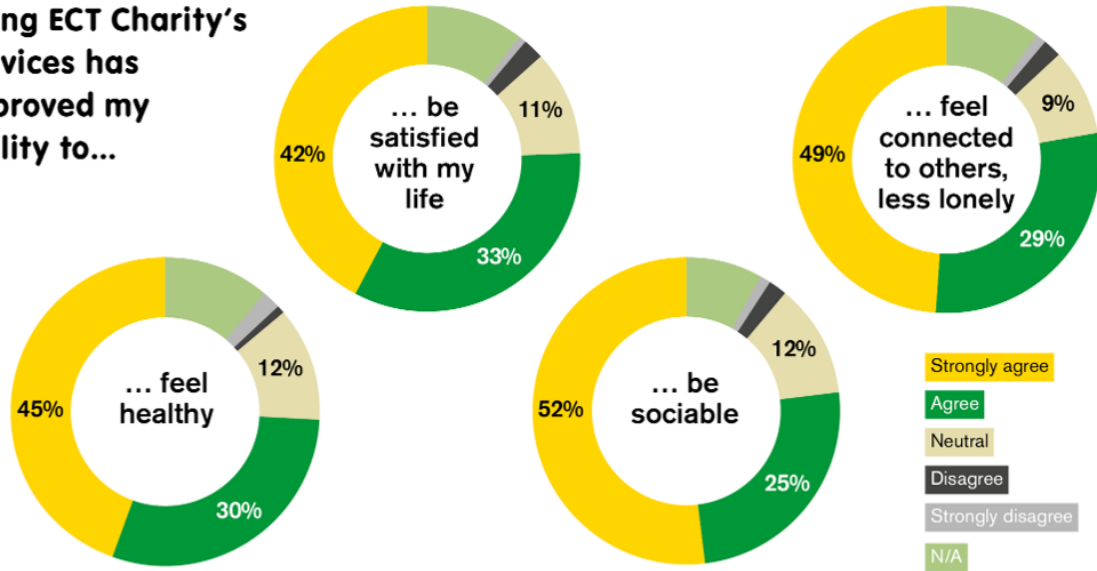
### Connecting our community through partnerships:

The report explores the role of our partnership work – at the local level with our Group Transport service, and at larger scale with our commissioners.

# Loneliness and social isolation

Survey results from our Social Impact report show how our services are helping to tackle loneliness and social isolation.

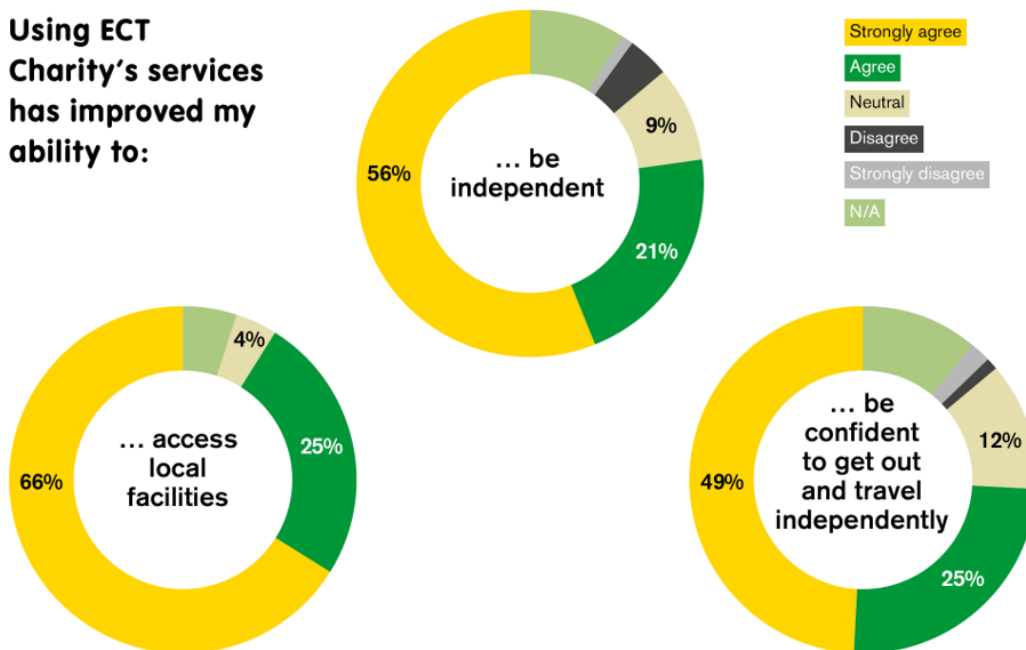
**Using ECT Charity's services has improved my ability to...**



# Building access to services

Survey results from our Social Impact report show how our services are helping to break down the barriers to accessing services in our communities.

