Nova Trustee Information Pack

November 2026



Introduction to Nova

Nova is a charity that supports Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations in Wakefield District to thrive. Our work as a Local Infrastructure Organisation is split into three key areas:

1	2	3
Supporting VCSE organisations to develop and grow	**Providing a voice for the VCSE sector and influencing local policies and practices**	**Securing resources for the VCSE sector**
"Your support has been truly transformative for our organisation. Over the past three months, we have received more funding than in our entire three years of operation, and much of this success is directly attributed to your guidance. Your belief in our vision has not only strengthened our financial position but given us the confidence to push forward." – 1 of 295 VCSE organisations supported in 2024-25 by Nova's Team	Nova supported 20 Advocates from the local VCSE sector to attend 21 boards within the Health and Care Partnership and Local Authority in 2024-25, enabling our sector to influence strategic decision making and be a more integrated part of the health and care system. We actively valued the contributions of VCSE Advocates through backfill payments.	We distributed £658,428 to 38 organisations through contracts and grants in 2024-25, providing access to fair and transparent funding to support the sustainability of VCSE organisations. In addition, support from Nova helped 72% of members surveyed to secure funding.

We see the incredible impact of our members who have built personal connections and trust within local communities, and respond directly to their needs. They have unique strengths and specialisms that people across the district depend on, and we've seen recognition of this in how the VCSE sector has been incorporated into the Wakefield District Health and Care Partnership (local NHS system) and Wakefield District Plan.

Wakefield is the 52nd most deprived district in England (out of 296 local authorities) and 17% of neighbourhoods in Wakefield are highly deprived (across England the average is 10%). The district is home to hundreds of VCSE organisations and a Community Anchor Network.

With funding being a top challenge for 80% of Nova's Members and increasing demand on VCSE services, consistent and quality support is essential. Our work has helped 7 in 10 Members surveyed to grow and develop, and allows them to keep doing what they do best.












Nova also works with South West Yorkshire Partnership Teaching NHS Foundation Trust to deliver the social wellbeing service, Live Well Wakefield. The service is award-winning and specialises in holistic, personalised care approaches for Wakefield's adult residents, delivered through social prescribing and supported self-management projects and interventions.

Live Well Wakefield

Case Study of Nova's Impact

Children's Domestic Abuse Support Service (CDASS) was established to address the significant gap in support services for children who are victims of domestic abuse. Sandra, who leads CDASS, was facing significant challenges setting up the grassroots organisation and an existing Nova member recommended reaching out to us for support.



What We Did

- Helped Sandra apply and successfully secure the National Lottery Community Fund and Mayor's Safer Communities Fund.
- Provided detailed feedback and guidance on grant applications.
- Assisted in the development and approval of safeguarding and organisational policies.
- Offered strategic advice on staff and volunteer recruitment.
- Encouraged networking by introducing Sandra to key local agencies such as Family Hubs in Pontefract, opening new doors for referrals and collaboration.
- Offered regular catch-up meetings, giving Sandra consistent encouragement, practical advice, and a space to share both progress and challenges.

The Result

- CDASS is now fully funded and operational, with Sandra being paid for her work for the first time.
- The charity has grown in visibility and credibility across Wakefield and beyond.
- Essential internal policies are in place, ensuring safe and professional service delivery.
- Sandra has built the confidence and skills to operate more independently.
- The organisation has moved from startup uncertainty to sustained impact.

Nova's Adviser Team built a supportive relationship that delivered key outcomes and empowered Sandra to continue on her journey of helping local children.

What do our trustees do?

For some, the word ‘trustee’ is associated with executives sitting at a conference room table. It sounds daunting and a different world to front-line charity work.

In reality, a trustee is anyone who cares about a charity and wants to help it run effectively. They are our ‘guardians of purpose’ and focus on the big strategic picture for Nova, helping to make sure our work aligns with our vision of a vibrant VCSE sector.

What does this look like in practice?

Our Trustees:

- Discuss how to move forward with strategic work and make decisions.
- Attend board meetings and some of our trustees also take part in our Finance and HR Sub Committees.
- Act as a ‘critical friend’ to Nova’s CEO by giving support and by challenging, to help them manage the charity effectively. They aren’t involved in the day-to-day running of our charity, which is delegated to staff.
- Review our risk management log, management accounts, and regular reports from Nova’s Senior Management Team and provide feedback.
- Have oversight of the implementation of Nova’s Business Plan.
- Have conversations to develop relationships with stakeholders and partners.

There are additional specific responsibilities for the Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer of our Board. We have Role Descriptors for each of these officer roles.



What we're looking for

We are looking for people who understand the value of the VCSE sector and want to be part of supporting it at a wider strategic level in Wakefield District.

This is what's important to Nova, and we can support you with the rest.

