

RUSS BOARD NOMINATIONS 2019

Beatrice Barleon

For me a house is a home, and being part of a community, and having a home is one of the most important things in a person's life. Unfortunately, the UK, and particularly London, has quite a dysfunctional attitude to housing, leaving many struggling to find a home. I think that it is a critical time for new approaches to the housing crisis in London and I see Community Land Trusts as an exciting way forward. I would therefore be really honoured to be involved in what is an exciting community-led project with a big vision. Apart from my enthusiasm for the organisation and what it hopes to achieve, I can also bring over 10 years of experience working in the policy and public affairs environment to the role. In those 10 years I have worked amongst other things on housing related policy, with one of my proudest moments in my campaigning career being a U-turn by Government regarding funding for supported housing. Part of my role is stakeholder engagement, developing communication, influencing and organisational strategies, as well as project management, and I believe and hope that these are skills that could be useful in the context of the work that RUSS is doing. Furthermore, I have experience in leading local community projects, having set up and run a local resident association, with the aim to improve the physical environment in which people live, and to encourage greater involvement in local decision-making. As the organisation's chair, I established good links with local decision-makers and managed to secure funding for the regeneration of a local park. During this time, I developed an understanding of how to get people of different walks of life to work together and I hope that this might also be a useful skill I can bring to the role.

Gillian Cooper

I would be privileged to support RUSS towards its vision and principles. It is an inspiring model for sustainability that tackles an enormous problem for Londoners and provides an alternative to dominant real estate capitalism. I am a Lewisham resident of six years, a Londoner of 13 years and a dual UK and Trinidad and Tobago national. Both my children have been through schooling in Lewisham and I am keen to get involved in community projects as they come to the end of their secondary school life and I can make more time outside my full-time work.

I have worked in support of civil society and citizen-led projects for over 20 years. My skills, experience and strong interests are in environmental justice and participatory processes. Through my years of work in capacity development of environmental, community advancement and advocacy organisations in the Caribbean, in other Commonwealth countries and in urban regeneration in Stepney, London, I believe that I can bring the following skills and values:

- Designing and facilitating participatory decision-making processes – involving grassroots and responsible authorities
- Designing learning workshops bringing together projects with common mission and purpose to share skills and ideas
- Organisational development and senior leadership experience including fundraising, proposal writing, board strengthening, organisational policies and procedures
- Communications strategy development, clear writing and editing experience
- Love of Lewisham, it's cultural and racial mix, and an interest to identify and encourage community 'change agents' and leaders.
- Keen interest in climate change activism, the Green New Deal and Green Industrial Revolution campaigns.

Courtney Redd

I would like to stay on as a trustee of RUSS because I believe in building communities, and through RUSS I can make a small contribution toward enriching Lewisham (and hopefully other communities in the future). Through meeting some of the residents, I also want to be a part of delivering Church Grove to alleviate some of the housing pressures that affect the individuals and families. Finally, I have really enjoyed using my bookkeeping and financial skills to keep things a bit more in order for RUSS.

Colette Snape

I am interested in becoming a RUSS trustee for several reasons. I am enthusiastic about RUSS' ambition to create sustainable community-led neighbourhoods and affordable homes across London. This is because I feel the housing crisis is an issue that has particularly affected my generation. I am from the rural north west of England, and see a similar impact upon local villages. Young people are unable to buy properties in the area due to individuals from other areas investing in properties as holiday homes. I plan to remain in London for at least a year, and during this time I want to learn all I can from the RUSS project and its aims to create environmentally friendly, and community focused housing that remains affordable. In the future I would like to establish a similar project in Lancashire and Cumbria to help prevent communities and families being pushed a part by unaffordable living situations. In terms of the experience that I can bring to the board, I believe I could help in a number of ways. I have a Graduate Diploma in Law, for which I studied land, contract and trust law and I have a good understanding of each of these areas. I would therefore be happy to liaise with solicitors on behalf the trust. Further, from my extensive studies I have become adept in research and presentation giving and would be happy to help with RUSS' community outreach meetings and events. I also have some knowledge of the construction field, being a shareholder for my family's company, Conlon Construction. I attend annual general meetings where projects are discussed, and I feel confident that I could contribute ideas to future development plans. I also have multiple familial contacts in the construction industry from whom i can seek advice, including my dad.

Ethan Williams

In my professional role as a researcher at a healthcare think-tank, my work focusses on understanding and developing policy around the social determinants of health and wellbeing. In particular, I explore the ways in which local government, the NHS and the third sector can work together across housing, the built environment, and asset-based community development in order to benefit the populations they serve. I'm drawn to RUSS as an organisation that is carrying out innovative, inspirational work in this area: creating affordable, sustainable homes, through a process and design that builds community ties between both residents and the wider community.

Two elements of my work that I would be eager to connect to RUSS are my professional network and my experience in innovation spread. Through chairing events at conferences and carrying out partnership projects, I am in a strong position to connect RUSS with organisations and leaders across the health, local government and third sectors (for example, this summer I'll be working with the Young Foundation, MHCLG and York University Centre for Housing Policy). This presents an opportunity to bolster RUSS's public profile, secure support from a diverse set of sources, and engage in partnership work across a range of sectors, such as with NHS organisations through social prescribing.

Much of my research, events and consultancy work involves assessing opportunities for innovation and spreading best practice across organisations. I'm keen to contribute to ongoing analysis and sharing of RUSS's model and the learning that emerges from its projects, both through written outputs and events, as well as to organise public events that contribute to RUSS's wider mission.

I'm diligent and enthusiastic, with experience of strategic thinking both as a management consultant at the Good Governance Institute and as part of the team developing the King's Fund's 2020-2025 strategy.