**Using ECT Charity's services has improved my ability to:**



# ECT Charity today

## Our priorities

The new Chair of ECT Charity will find a range of challenges and opportunities – both new and historic – as the organisation develops into the future.

### Continuing the governance journey:

We have made significant progress on our governance in recent years and now have a solid foundation to build on. Whilst we have a strong collective range of experience on the Board, the new Chair will need to ensure that we do not lose momentum.

### Exploring new options for sustainability:

In a challenging environment, ECT Charity is making good progress on developing its commercial options – which means developing new skills and pursuing different regulatory structures. The charity will need to ensure both success in these ventures and prevent them distracting from the core mission.

**Developing our sector leadership:** In 2024, we have completed a major project to update our sector-leading Social Value toolkit. This provides us with opportunities to expand our influence – across the Community Transport sector as a whole, and, by demonstrating the value of the sector to the sphere of public policy.

**Regulatory headwinds:** The desire to influence public policy is shaped by ongoing regulatory uncertainty around our current operations. ECT Charity has proved adroit at navigating these uncertainties over many years, but they continue to factor in our environment.

## Our finances

ECT Charity exists to make a positive difference in our communities and this is underpinned by our economic performance as an organisation. Well-run services and sustainable finances enable our social impact.

To that aim, our pre-audit figures for 2023/24 reveal growth in the year, with turnover increasing from £5.8m in 2022/23 to £6.4m. Growth has been organic, reflecting our efforts to bring our services to as many people as possible in our current areas of operation. This achievement is encouraging in otherwise economically challenging times.

The organisation has posted a small deficit for the year of £42k (2023: surplus £175k). The deficit has been caused by a number of pressures that would be recognisable to many organisations across the UK: The cost of living crisis has provided upwards pressure on staff costs, global supply chain issues have negatively affected vehicle maintenance costs and the budgetary challenges of many commissioners have placed downward pressure on income.

We believe that these challenges are temporary, rather than structural, and have been focussing our attention on improving the efficiency of our operations, continuing to upgrade our vehicle fleet and seeking new opportunities for income. You can find our most recent regulatory findings [here](#).

# Vision, mission & values

## Vision

Our vision is for inclusion & accessibility for all members of society, whatever their transport needs.

## Mission

Our mission is to:

- provide top-quality, safe, affordable, accessible transport services for every community we serve
- collaborate with partners who share our vision for inclusion and accessibility
- be a dedicated and energetic advocate for the positive impact of community transport on the health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and public services around the UK.

## Find out more

A more detailed explanation of our vision, mission and values can be found in our publication, [What Matters to Us](#).

## Values

Our values are as follows:

- we care passionately about making a difference
- we always go the extra mile
- we are an organisation that you can trust
- we are flexible, adaptable and open to change
- we believe in collaboration and the sharing of success and ideas.

## A diverse ECT Charity

Our aim is to become a truly inclusive organisation with a workforce and Board of Trustees as diverse as the communities we serve. The range of perspectives and experience diversity brings is an asset to ECT Charity and we want to create an inclusive, welcoming environment. We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and particularly those who share our values.





# About you

The Chair provides leadership to the Board and has prime responsibility for ensuring that it has agreed priorities, appropriate structures and effective processes. The Chair also ensures that the Board has a productive culture and has Trustees and senior staff who are able to govern well and add value to the organisation, reflecting ECT Charity's position within the community transport sector.

