



**Aylesbury Youth Action**

## **Why be a Trustee?**





Christmas Shop Project

## What is AYA and Who are we?

AYA provide support for young people to help their local community, through volunteering across Aylesbury Vale. We do this by running clubs, activities, events and projects; both regularly, with a high level of commitment, and drop in sessions that young people can sign up to on an adhoc basis.

### History & Ethos

AYA began its life in 1971 after a need was discovered in Aylesbury Vale for co-ordinated community service opportunities for young people. Six local secondary schools met together with representatives of Local Welfare Organisations and the Rotary Club. The first meeting was made between Aylesbury Secondary School Heads and the Aylesbury Fish Scheme; chaired by Mr KD Smith, Headmaster of Aylesbury Grammar School. Keith Smith OBE, has been part of AYA ever since and is now our Honorary President. AYA has continually maintained its original ethos of supporting young people in their service of the community throughout its organisational evolution.

### The role of volunteers

The young people who apply to volunteer with AYA, go through checks to safeguard both themselves and the beneficiaries. After which the volunteers are then encouraged to run projects and activities themselves, with a member of AYA staff's support, teaching them a myriad of life skills and ensuring that the local community is continually supported and enriched.

*"AYA has young people at its centre; it assists with creating volunteering opportunities to challenge and develop young people whilst also providing a wider benefit to their local communities."*

*- Trustee Member*

# What is a Trustee?

Generally the role of a Trustee within a charity is to support and guide the direction of the charity, sharing your particular skill base and insight, and getting involved with some operational aspects. Giving firm strategic direction, setting overall policies, ensuring effective administration and financial stability of the charity are key responsibilities. There are additional duties for the following roles:

## Chair

The Chair of the Trustee Board leads discussions and ensures that every member has an opportunity to express their opinion. It is usual for the Chair to have been a Trustee for a some time before being elected to lead the Board. Some of the duties are:

- *Develop agenda and chair board meetings, ensuring the charity complies with all legal requirements.*
- *Give firm strategic direction.*
- *Act as figurehead for the charity with other Trustees.*
- *Lead on development of board decision implementation.*
- *Effective development of board members, and utilisation of their skills.*
- *Taking urgent action between board meetings (but not decision making unless authorised)*
- *Maintaining proper fiscal oversight.*
- *Working with other Trustees to effectively manage resources and funding.*

## Secretary

The general role of a Charity Secretary is to support the Chair by ensuring the smooth functioning of the board, personally or by delegation.

Some of the duties are:

- *Ensuring good communications with the board.*
- *Tracking board members attendance and raising matters in their absence.*
- *Liaising with the office staff for papers circulation.*
- *Ensuring good governance with the AYA Constitution.*

## Treasurer

The Treasurer is required to maintain an overview of the organisations affairs so as to ensure its financial viability and that proper financial records and procedures are maintained.

Some of the duties are:

- *Present financial reports to the board.*
- *Advise the board on how to carry out its financial duties.*
- *Liaise with book-keeper; budgeting and preparation of reports.*



Celebration at  
Volunteers Week

## Benefits & Motivations

There are many reasons to why people wish to become a Trustee, we have listed out some benefits that we have come across that may help you to get started with what motivates you personally.

### Expand current skills

There are lots of opportunities for you to improve your existing skills, and the informal chat that we invite you to have with our Chair will determine whether there is a mutual benefit initially. Once a Trustee is welcomed to the team there will be opportunities for you to stretch your skill base and to try out new areas with the support of the other members. In addition we can offer you training in governance and community based courses.

### Satisfaction

We have an open minded approach to matters with an informal atmosphere in our meetings, encouraging fresh ideas and injecting further energy into the charity. There are a few opportunities for socials, through the year, in the form of Team Building activities and a Christmas Dinner evening, as well as opportunities to meet the volunteers. Also, many people believe that having a passion outside of work is a healthy activity to have; encouraging you to look at the bigger picture.

## Helping your community

Many people like to feel that they are giving back to their community, supporting young people and investing in the next generation.

## Experience

For many people, including young Trustees, having an outside interest listed on your CV is very beneficial, showing that you are proactive and can apply your skills in different settings.

## Training

All Trustees receive safeguarding and governance training. If there are additional skills you feel would be beneficial in supporting your role at AYA, we have links with local organisations that can provide most training courses, which AYA is happy to discuss options with you.



Volunteers on an Intergenerational Project



The AYA Board of Trustees

## Rights & Responsibilities

There are a lot of aspects of being a Trustee that are important to follow and know about. We cover the main elements below to give you a flavour of what it means to be a Trustee. If you would like further information please checkout the following link for the Charity Commission: [www.charitycommission.org](http://www.charitycommission.org) or read the accompanying booklet.

### Charity Commission

The Charity Commission is a governing body that regulates all charities, from a legal and financial standpoint. Anyone can look up a charity via its name or number to view the details about that organisation including recent Annual Accounts and other Trustees.

### Constitution & Age of Trustees

AYA is governed by a Constitutional document, which safeguards the community users, the young people that get involved and the staff/trustees that work within the organisation.

From 1st April 2016 AYA became a CIO, which allows us to welcome trustees from the age of 16 and above to join the Trustee Board, and thus become more youth led.

