



Welcome to YHA

Trustee recruitment
pack 2025



We are YHA

We believe in the power of travel and adventure to connect people to each other, nature and heritage. These connections do wonders for wellbeing.

Since 1930, YHA has operated a unique network of hostels throughout England and Wales – a community of shared spaces, open to all and for the benefit of everybody.

We provide inclusive adventures, in extraordinary buildings, in amazing places – yet we offer much more than accommodation.

YHA is a sector-leading education residential provider, a champion of access to the outdoors for all – especially young people, and an Investors in People Gold employer.

We are a large social enterprise leading the way in social tourism and nurturing partnerships that deliver impact across multiple sectors and at every level – in our communities, in our regions, and nationally.

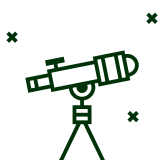
95 years on from our pioneering beginnings, our founding principles and determination to achieve social good remain at the heart of what we do.

With our course set for long-term sustainability, we stride out on the road to our centenary with a refreshed strategy to enable everyone to access adventure, for the first time and a lifetime.

We are YHA.

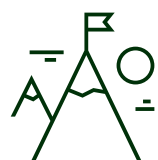
Because where you go changes who you become.





Vision

Everyone has access to the benefits of adventure, for the first time and a lifetime.



Mission

Enabling everyone, especially young people, to connect with people, nature and heritage through hostels in amazing places.

Charitable objects

To help all, especially young people of limited means, to a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside, and appreciation of the cultural values of towns and cities, particularly by providing youth hostels or other accommodation for them in their travels, and thus to promote their health, recreation and education.

You can find out more about YHA, our history, strategy and impact at yha.org.uk/about-yha.

Hello

Thank you for your interest in the role of Trustee of this amazing charity

I'm Margaret Hart and I've been Chair of YHA's Board since 2019. Throughout my career, I've had the privilege of working with many fantastic organisations, but none with quite the blend of mission, reach and heart that YHA brings. I hope the information in this pack will inspire you to consider joining us to make a meaningful impact.

It's a very exciting time to be part of YHA. As we celebrate our 95th anniversary year, we have just launched a refreshed strategy that builds on recent successes with a clear-eyed vision for the future. With renewed purpose and optimism, we are focused on delivering lasting change for our beneficiaries.

At its core, YHA is about improving access. Access to the outdoors, nature and heritage for all but especially young people and those experiencing travel and adventure for the first time.

Our Board members lead our charity and social enterprise, which is making a tangible difference in people's lives. Through our work, we nurture wellbeing by building confidence, connections and a sense of belonging. Never more important than in today's uncertain and changing world.

As we all know, the past few years have been challenging – for our beneficiaries, the charity sector and society as a whole – as we've navigated the legacy of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. We have overcome huge challenges, and I am pleased to say that YHA is in the final year of a recovery plan – with our sights set on a return to surplus. But there is still a long road ahead. And financial stability is crucial as we seek to grow and deepen our impact.

Through a combination of strategic cost-saving measures, growth, and the successful delivery of our hostel network strategy, we're on track to long-term financial sustainability. At the same time, we're delivering sector-leading impact programmes targeted at young people and under-served communities.

From our No Child Left Behind residentials, which provide children at risk of missing out on outdoor learning with vital opportunities, to our pioneering Outdoor Citizens programme, which helps grassroots organisations address systemic inequalities and improve access to nature – we are proud to be making a real difference. Our Festival of Walking events are also helping beginners build confidence and enjoy the stunning landscapes that surround our hostels. And through the government-funded Generation Green initiative, we've connected more than 140,000 disadvantaged young people with the natural world – working with coalition partners to encourage the environmentalists of the future.

As we continue the journey to our centenary, we are looking for passionate people who can bring both life experience and expertise to help take YHA forward. We need energetic, collaborative voices on our Board to help YHA create even greater social impact in the years to come.

I hope you'll consider putting forward your unique skills and perspective to our Board and I wish you the best of luck with your application.



Margaret Hart, Chair



Our culture

Becoming a YHA Trustee is both deeply rewarding and genuinely enjoyable. It offers a rare opportunity to shape the future direction of a charity whose work is grounded in powerful values and real social impact. It's also a chance to collaborate with people from outside your usual sector or daily experience – bringing fresh perspectives and expanding your own.

Our Board of 15 Trustees holds overall legal responsibility for YHA. Together, they set and oversee the delivery of our strategy, while providing guidance across key areas such as impact, finance, risk management, property, hospitality, and performance. With Trustees from a wide range of personal and professional backgrounds, boardroom conversations are rich and dynamic – and every voice contributes meaningfully to our progress.