So we don't require:

- Previous experience or knowledge of how to be a trustee
- Detailed understanding of charity governance or legal responsibilities
- You to be at a 'senior level' in your role or a 'professional'

Instead, we value:

- Your contributions based on lived experience
- Experience of working at a VCSE organisation
- Ability to work with our Board in a collaborative way
- Ability to lead with empathy and care

We welcome applications from people who can bring:

- **New perspectives and insights to our board,** so decisions are led by a group that is representative of our membership and local communities. Women, people with disabilities, people with neurodivergence, people who are LGBTQ+, and people of global majority heritage are currently under-represented on Nova's Board.
- **Financial skills**, with experience in accounting or charity financial management, to fill the role of Treasurer.

The diversity of our board is important as it leads to strong leadership and governance. This is a priority for Nova and we are committed to removing barriers that often exclude people from applying or staying on boards. We are striving to be an accessible and inclusive organisations and will work proactively on adjustments requested.

Why you should do it

You can get a lot out of being a trustee too.

Being a trustee is rewarding

As a trustee you have the chance to support and shape Nova's work, and make a significant difference to a cause that matters to you. It's a great way to get involved and find out more about the local VCSE sector.

An opportunity for professional development

Trusteeship can help you gain experience of strategy and leadership, and boost your CV. It will give you experience of setting a strategic vision, influencing and negotiation, and managing risk. If you already have experience in these areas, it can be stimulating to use it in a different and challenging context.

Support is needed from the VCSE sector

We are operating in socially, economically and politically challenging times. The VCSE sector is facing increased demand, reduced resources, and greater complexity across our communities. At the same time, we are looking to build stronger, more coordinated relationships with partners, working together to enhance what we deliver and bring even greater value to the organisations and communities we serve. Nova's current business plan runs until late 2026, so the Board of Trustees will develop a new strategic plan that sets the direction for the organisation beyond 2026. We need trustees who can help us navigate this landscape with confidence and compassion.

FAQs about our board

When do you meet?

Nova's Board meets every month for 2 hours on a Wednesday. We adjust the day and time depending on what works for the Board, so don't worry if a Wednesday doesn't work for you – please just let us know in your application.

Do you meet online or in person?

We alternate between online and hybrid meetings, where some trustees meet at a local community centre and others join on Zoom. Access to venues is step free and we will work proactively on adjustments requested to make our meetings accessible and inclusive.

Are there any other time commitments?

Each month, there are papers to read before the Board meeting which are sent to trustees a week in advance. We hold two in-person away days each year to build connection and there are also optional opportunities to get involved with:

- Development opportunities such as workshops
- Our Finance and HR Subcommittees, which both meet monthly
- Supporting Nova at events such as networking meetings and our Annual General Meeting

We estimate the time commitment to be 3-5 hours a month.

Are there development opportunities?

We offered free and varied opportunities for trustees to develop their skills and knowledge. For example, we have recently paid for the lead of our HR Subcommittee to complete a three-day Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Charity Governance course with NCVO.

For anyone who has not been a trustee before, this can include training and shadowing opportunities.

Do you cover expenses?

Nova covers reasonable expenses.

How long would I be on the board?

New trustees are co-opted onto Nova's Board and elected at the next Annual General Meeting, which happen in November. You would then serve one term of three years. After this, you can discuss with the Chair if you would like to continue as a trustee and stand for re-election.

What support is available?

All of our Trustees have 1-1s each year with Nova's Chair to check in, monitor their goals, and review any support needs they have.

For the first six months, new Trustees also have a buddy on the Board who can answer questions, help explain the papers sent to the Board, and be a point of contact for any additional support needs.

We can support with making the Board meetings and documents accessible to you, and will ask you about this during the application process.

Do I need experience of being a trustee?

No, we would like to welcome people who haven't been a trustee before and value the other experience you can bring to our Board. For example, people with first-hand experience of working in the VCSE sector or the services they provide can bring powerful perspectives and play an important role in shaping our strategy.

If you want to bring your life experiences to the table, or combine these with your skill sets, we'd encourage you to do so.

Making an application

1. Read through this Information Pack and the Treasurer Role Description if that's relevant to you. Get in touch with Hayley (Chair of Nova's Board) if you you'd like a quick chat before applying, at ceo@wdsa.org.uk
2. Complete the online Application Form by **Tuesday 1 December 2026 at 9am**.
3. Applications will be reviewed by Nova's Chair, CEO and a Trustee and we will send invitations for an informal interview.
4. Interviews will take place on a rolling basis, in person or online.
5. All applicants will be updated about the outcome of the interview. Successful applicants will be recommended for appointment to the Board.

Please contact our team if you need support or adjustments throughout the recruitment process to make it accessible for you. Contact our team at jobs@nova-wd.org.uk or 01924 367418.

Nova
building a vibrant VCSE sector in our District

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