



WE'RE RECRUITING

Board of Directors / Trustee

Applicant Information Pack · Local Advice. Rural Reach. Lasting Change.

**FREE · CONFIDENTIAL · IMPARTIAL · INDEPENDENT · ACCESSIBLE ·
EFFECTIVE**

Bring your strategic vision, independent judgement and time to help lead a charity that delivers vital advice and support across a 2,400 km² rural community — from Westhill to Braemar.

20 + 14

volunteers + staff,
volunteer-led

8,000+

client issues advised yearly

£1m+

client financial gains p.a.

2,400km²

rural area covered

Welcome

A message from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of South West Aberdeenshire Citizens Advice Bureau (SWACAB). There has never been a more crucial time for our services, given the range of challenges so many people across our communities are facing.

As a Trustee of the Board, you will contribute to the overall governance and direction of the organisation as we deliver these vital services to our clients. We operate an open and collaborative environment, and every Trustee is encouraged to contribute in their own way.

The role is varied and interesting, spans all manner of topics, and offers a genuine sense of achievement — whether measured in the number of people we help, or in the direct financial benefit delivered to our clients.

If this could be of interest to you, we would be delighted to discuss it further.

Owen O'Donnell, Chair

South West Aberdeenshire Citizens Advice Bureau
Board of Directors



Owen O'Donnell, Chair, South West Aberdeenshire Board of Directors

About this pack

This pack tells you more about SWACAB, the Board's role, what we're looking for in a new Director/Trustee, and how to apply — prepared with reference to SCVO and OSCR guidance and good practice.

About SWACAB

South West Aberdeenshire Citizens Advice Bureau has been operating since 2009. For over 16 years we have responded to the needs of citizens, providing free, confidential and impartial advice and information across money advice, benefits and debt, energy advice, consumer issues, family matters, employment, immigration and housing.

Our service is vital for the communities we serve — Westhill, Banchory, Aboyne, Ballater, Alford, Kemnay and the wider Donside, Deeside and Garioch hinterland. Covering roughly 2,400 km² — around 38% of Aberdeenshire's land area — we hold the largest single-bureau geography in the Aberdeenshire CAB Consortium.

It is also a territory of hidden hardship. More than a third (35%) of Aberdeenshire households are in fuel poverty — above the Scottish average — rising to 40% in remote rural Scotland, with 33% in extreme fuel poverty: nearly three times the national rate (Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership; The Poverty Alliance, *Taking Action on Rural Poverty*; Scottish House Condition Survey).

Our Four Priorities 2026–2031

- **Advice that changes lives** — free, impartial, confidential advice that matches increasingly complex need
- **Insight that changes lives** — using our evidence to influence policy on rural poverty and the cost of living
- **People that change lives** — a volunteer-led organisation that values, trains and retains its people
- **Reach that changes lives** — extending access across 2,400 km² so geography is never a barrier

Our Values

Person-centred · Empowering · Supportive · Inclusive · Collaborative

The value we deliver

£4–£6

client financial gain per £1 of operating cost

£11–£16

returned per £1 of core advice funding

£39–£50

social & economic value per £1 invested

£1.75m

projected client financial gains by 2028/29



The communities SWACAB serves across South West Aberdeenshire

Our Vision

A South West Aberdeenshire where every person, wherever they live, can access the advice they need to realise their rights and live with dignity.

Our Mission

To provide free, impartial and confidential information and advice to the people of South West Aberdeenshire — so that no one in our communities has to face a problem alone.

The Opportunity

SWACAB is currently looking to recruit volunteers who live locally and would like to contribute to their community by joining the Board. We are seeking team players with strategic vision, independent judgement, and a willingness to give their time to support and develop the organisation — particularly people with HR, fundraising, marketing, finance or third-sector governance experience — though a commitment to our cause and a willingness to learn matter just as much as a particular background.