YHA places inclusion and access for all at the heart of everything we do. As a Trustee, you'll be part of an open, collaborative culture where diverse viewpoints are not only welcomed but essential to our success. We believe the best decisions are made in an environment of mutual respect, trust, and constructive challenge.

If these values resonate with you, and you're excited by the idea of helping YHA to grow and deepen its impact, we'd be delighted to tell you more.

Meet some of our Trustees

Here's what some of our current Trustees said about YHA's contribution to society and what motivates them as a Board member.

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Being a Trustee is an opportunity for you to make a difference to an amazing cause – making sure all young people have access to adventure. It has been amazing to be a young Trustee on YHA's Board – I have enjoyed working with multi-talented people on challenging issues to influence positive change. I have developed in skills and confidence on this supportive board – realising that my voice can make a difference (there is a reason we need diverse boards) – and have had a lot of fun along the way.

Sarah

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There is a genuine need for young people to have a multitude of experiences that excite, challenge and inspire them to ask questions about themselves and society as a whole. I have done the same, and continue to do so, and am excited to facilitate opportunities that enable all of us to continue to have fun and stay curious.

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YHA enables everyone, and especially young people, to gain access to places they might not otherwise have the means to visit. As a person who experienced these benefits at a young age, I am immensely grateful to have had this life-changing opportunity. As a Board member, what motivates me is knowing that I am contributing to decision making that will drive increased impact and improve wellbeing for people like me and I am proud of being able to give back in this way.

Paula

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This could be a great fit for you

You don't need to have been on a Board before to become a YHA Trustee. If you care about connecting people to each other, the outdoors, nature and heritage, we'd love to hear from you.

We're looking for people who support our mission and values, and who can act as ambassadors for YHA. You'll need to be ready to listen, contribute, and bring your perspective to the table – knowing when to ask questions, offer support, or challenge ideas in a thoughtful, constructive way.

Experience comes in many forms. Whether you've taken part in a community group, student council, parent committee, trade union, local campaign, or formal Board settings – those insights are all valuable here. What matters most is your commitment, ability to communicate clearly, think strategically, and work collaboratively with others.

If that sounds like you, we really hope you'll apply.



Who we're looking for

Above all, we're looking for people who have the skills and experience to guide and challenge the strategic direction of the whole organisation.

Essential qualities for every Trustee

You don't need previous Board experience to become a YHA Trustee. What matters most is that you bring:

- a strong belief in YHA's mission and understanding of our strategic direction
- good communication and listening skills
- fair and reasoned decision-making
- the confidence to challenge and support constructively
- time to commit to the role (including preparation and attendance at meetings)
- a commitment to YHA's HEART values: Helpful, Efficient, Authentic, Respectful, and Team-spirited

Diversity

We believe diversity in all its forms makes us stronger, more effective, and better able to deliver our mission. We care about who you are – not just what you've done.

We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds. In particular, we strongly encourage people from the global majority to apply. These voices are currently under-represented on our Board, and we are committed to changing that.

Valuable additional strategic experience

We're also looking to strengthen the Board with Trustees who bring strategic insight in one or more of the following areas:

- Finance
- Hospitality
- Information technology, cyber security and data protection
- Leadership in a schools environment



You do not need to possess all of these skills to apply.

Candidates must be over 16 years of age.

YHA is committed to upholding and promoting equality and fair treatment for all.

Read our safer recruitment policy at jobs.yha.org.uk/safer-recruitment-policy.

Expenses – we've got you covered

Cost should never be a barrier to applying or becoming a Trustee. This is a voluntary role but travel expenses and other costs incurred as part of your Trustee duties will be fully reimbursed.

What we'll ask of you

Like all worthwhile endeavours, being a Trustee requires time and commitment. We want to be upfront about what's involved, while also reassuring you that support is available and we've built in convenience and flexibility where possible.

This is a hybrid role, with a mix of online and in-person involvement throughout the year.

Here's what you can expect:

- Three in-person Board meetings per year — each held over a weekend at a YHA hostel in England or Wales. These are great opportunities to connect with your fellow Trustees and experience our sites first-hand as overnight accommodation is provided.
- Attendance at our AGM (online) and one virtual Board meeting during the year (both held on Saturdays).
- Occasional extra Board meetings, held online if needed.
- Participation in a sub-committee, which typically meet online for two hours four times a year.
- Time to read papers and prepare for meetings.