### Meetings

The Board of Trustees meet on a bi-monthly basis to discuss and develop ideas, raise any issues or concerns and to give feedback on points previously brought up. AYA welcomes fresh perspectives and encourages you to voice your point of view. We ask that a Trustee be dedicated enough to the charity to actively participate in as many meetings per year as possible, with additional actions in-between meetings.

### Conflict of Interest

If you are on a Trustee Board or actively involved in another charity you will be required to declare this. If the organisation is discussed during a meeting you will not be able to join in the discussion actively or pass on information that is discussed in the meeting to that organisation.

## **AGM and Volunteer Celebration**

In addition to our AGM, we hold an annual Volunteer Celebration, which is traditionally a large open event, where we present the projects, activities and events that have been run during the year, sharing good times and community impact. The preparation for this usually begins around June, where the basics are discussed for how and where AYA will perform its showcase. The event itself is usually held in the October half term, ensuring that as many young people as want to get involved have the opportunity without disturbing their school work.

*“I get to meet and talk to lots of new people with different worldviews ...”*

*- Young Trustee Member*

## **Declarations**

You will be required to sign a Code of Conduct Agreement when you first start with us, covering items like law, mission and policy, conflicts of interest, protecting reputation, personal gain, trustee forums, enhancing governance and resignation. In addition, you will also be required to declare yourself a fit and proper person, which is basically legally declaring that you have the right to be a trustee and that you haven't been involved in criminal activities such as listed in the next paragraph.

## **Safeguarding and When things go wrong**

AYA takes safeguarding very seriously and have a number of procedures in place to not only secure the young members, but also staff and Trustees. The Charity Commission website is a useful resource to turn to for guidance on issues that we do not have expertise on or just need clarification on a particular point.

There are rare occasions that a person is not able to become a Trustee and these include; personal solvency problems, if you have a criminal record or if you have been removed as a company director by the High Court. You do not specifically need to have a DBS check, as you will not be directly working with young and vulnerable people on a regular basis. Although in some cases we may request you complete one. We will, however, need a Character Reference as you will be asked to champion an area of AYA's activities suited to your expertise, for example children's projects, elderly resident's projects or a more practical skills base like IT, HR or business or mentoring young people involved in the M.A.C.

## **M.A.C.**

The MAC is an entirely youth led group that meet regularly and enables the young people to get involved in the running of AYA; it is chaired by a volunteer with the guidance of one of our staff members.

# Funding & Collaborations

The activities that AYA develop and get involved with are funded from key local organisations, together with a number of other local and national funding bodies. Funding is usually applied for direct to a funding body, detailing how the potential project would impact the community. AYA also have a number of community partnerships, who work with us in different capacities, such as helping with fundraising, supply services to enable us to complete projects and of course delivery partners.





Social action at the Bucks Goat Centre

## Practicalities

### Travel

If you travel somewhere for the purposes of supporting AYA, you can put in for a travel claim, recording your destination and how many miles you have travelled. Your totals are then calculated at a certain number of pence per mile, please feel free to ask for the current amount.

If you don't wish to claim these costs, you are welcome to donate these back to AYA, adding Gift Aid.

### Expenses

Similarly, we would reimburse you for any expenses that you have incurred during the course of your Trusteeship; for example if you have been asked to organise something and you need supplies for this activity. You can ask for an Expense Claim form, upon completion you simply forward this with your relevant receipts to the AYA office for processing.



Volunteers on  
a conservation  
project at  
Wing Spinney

## Supporting AYA

Perhaps you're interested in supporting AYA but having read this you don't think the role of Trustee is the one for you. Other options include:

### Ambassador

Using a position of influence in your networks to gain further support for AYA.

### Fundraiser

Working with our Fundraising Team to support community and corporate fundraising programmes.

### Expert Volunteer

Providing professional or practical assistance to our office work or community projects.

Please contact us to discuss these options further.



A community mural under the High Street Canal Bridge

## How to become an AYA Trustee?

If you would like to become a Trustee at AYA, we would be delighted to hear from you. Firstly, you would be invited for an informal interview with our Chair to discuss what you would like to get out of your time with AYA and what might be expected of you. If you wish to progress further you would be invited to join the other Trustees at a couple of our meetings, as a guest, to see how we operate. If at this point you are still interested we would introduce you to our staff at the AYA office and maybe you would like to come and visit one or two of our project sessions to see our young people volunteer.

If you decide to become an AYA Trustee you will be asked to sign a declaration of fit and proper persons then invited to a Meeting of the Trustee Board to be co-opted in.

### Links & Resources

Charity Commission:  
[www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)

AYA website:  
[www.aylesburyyouthaction.co.uk](http://www.aylesburyyouthaction.co.uk)

**For further information on becoming a Trustee  
at AYA please contact the office on:**

**Office:** 01296 421149

**Web:** [www.aylesburyyouthaction.co.uk](http://www.aylesburyyouthaction.co.uk)

**Email:** [volunteer@aylesburyyouthaction.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@aylesburyyouthaction.co.uk)



Young people at the Colour Rush

**Aylesbury Youth Action**  
Charity No. 1165882

