Make a difference as a Point North trustee

Everything you need to know about becoming a trustee

point north

pointnorth.org.uk

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Welcome from our Chair

We're delighted you're considering joining us at Point North

For nearly three decades, we've been working closely with communities and businesses to fight poverty and enrich lives in County Durham, Tees Valley and the wider North East.

As we approach our 30th anniversary in 2025, we're taking steps to prepare for the years ahead.

Our recent rebrand from County Durham Community Foundation to Point North is a reflection of our evolving work and vision for the future. We're improving, simplifying and strengthening our internal systems, particularly in the areas of grant making and reporting. These improvements are essential as we address the complex and pressing challenges our communities and planet face.

This is where you can make a difference.

We're seeking trustees who can bring fresh perspectives and strategic insights to help guide Point North through its next phase. As a trustee, you'll be joining a dedicated Board committed to our mission and open to innovative approaches to fighting poverty and enriching lives. My own time as Chair is soon drawing to a close, but I'm proud to pass on this role at such an exciting time for Point North.

Our collective efforts are directed towards addressing poverty, revitalising communities, and creating opportunities for people across our region. While the challenges are substantial, the potential for meaningful impact is considerable. If you're passionate about making a positive difference in our region, and have the experience and skills to guide Point North through its next phase, we would be interested in hearing from you.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to the possibility of welcoming you to our Board.



James Fenwick

Chair, Board of trustees

James Fenwick

Making a difference every day

£70.3m

awarded to communities since 1995

£4.4m

awarded to communities since 1 April 2024

1,186,006

lives enriched since 1 April 2024



Fighting Poverty & Enriching Lives

We're Point North, an independent grant making charity, and our mission is simple; make today better and tomorrow brighter for our communities.

Since 1995, we've been working in County Durham, Tees Valley and across the North East to fight poverty and enrich lives.

As the official Community Foundation for County Durham, Darlington and Tees Valley, we aim to be the place people come to when they want to make a lasting difference in their community.

We connect and collaborate with businesses and individuals who are motivated to create a better today and a brighter tomorrow for local people.

Our approach

We work with donors and supporters who want to make a difference in the lives of local people and who join us in our mission to fight poverty and enrich lives.

Whether in a specific location or area of interest, our donors and supporters channel their giving through Point North. They trust us to direct funds to where the need is greatest.

Put simply, we get money in and get it out again to where it can make the most difference to the most amount of people.



We raise funds

Our donors include people, businesses, families, and trusts - they all have their own reasons for giving to Point North, but they're united by one thing:

They want to make a difference to local people, to make today better and tomorrow brighter.

We grant funds

The funds we raise from our generous donors are distributed to community groups and projects. These groups and projects are diverse and varied, but they're committed to:

Supporting communities, fighting poverty, and enriching the lives of local people.



Our impact

As a charity, grant maker and a Community Foundation, we know we have a responsibility to our communities, donors, and supporters in County Durham and beyond.

We take a ‘continuous improvement’ approach to all we do, including our own development as people and as an organisation.

Climate commitments

Our commitment to taking action to reduce our impact on the environment extends across our organisation and through to our grant making.

Many of our grants include a ‘greening’ allowance. This is an additional sum of money to support grant recipients in making their projects or organisations greener.

We’re also a signatory of the SME Climate Commitment with the aim of reaching net zero emissions by 2040.

Team health & wellbeing

We take our responsibility to care for our team seriously!

In 2023, we implemented the nine-day fortnight. This gives everyone a Friday off every other week. Our hybrid working approach and flexible working options mean an improved work/life balance.

Click here to read more about our policies and approach

It all starts with our people

Our small team is proudly rooted in County Durham, where our journey began nearly 30 years ago. Together, we're determined to make today better and tomorrow brighter for our communities.

Our people and the decisions we take are guided by our values. We are:

- **Trustworthy:** We are reliable, honest, and transparent in our work.
- **Respectful:** We respect each other, our donors, and our communities, and we are inclusive in our approach.
- **Passionate:** We truly care about making a difference to the lives of the people in our communities and our planet.
- **Adaptable:** We are flexible in our approach.
- **Ambitious:** We want good things for local people.
- **Vocal:** We are vocal for the communities and causes we serve.

"What sets us apart is the difference every pound donated makes. The team's openness and accessibility are crucial to me — we are always ready to find ways to help."

Michelle Cooper,
Chief Executive



Point North's leadership team is led by Chief Executive Michelle Cooper, Chief Finance Officer, Chris Rogerson and Head of Grants, Sharon Gollan.

Click here to meet and learn more about our full team.

Our Trustees & Patrons

Chaired by James Fenwick, our trustees volunteer their time, experience and expertise.

Point North trustees and patrons are industry leaders, experts and pioneers in their fields. They guide us and are responsible for overseeing our direction, strategy, finances and vision.

Since we were established in 1995, our President, Sir Paul Nicholson, and our Patron, Lady Sarah Nicholson have remained steadfast in their dedication to Point North.