SWACAB — supporting citizens across Deeside, Donside and Garioch

The role of the Board

The Board leads, controls and monitors the organisation's activities — the part of the Bureau with formal power and responsibility, set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Day-to-day management is delegated to the Chief Officer, but the Board retains overall responsibility. Its prime functions are to:

- Develop direction, strategy and planning
- Manage risk and ensure compliance and accountability with governance, regulation and law
- Ensure the Bureau has sufficient funds and resources
- Ensure the Bureau meets the standards of the membership scheme
- Meet all legal obligations
- Act as the employer of all paid staff

Your responsibilities as a Trustee/Director

- Attending Board meetings bi-monthly, reading papers in advance, and participating actively in discussions and decisions
- Maintaining contact with Bureau staff and other Board members between meetings, as required
- Being aware of the advice needs of the local community, other providers' services, and the opportunities and challenges facing the CAB
- Contributing actively to setting policy and strategic direction, and to planning and evaluating performance
- Monitoring the financial position of the Bureau, and ensuring resources are managed effectively — strategically and day to day

Your legal duties as a Charity Trustee

SWACAB is a Scottish charity (Charity No. SC037679) and a company limited by guarantee. As a Trustee/Director you will hold both charity trustee and company director responsibilities.

Under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, as explained in guidance from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), all charity trustees must:

- 1 Act in the interests of the charity, putting SWACAB and its beneficiaries first, and manage conflicts of interest openly
- 2 Operate with the care and diligence expected of a person managing the affairs of another, seeking advice where needed
- 3 Act within the charity's purposes, using funds and property only for those purposes
- 4 Comply with specific duties under the 2005 Act: accurate records, reporting obligations, and public information on reasonable request
- 5 Take collective responsibility for controlling how the charity raises funds and for the proper use of money raised

Charity trustees remain responsible for their charity and cannot pass this responsibility to someone else while in post. A full induction — covering SWACAB's governing document, code of conduct and trustee handbook — is provided to every new Trustee.



Delivering free, confidential advice across our communities

You won't be doing this alone

Your focus is governance, strategy and oversight — not day-to-day operations. Every new Trustee receives a full induction and ongoing training and support throughout their term.

Person Specification



Skills you'll need

- Communication skills, and willingness to be an active participant in discussions and decisions
- A good understanding of, or willingness to learn about, local needs, services, resources, issues and opportunities
- Commitment to the aims, principles and policies of the CAB, including equality, independence, data protection and employment
- Finance, fundraising, governance or third-sector experience would be beneficial
- Previous board experience would be an advantage
- The ability to think strategically and creatively, and participate actively in decision-making

You should also be able to

- Commit sufficient time and willingness to Board-related matters
- Act in the best interests of the Bureau at all times
- Understand your responsibilities as a Trustee and, collectively, as an employer
- Develop your knowledge of legal, financial, audit and regulatory requirements
- Work collaboratively while remaining independent of influence
- Manage risk with a balanced, informed approach
- Commit to the Trustee Code of Conduct: purpose, leadership, integrity, board effectiveness, equality and diversity

First time on a board?

That is not a barrier. Some of our most effective Trustees joined with no previous board experience — what they brought was judgement, curiosity and a commitment to their community. If that sounds like you, we would genuinely like to hear from you, and we will support you every step of the way.

The impact you'll have

Volunteering with SWACAB is a rewarding way to give back to your community. As a charity, we rely on volunteers to help deliver our vital services. It's a great way to stay active, connect with your local community, and make a real difference in people's lives.

You'll also have the opportunity to develop valuable skills through ongoing training and support as part of the wider Scottish Citizens Advice network.

“

The contribution of bureau volunteers is the lifeblood of the Scottish CAB Service — enabling advice of a consistently high standard, right across Scotland.

— Citizens Advice Scotland

Equality, diversity and board recruitment

We follow SCVO good practice on inclusive trustee recruitment. Our procedures are open and transparent, to ensure the best possible mix of skills, knowledge, attitudes and experience. We particularly welcome applications from groups currently under-represented on our Board, and from people with lived experience of the issues our clients bring to us.



