



Recruitment of Trustees

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Welcome from the CEO

At Epilepsy Scotland, we are dedicated to improving the lives of people living with epilepsy, their families, and communities across the country. Every day, our services change lives – offering support, guidance, and hope when it's needed most. Our impact is seen not only in the numbers we reach, but in the powerful stories of those we help.

The past year has been extremely challenging. Like many charities, we've faced rising costs without equivalent increases in funding, reduced disposable incomes affecting donations, and greater demand for our services. Statutory bodies such as the NHS and social services refer people to us but rarely contribute financially. Our helpline has seen a 125% increase in calls since before the pandemic, and our Welfare Rights team had to pause new referrals three times due to demand. These pressures led to difficult decisions, including leaving some roles unfilled and temporarily reducing staff hours by 10%.

Despite these challenges, our dedicated staff have continued to deliver vital person-centred support from Shetland to the Borders. This includes our Scotland-wide Helpline, Adult Wellbeing Service, Welfare Rights Service and Youth Groups. In the past year, we directly supported over 2,000 people with epilepsy and indirectly reached over 17,000 others. We published our influential Epilepsy On The Mind mental health report, discussed in the Scottish Parliament, and continued to influence policy through government consultations and the Cross-Party Group on Epilepsy.

In 2024, we marked 70 years of service. We have made great progress, but much remains to be done for the 80,000 people in Scotland living with this under-represented and misunderstood condition. We remain committed to providing person-centred support and ensuring decision-makers have the information they need to make positive change.

We are now seeking committed and passionate Trustees to join our Board. As a Trustee, you will help shape our future, support our team, and ensure our services remain strong, accessible, and impactful. If you share our vision of a Scotland where people with epilepsy are fully supported, understood, and included – we would love to hear from you.



Warm wishes

Lesslie Young OBE, CEO



Background to the role

About Epilepsy Scotland

Epilepsy Scotland is a registered Scottish charity that wants to make sure the needs of people with epilepsy and associated conditions are met. This is why we campaign for improved healthcare, better information provision and an end to stigma.

Our mission

Epilepsy Scotland works with people living with epilepsy and associated conditions to ensure their voice is heard.

Our vision

We believe people living with epilepsy and associated conditions have a right to:

- ✓ **be free from stigma and discrimination.**
- ✓ **have access to high quality medical, social, educational, support and information services.**
- ✓ **be valued and included in society.**
- ✓ **determine their own way of life.**

Our work

- ✓ We fight discrimination and stigma experienced by people with epilepsy and associated conditions.
- ✓ We influence public policy to achieve best practice for people living with epilepsy and associated conditions.

- ✓ We work to ensure appropriate services and support are available.
- ✓ We sustain an effective, supportive, and financially secure organisation.

In Scotland approximately 80,000 people have epilepsy. Children and older people are most at risk of developing this common serious neurological condition, but anyone can develop epilepsy at any time and around eight people in Scotland do every day. There is also a wider community of families, carers, friends etc., living with epilepsy.

This role profile has been prepared to clearly set out the standards and responsibilities that are associated with being a Trustee and director on the Board of Epilepsy Action Scotland (Epilepsy Scotland). It should be read in conjunction with our Articles of Association.

The role profile reflects the principles of good governance. This takes account of (and is compliant with) the expectations of the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) Regulator's Standards of Governance and Financial Management for Epilepsy Scotland and relevant guidance produced by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).



Responsibilities

The role of a Trustee

- You must act in the interests of the charity.
- You must comply with the Charities and Trustees Investment Act 2005 and supporting guidance from OSCR.

The role of the Board

- The Board of Trustees have and must accept ultimate responsibility for directing Epilepsy Scotland's affairs, ensuring it is solvent, well-run, and delivering the outcomes for which it has been set up. The Board operates under the leadership and guidance of the Chair and works in partnership with the Chief Executive.

Strategic direction

- Trustees should focus on Epilepsy Scotland's strategic direction and avoid becoming involved in day-to-day operational decisions and matters.
- Responsibility for the operational implementation of Epilepsy Scotland's strategies and policies is delegated to the Chief Executive.
- Where trustees do need to become involved in operational matters, they should separate their strategic and operational roles.

Primary responsibilities

As a member of the Board of Trustees your primary responsibilities are, with the other Trustees, to

- Lead and direct Epilepsy Scotland's work to meet the stated aims and objectives.
- Promote and uphold Epilepsy Scotland's Mission and Values.
- Monitor standards for service delivery and performance.
- Control Epilepsy Scotland's affairs and ensure compliance with its legal and regulatory requirements, its own constitution, and approved internal policies that are available for review.

Key Expectations

- Epilepsy Scotland has agreed a Code of Conduct which every Trustee is required to sign when they are appointed (and cannot take up their duties until they have done so), and on an annual basis thereafter.
- Each Trustee must accept and share collective responsibility for the decisions properly taken by the Board. Each trustee is expected to contribute actively and constructively to the work of the Board. All members are equally responsible in law for the decisions made.
- Each trustee must always act only in the best interests of Epilepsy Scotland, its customers and service users, not on behalf of any interest group, constituency, or other organisation. Trustees cannot act in a personal capacity within Epilepsy Scotland to benefit themselves or someone they know.