We are seeking a dedicated and charismatic leader, with a proven track record of chairing a board or committee, potentially with previous charity Board experience. A full role description is provided on page 12, but the ideal candidate will be able to demonstrate the following skills, values and personal qualities:

**Shared values and a commitment to our mission:** The most essential criteria for our new Chair is that they must hold a fundamental belief in our cause and share our values. The new Chair will bring enthusiasm, understanding and a passion for our mission – and be committed to work with their fellow Trustees and the CEO to make a positive difference to the lives of our beneficiary community.

**A passion for good governance:** The ideal candidate will bring proven experience of governance and strategy, ensuring that our Trustees make an effective contribution and are engaged, fully involved and invested in the charity in discharging their responsibilities. They will combine these practical governance and oversight skills with strategic and creative vision and strong, independent judgment. They will also reflect ECT Charity's commitment to promoting equality and diversity.

**A collaborative and thoughtful leader:** The ideal candidate will have a way of working in harmony with our values – a compassionate, fair, inclusive and collaborative leadership style – able to offer constructive challenge while maintaining tact, confidentiality and diplomacy. We are also seeking a good team player, willing to make themselves available to staff to provides for advice and answer enquiries on an ad hoc basis.



**A skilled communicator:** Each dimension of the Chair's role is underpinned by the need for great communication skills. Additionally, a strong external presence with a substantial network of contacts and excellent networking abilities would be highly valuable. The successful candidate will need demonstrable experience of building and sustaining relationships with key stakeholders and colleagues to achieve organisational objectives.

Taken together, we want a Chair who is dedicated to our cause, curious about how we can do better, compassionate towards our people and collaborative in their approach. They will help us develop and maintain a culture of high performance which is genuinely inclusive. The new Chair will need to take the time to understand the intricacies of our charity, which can be more complex than it first appears.

In common with much of the charity sector, we have ongoing work to do in ensuring our Board remains diverse and reflective of the communities we serve. We know this needs to change, and our new Chair will play a key role in this. For both the Chair and future Trustee roles we actively welcome applications from groups who are under-represented on Trustee Boards. We also particularly welcome applicants who have personal experience of our services.

We expect that, once settled in, our new Chair will wish to recruit additional Trustees to complement the existing skills of the Board, and to add diversity of experience and thought.



# About the ECT Charity Board

The ECT Charity Board convenes quarterly, with each meeting lasting no more than two to three hours. Board meetings are normally held in Ealing, London, but you do not need to be based nearby – remote attendance at these meetings is supported, but we encourage in-person attendance as much as possible – particularly by the Chair – as it helps build relationships and understanding.

We also ask that each Trustee joins at least one of our Board committees. Each committee meets three times a year, usually online, for an hour and a half each time. The committees are:

**Finance** – responsible for overseeing the financial leadership of the charity, ensuring its short and long-term viability.

**Business Development/Charitable Purposes** – supporting the organisation to navigate the challenges of growth whilst retaining a focus on charitable purpose.

**Governance** – provides oversight of the charity's balance of skills and its diversity, together with developing key policies.

The role of the Board is to ensure that ECT Charity complies with its legal obligations, ensuring that good practice is followed at all times in relation to the governing documents, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations. But more importantly to us, we want our Chair and our Trustees to be a part of what we do. We want the Board to use their professional and personal skills and

help us to be better and do more for our communities.

## Formal responsibilities of Trustees

The ECT Charity Chair is also a Trustee of the charity. ECT Charity's Board, its Chair and Trustees, have ultimate responsibility for the organisation, including finance, organisational strategy and employees. Trustees are accountable to Companies House, The Charity Commission, funders, beneficiaries and other regulatory authorities.

A Trustee has three main responsibilities:

- 1 Fiduciary responsibility, ensuring that it remains solvent, holding the organisation in trust and ensuring public confidence.
- 2 To determine the overall direction of the organisation, ensuring it is well-run and delivers the charitable outcomes.
- 3 To provide leadership.

The positions of Chair and Trustee are on a voluntary-basis and are unpaid.

For further general information on the roles and responsibilities of a charity Trustee, please refer to The Charity Commission's guidance [here](#). All Trustees are accountable to Companies House, The Charity Commission, funders, beneficiaries and other regulators.