Our people are at the heart of Strategy 2026–2031

Terms & conditions

Bi-monthly meetings

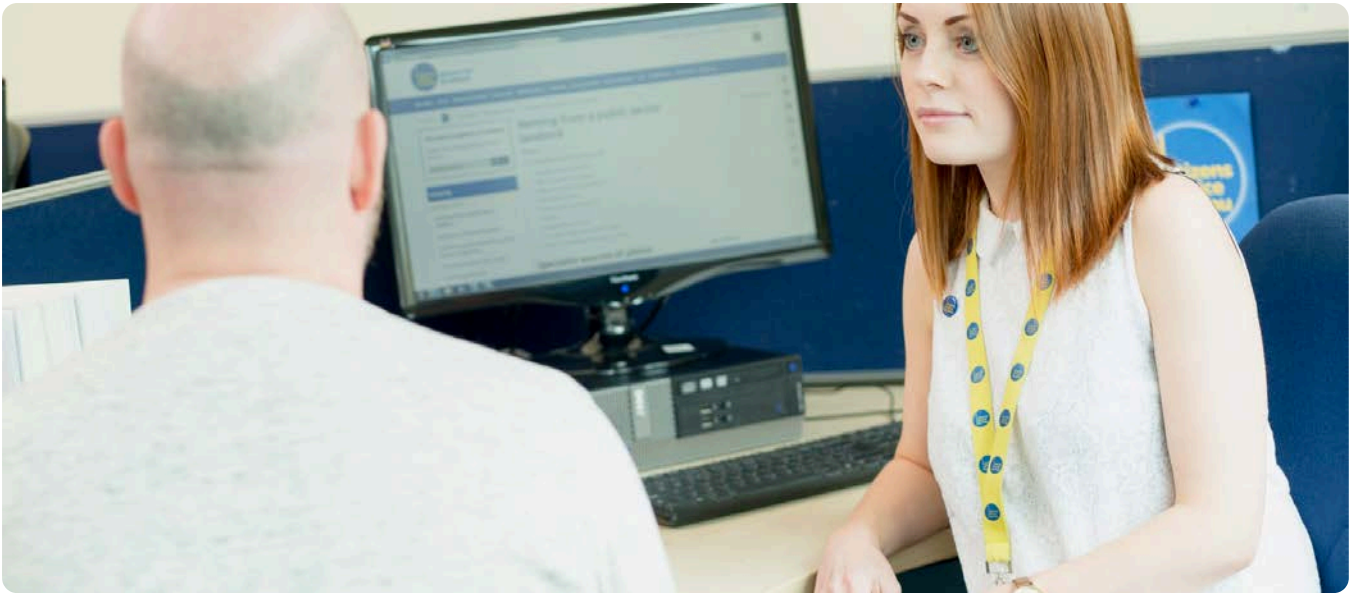
Hybrid · Westhill

Voluntary role

Board meetings run bi-monthly (~1.5 hours), plus one annual strategy session and subcommittee work as required. Trustees should expect to give 2–4 hours a month, including training.

You'll have access to our Teams platform for all charity business. Expenses are reimbursed; the role itself is unremunerated.

How to apply



Please complete our application form. If you have any difficulties, or would like an informal, confidential chat to discuss the role, please get in touch.

Once we have received your application, you will be invited to interview with Owen O'Donnell, our Chair, and Grahame Paterson, our Chief Officer.

Grahame Paterson

Chief Officer

Grahame.Paterson@swacab.org.uk



SCAN TO APPLY

govo.org > search "South West
Aberdeenshire Citizens Advice Bureau" >
Opportunities > Board Member

South West Aberdeenshire Citizens Advice Bureau is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, FRN 617487. SWACAB is a Scottish Charity, No. SC037679, and a Company Limited by Guarantee, No. 365959. Registered office: Suite 2, Westhill Shopping Centre, Westhill AB32 6RL.