Responsibilities

Statutory Duties

- To ensure Epilepsy Scotland operates within and is compliant with the relevant legal and regulatory frameworks.
- To ensure Epilepsy Scotland pursues its objectives as defined in its governing document.
- To ensure the organisation uses its resources exclusively to meet its objectives.
- To contribute actively to the Board's role in formulating and regularly reviewing Epilepsy Scotland's values, strategic aims, and performance standards.
- To contribute to defining goals and setting targets and to monitor Epilepsy Scotland's performance against those targets.
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- To protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.
- To ensure risks are realistically assessed and appropriately monitored and managed.
- To ensure Epilepsy Scotland is adequately resourced to achieve its objectives and meet its obligations.
- To act, along with the other members of the Board of Trustees, as the employer of Epilepsy Scotland's staff
- To appoint the Chief Executive Officer and monitor their performance.

Other Duties

- In addition to the above statutory duties, each Trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have, to help Epilepsy Scotland's Board of Trustees reach sound decisions and ensure the organisation fulfils its objectives. This includes:
- Always acting in the best interests of Epilepsy Scotland.
- Accepting collective responsibility for decisions, policies, and strategies.
- Attending and being well prepared for meetings of the Board of Trustees and any sub-groups to which you may be appointed.

- Contributing effectively to discussions and decision making.
- Taking part in training and other learning opportunities.
- Taking part in an annual review of the effectiveness of Epilepsy Scotland's governance and of your individual contribution to Epilepsy Scotland's governance.
- Maintaining and develop your personal knowledge of relevant issues and the wider charity/third sector.
- Always representing Epilepsy Scotland positively and effectively, in local communities, when attending meetings and other events.
- Respecting and maintaining confidentiality of information.
- Treating colleagues with respect and foster effective working relationships within the Board of Trustees, all sub-groups and with staff.
- Being aware of and complying with our policy on Entitlements, Payments, and Benefits.
- Registering any relevant interests as soon as they arise and complying with Epilepsy Scotland's policy on managing conflicts of interest.



Person Specification

- A commitment to the aims and values of Epilepsy Scotland.
- An interest in the work of Epilepsy Scotland.
- Ability to work as a team.
- Self-motivated, encourages and inspires others.

Trustees do not require specific formal qualifications. We do however seek to appoint people with relevant skills and experience which adds or expands the existing

range of skills and experience available to ensure the Board is able to fulfil its purpose. This may include a person with epilepsy or who has a family member living with epilepsy.

We carry out an annual review of the skills and diversity we have and those we need. This informs us on what skills we need to recruit.

Commitment

An estimate of the annual time commitment that is expected from board members is:

Attendance at four regular meetings of the Board of Trustees, three of which will be virtual.	2.5 hours per meeting
Attendance when required at Trustee-only meetings.	1 hour per meeting which we aim to add on to Board of Trustee meetings
Taking part in sub committees and subsequent meetings where required.	1 hour per meeting
Ensure you are fully prepared for any meetings by reading and preparing all pre submitted documentation.	2 hour per meeting
Attendance at annual planning and review meetings, including your own individual annual review with the Chair.	Up to 2 days
Attendance at internal briefing and training events.	Ad hoc (Evenings and "Away Days")
External training and conference attendance which may include overnight stay.	Ad hoc



What Epilepsy Scotland Offers Trustees

What Epilepsy Scotland Offers Trustees

All Trustees are volunteers and receive no payment for their contribution. Epilepsy Scotland has policies which prevent you or someone close to you from benefiting personally from your involvement with Epilepsy Scotland. These policies also seek to ensure you are not unfairly disadvantaged by your involvement with Epilepsy Scotland. Reasonable expenses associated with your role as a Board member are fully met and promptly reimbursed.

- A welcome and induction when you first join the Board of Trustees.
- A mentor from the Board and a named staff contact for the first six months, with ongoing support.
- Clear guidance, information, and advice on your responsibilities and on Epilepsy Scotland's work.
- Formal induction training to assist you in your role as well as basic training in understanding epilepsy.
- Papers which are clearly written and presented and circulated in advance of meetings.
- The opportunity to put your experience, skills, and knowledge to constructive use.
- The opportunity to develop your own knowledge, experience, and personal skills.
- The chance to network with others with shared commitment and ideals.

Review

This role description was approved by the Board on 31 July 2025 and will be reviewed at least every 3 years. It will be used as part of the annual review of the effectiveness of your contribution to our governance.

How to apply

If you are interested in applying for the role of Trustee at Epilepsy Scotland, please submit your CV and a brief cover letter outlining your interest and suitability for the role via the microsite:

<https://awsexecutive.com/microsite-trustees-epilepsy-scotland>

For an informal discussion or more information, please contact Alan Surgeon or Donna McKay at AWS Executive.

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