In addition to these key meetings, Trustees also make other ongoing contributions and occasionally represent YHA at external events.



New Trustees are supported with a comprehensive induction programme, which includes:

- online sessions to suit your schedule (approximately six hours in total)
- a half-day, face-to-face session with our regional business managers at one of our hostels
- ongoing training in areas including safeguarding and finance to help you feel confident and equipped in the role

Sub-committees Trustees may join:

- Finance Committee
- People, Remuneration, Impact and Engagement Committee
- Audit and Risk Committee
- Board Recruitment Committee

Understanding the responsibilities

Becoming a Trustee comes with some important legal responsibilities. As a member of the Board, you'll help shape decisions that guide YHA's future – and those decisions are made collectively. **All Trustees share responsibility** for the actions and outcomes of the Board as a whole.

The way Trustees operate is set out in YHA's **Articles of Association**, and we'll make sure you're supported in understanding these. One key part of the role is being aware of and identifying any **conflicts of interest** – for example, if a decision could affect something you're personally involved in. If that happens, Trustees are asked to declare it in advance and follow YHA's **Conflict of Interest Policy**, which we'll share with you if you're shortlisted. You'll also be asked to complete a short declaration form if successful at interview.

To make sure we meet our legal obligations as a charity and company, we do ask for some standard checks before appointment. This includes confirming that candidates are **eligible to act as Trustees**, and completing an **enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check**, which we'll guide you through if you're appointed.

These steps are part of creating a responsible and trusted Board – and we're here to support you every step of the way.

Please note

The Charities Act disqualifies people from being Trustees if they:

- have unspent convictions for offences as set out in the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016
- are undischarged bankrupts
- have made an arrangement with creditors and have not been discharged (this will include an IVA)
- are subject to a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or to an order made under section 429 (2) (b) of the Insolvency Act 1986
- have been removed from the Trusteeship of another charity by an order made by the Charity Commission of the High Court





YHA's governance structure

The voting members of the Board of Trustees are made up of the following groups:

- a. three National Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer)
- b. up to 12 members, selected by YHA members
- c. up to two co-opted members

Board members are elected for a four-year term of office. After their first term, Trustees are eligible to apply for re-election for one more four-year term. We look forward to meeting our new Trustees and helping them settle in. To welcome them to the Board, we'll pair them with a current Trustee mentor and there will be a full induction.

Read about our existing Trustees at yha.org.uk/about-yha/board-trustees

Watch our video explaining this rewarding role (scan the QR code below)



Scan the QR
code to watch
the video

Read more about YHA governance at
yha.org.uk/about-yha/governance



How to apply

You don't have to be a current YHA member to apply to become a Trustee. To be elected, however, you will need to become an Association Member of YHA before the AGM on Saturday 8 November 2025.

Please complete our online application form, which includes your personal details, diversity monitoring and candidate statement which will ask you some questions relating to your skills and experience.

If you need support with the application process or to submit your application in an alternative format, please contact trusteerecruitment@yha.org.uk.

Submitting your application

All applications must be submitted via our Application Gateway, in line with our safer recruitment practices. You can find further information and a link to the vacancy at jobs.yha.org.uk/our-roles/become-a-yha-trustee/

Completed applications must be sent by **9am on Monday 21 July 2025** to be considered for shortlisting. Incomplete or late applications will be rejected. We will contact shortlisted candidates by Wednesday 6 August 2025. We will contact those not shortlisted to let them know they have been unsuccessful.

We're sorry, but we're unable to provide individual feedback to unsuccessful candidates at this stage.

If you need any assistance in submitting your application or have any questions relating to the Trustee Recruitment process, please email trusteerecruitment@yha.org.uk

Applications will be assessed by YHA's Board Recruitment Committee, which oversees the candidate selection process on behalf of our members. Trustees are elected by Association Members through an online voting process.



Interview dates

Interviews will take place virtually on 1 and 2 September 2025.

Following the interviews, the Board Recruitment Committee will confirm the successful Trustee candidates to be put forward for election by Wednesday 10 September 2025. Online voting for Trustees will open to YHA members on 26 September 2025 and close on 24 October 2025. We will share the results with shortlisted candidates as soon as possible after this.

Newly elected Trustees will be expected to attend the AGM which will be held virtually on Saturday 8 November 2025.

Thank you.

If you have any questions, please email trusteerecruitment@yha.org.uk and the team will be more than happy to assist you.



We are YHA.

Because where you go changes who you become

stay | join | give | volunteer

yha.org.uk