# Job Description: Chair of Trustees

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## Remuneration

None, reasonable travel expenses may be covered

## Time Commitment

4 Board meetings per year, held in Greenford, Ealing, typically requiring attendance in person and attendance at selected committee meetings (3 regular committees meeting between 2 to 4 times per committee per year – on-line attendance optional).

## About ECT Charity

ECT Charity is one of the UK's leading providers of community transport, safely providing over 400,000 passenger trips for our communities each year. We operate a wide variety of services, each based on a particular local need: from minibuses for community groups to transport for children with Special Education Needs or Disability, from door-to-door services for older and disabled people to buses tackling rural social isolation – and many more. Our transport supports and enables independent living, reduces isolation and encourages social interaction.

We've been providing people who struggle with mainstream transport with safe, accessible journeys since our foundation as Ealing Community Transport in 1979. Now, as ECT Charity, we operate community transport services in the London Borough of Ealing, Cheshire and Dorset.

ECT Charity is an **Equal Opportunities employer** and positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates, regardless of age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital/civil partnership status, or pregnancy and maternity. We are happy to make reasonable adjustments during the selection process (and if a position is offered, in employment) if required.

ECT Charity is also a **Disability Confident employer** and welcomes applications from the disabled community.

ECT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and any vulnerable person using our services. In order to meet this responsibility, we follow safer recruitment practices which are outlined in further detail in our Safeguarding Adults at Risk and Protecting People Policy.

## Key responsibilities

- Ensure that ECT Charity pursues its charitable objectives as defined in its governing document.
- Ensure the organisation maintains suitable resources and applies them exclusively in pursuit of its objectives and strategic aims.
- Lead on the recruitment of Trustees for the Board, working with existing Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure the Board has the required blend of skills, experience and diverse backgrounds. Maintain and refer to a skills matrix to ensure key competencies are present on the Board at all times.
- Provide support and feedback for the Chief Executive Officer on an ongoing basis, setting and assessing their performance in ensuring the charity is well-managed and delivers its mission and agreed targets, including meeting 1:1 as required – while ensuring there remains a clear boundary between the two roles and the Board of Trustees and Executive team.
- Chair Board meetings and AGM/EGM as needed, including planning the agenda with CEO and Senior Leadership team to ensure that all relevant items are covered and considered by the Board.
- Act as a point of contact for Whistleblowing.
- Promote and champion ECT Charity with external partners, in coordination with the CEO, Senior Leadership Team and Patron(s).

Lead and manage the Board and its agreed specialist sub-committees (Finance Committee, Governance, Committee, Business Development and Charitable Purposes Committee).

Meet with individual Trustees on at least an annual basis to discuss their contribution to the Board

Lead and manage the Board of Trustees to:

- Ensure that the charity has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction and, working with the CEO and other members of the Senior Leadership Team, is focused on achieving them.
- Monitor and evaluate the performance of the CEO and of ECT Charity against the agreed strategy and associated annual business plans and targets.
- Support the CEO and Senior Leadership Team to effectively execute the agreed strategy.
- Ensure suitable and sufficient succession planning is in place for both the Board and the Senior Leadership Team.
- Safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation, including the periodic review of major risks and systems and processes in place to manage those risks.
- Ensure the financial stability of the organisation.

- Ensure all required safeguarding arrangements, policies and procedures are in place, effective and regularly reviewed.
- Protect and manage the property of the organisation and to ensure the proper investment of the organisation's funds.
- As needed, lead on the recruitment and appointment of the Chief Executive Officer and provide support and guidance in recruiting for other key positions in the Senior Leadership team.
- Review and set pay and remuneration on an annual basis in line with agreed policy, in particular for the Chief Executive Officer.
- Ensuring that the charity complies with all legal and regulatory requirements and acts in an ethical and appropriate manner.
- Act as guardians of the charity's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking due care over their security, deployment, and proper application.
- Ensure that the charity's governance and related policies and procedures are compliant with all applicable codes and legal requirements.

## Take the next step

**If you have questions:** If you want to know more about the role – please contact the CEO, John Chesters on [john.chesters@ectcharity.co.uk](mailto:john.chesters@ectcharity.co.uk).

**If you want to apply:** You can apply online [here](#).

