

# RURAL URBAN SYNTHESIS SOCIETY

## Secretary Role Description and Application Information December 2019

The Rural Urban Synthesis Society (RUSS) is seeking a volunteer Secretary to sit on the board of Trustees and support the organisation through an exciting time of growth and development.

RUSS is a Community Land Trust based in south-east London. We are an innovative volunteer-led organisation that has embarked on an exciting journey to build a sustainable community of self-built, permanently affordable homes in Lewisham. Planning permission has been secured and work on site will commence in 2019.

We currently have a board of voluntary Trustees who meet every six weeks, and over 800 members. Read more about [RUSS on our website](#).

### Trustee diversity

We're keen to maintain a diverse board that is representative of our local community, and welcome applications from any sections of society underrepresented on the board (see our [current Trustees](#) here).

### Governance

We are a Community Benefit Society, registered with the Financial conduct authority (FCA) operating under charitable purposes with a set of governing [rules](#) (instead of the Articles most commonly used for companies).

## Purpose of the role

The Secretary supports the board in ensuring that meetings, appointments, and the finances of the organisation are run effectively and in accordance with the governing document. The Secretary will be supported in these duties by the Operations Director and (subject to successful appointment) a part-time Administration and Finance Officer.

## Duties

### Ongoing

- Arranging and minuting board meetings
  - Agreeing the agenda for Board meetings with the Chair and Operations Director
  - Ensuring pre and post-meeting documentation is sent out in good time
- Completing assigned actions from board meetings

- Ensuring that Trustees and members are aware how the powers and duties of the governing document affect decision-making and the impact of any new legislation on the organisation

### **Annually**

- Completing the annual FCA return (including the accounts and annual returns) within 7 months of the financial year-end (which is 31<sup>st</sup> December)
- Keeping the FCA up-to-date with changes to board make-up
- Ensuring insurance and legislative requirements (e.g. HMRC, pensions regulator, GDPR) are fulfilled
- Arranging and minuting Annual General Meetings and any subcommittees (agreeing agenda for Board meetings with the Chair)

### **As required**

- Attendance at members' and residents' meetings
- Ensuring the correct appointment of Trustees
- Coordinating the appointment of new staff
- Developing new policies and procedures
- Ensuring the Terms of Reference for sub-committees are fit-for-purpose
- Organising and attending board 'away days' (once or twice per year)

The [Charity Commission website](#) has more information about the statutory duties of a Trustee. All Trustees are expected to be eligible to act as a Trustee and will be required to sign the [automatic disqualification declaration](#). RUSS has Directors and Officers' Liability Insurance through its membership of the Community Land Trust Network.

All new Trustees will receive a full induction to the organisation.

### **Minimum time commitment**

Whilst we'll aim to tailor your involvement around your capacity and availability, you must be available to commit to attending the majority of board meetings (which take place every six weeks), board 'away days' (max two per year), and one members' meeting each quarter. You'll also need to undertake some tasks between meetings. RUSS Meetings are held during evenings and weekends and take place in a variety of venues across Lewisham (including the [pioneering self-build development at Walters' Way](#)).

It is advised that becoming familiar with the future residents for our Church Grove project will be beneficial. The Secretary may attend the Residents' Meetings, which are held monthly.

### **Remuneration**

There is no financial remuneration for Trustees, although reasonable travel and other expenses can be claimed.

### **How to apply**

Email [Kwame@theruss.org](mailto:Kwame@theruss.org) telling us why you're interested in becoming a Trustee and what you will bring to RUSS (in no more than 300 words). Please attach a copy of your most recent CV. The deadline is **Friday 11 January 2019**.

*RUSS is a registered charity in England & Wales: XT18342 and an Industrial and Provident Society for the Benefit of the Community: 30624R*  
[www.theruss.org/about](http://www.theruss.org/about)