Our Board is excited to welcome new trustees who can strengthen and provide different perspectives, experiences and skills.

Continue reading to learn more about who we're looking for and how you can get involved.

"I have been very impressed with the forward thinking approach of Point North, it's ambitious and there is a boundless energy and focus."

Gillian Chinhengo,
Point North trustee



Click here to meet and learn more about our trustees & Patrons.

Become a Point North trustee

Our work wouldn't be possible without our trustees and we are incredibly thankful for their generosity in sharing their time, experience and expertise.

We want our Board to reflect the communities and groups we support and are supported by. We value lived and professional experience and expertise.

We're always open to suggestions and ideas, so if there is something that we can do to support you in becoming a trustee, please get in touch with us.

And just because you don't tick all the criteria, doesn't mean you shouldn't apply.

To strengthen and complement the skills of our Board, we're looking for the following:



Trustee

- Experience in any of the following areas: finance, audit, marketing or community work
- Passion for making today and tomorrow better for people and communities in County Durham, Tees Valley and the wider North East
- Contribute ideas that will help us support more groups
- Previous Board experience is not essential

Not sure what a trustee is or does? Please read our FAQs on page 13.

Who we're looking for

You'll make a great trustee for Point North if you have these qualities:

- You care passionately about County Durham and the wider North East and you want to play a role in making our region the best it can be for everyone
- You understand the different ways poverty can impact someone's life
- You can commit to the necessary time and effort to being a trustee
- You have experience of working as a member of a team
- You have a drive to make things happen and take action when required
- You are willing to contribute new ideas and find solutions to problems
- You share our mission and values

Main responsibilities

- Advise the leadership team on the development of new ideas, campaigns and programmes
- Attend Board meetings and where possible become part of an internal committee
- Ensure that Point North complies with its governing documents, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulation
- Adhere to Point North's policies
- Maintain confidentiality and declare any conflicts of interest while carrying out your duty as a trustee
- Share your skills, knowledge or experience in Board and committee meetings to advance the aims of Point North
- Most importantly, we want you to push us to become the best that we can be



Term

The trustees serve an initial three year term.

Time commitment

There are four Board meetings a year. You will be expected to attend at least 75% of Board meetings.

Each meeting is two hours.

Board meetings normally take place on a Monday evening.

We also have committees, which you can choose to be part of. Committee meetings take place during the weekday and normally start on a morning.

These are usually smaller groups where Board members can get down to the nitty gritty details. If you decide to join a committee, it will usually be around your area of expertise, for example we have a Audit and Risk committee.

Location

County Durham, and online where meeting in person is not possible.

Expenses

Being a trustee is a voluntary role. Expenses that can be reclaimed include:

- Travel
- Accommodation costs to attend meetings

Induction

Whether it's your first time becoming a trustee or your fifth, our senior management team will offer an early, full induction to all new trustees. This will give you an insight into how we work.

You'll also meet our people, be invited to observe a Board meeting, and have the option to complete any relevant training to support you in your role.

Application process

To apply, please email Michelle Cooper at michelle@pointnorth.org.uk with:

- A copy of your CV
- A cover statement of no more than two sides of A4, explaining why you're interested in becoming a trustee of Point North and what relevant skills or experience you will bring to the role

Timeline

Apply by:	Friday 3 January 2025
First informal chat (online):	Tuesday 21 January 2025
Second interview (face to face or online):	Monday 10 February 2025
Board meeting observation:	Monday 17 March 2025
Formal appointments:	Following Board meeting

FAQs

What is a trustee?

A trustee is a volunteer who shares their knowledge, expertise and experience to help an organisation better serve its community and cause.

A trustee means being part of a diverse team who come from different backgrounds and have different skills, but have a shared passion – in our case making today better and tomorrow brighter.

Being a trustee means you're never left to do anything alone.

How will being a trustee benefit me?

Being a trustee is about helping you as well as the community. Depending on where you are in your career, there are many benefits, including:

- Meet industry leaders
- Be part of the decision making
- Make a real difference to Point North and the communities we work with
- Help develop or share your leadership skills

What do trustees do?

Trustees do lots of different things. From helping us raise awareness to making sure we're following the rules.

Depending on each trustee's area of expertise, what you do can vary.

The most important is that trustees make sure we are doing what we said we would and that how we work is in line with legal and statutory requirements.

What experience do I need to have?

We're looking for trustees who have different levels of lived and gained experience, expertise and knowledge.

Whether it's your first time being a trustee or you have decades of experience, we want to hear from you!

How much time will I need to commit to?

The minimum commitment is eight hours a year.

We will be seeking new trustees to join either the Audit & Risk or Resources & Policies committees. These groups meet four times a year, separately to the Board. Meetings last up to two hours.

You will need to do some pre-reading before meetings.

Want to find out more or speak to us before making your decision?

We hope this pack has answered some of your questions about what being a Point North trustee means and the difference you can make.

If you're considering becoming a trustee, or you'd like a more information before making your decision, you can contact Michelle Cooper, our Chief Executive.

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