



Brass Bands
England



Treasurer & Trustee

Recruitment Pack

Deadline: 9am Monday 28th July



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

We're recruiting a Treasurer to join our board of trustees

Brass Bands England (BBE) is seeking motivated and dynamic individuals who are passionate about brass banding's future.

We are particularly interested in individuals with experience in **finance, accounting** or **strategic financial oversight**—especially those who can support effective financial governance and bring clarity to complex financial matters. As with all our trustees, we value your perspective and lived experience to help shape the future of this forward-thinking charity. Past experience or knowledge of the brass banding sector is not a requirement.

About BBE

Brass Bands England is a national registered charity and membership organisation representing over 600 brass bands. More than 30,000 people of all ages and backgrounds participate on at least a weekly basis in this friendly, healthy and artistic pastime.

Our charity educates the public on the importance and value of brass bands, and promotes good practice in performance. We engage with a wide range of partners in strategic and operational ways to help share the fun, challenges and rewards of being involved with a brass band. We are a voice for all brass bands and their players and extol the life-enhancing virtues of this important art form.

Information for Candidates

Over the past five years, Brass Bands England has undergone a structural and operational transformation. Funding from Arts Council England (ACE) has enabled the organisation to make dynamic new appointments, including a new Chief Executive Officer. This appointment, along with the recruitment of new and appropriately skilled trustees, has delivered in-depth understanding and a strategic vision to develop and sustain this vital part of our cultural heritage.

This new structure has overseen growth of our membership base by 175%, turnover by 150% and the development of new income streams from safeguarding training and artistic/player development courses. In addition to ACE core funding (confirmed until 2026) we received three grants totalling £321,000 from ACE Culture Recovery Fund to help us adapt to the significant challenges resulting from COVID and to pioneer a new initiative: Brass Foundations, a pilot programme aimed at significantly improving diversity, access and inclusivity of disadvantaged children and young people as players in bands.

Why become a trustee?

As a trustee, you can make meaningful change to a sector you are passionate about and gain valuable experience in how charities are run and developed. Being actively involved in discussions and visioning about future projects, directly contributing to BBE's work, offers valuable transferable skills for future employment. BBE has two Young Trustees on its board currently, and applications from those under the age of 30, and from other under-represented groups would be welcomed.

About our trustee board

Our trustees understand their shared responsibility for governing BBE and take it seriously. We do our best to ensure BBE is led, managed and run well, based on our vision, our values and ambitions. Trustees help to maintain the health of the organisation, as well as shaping its future. This involves the creation and delivery of strategy, ensuring that the everyday business is properly conducted and carefully developing our understanding and delivery of the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion. We check that these are embodied in our work. Everyone on the Board knows that they have a personal obligation to act with care, making good use of their skills and experience, as well as listening to and learning from colleagues. We all commit to give sufficient time, energy and thought to the role, using networks and contacts to advocate for brass bands and their value, as well as the services of BBE.

Boards work best when a wide range of complementary skills and experience is represented. We have focused hard to achieve this. Our board brings strategic experience and knowledge from many areas - business, the voluntary sector, legal, education, financial, technology and project management.

[Find out more about the Board.](#)

About our staff

Our staff team is small, dedicated and high quality. Whilst understanding the realities of roles, boundaries and other commitments, staff and trustees frequently work together on policies and projects, events and resources. We find this way of working to be positively challenging, stimulating, often fun and highly productive, with much mutual learning.

[Find out more about the staff team.](#)



Conversations with our Chair of the Board of trustees

Our Chair, Mike Kilroy, shares his thoughts and insights on BBE in a recent conversation with our Finance & HR Manager.

Why did you become Chair of BBE?

Generally, brass band organisations were run by people with little experience as performers. Many had a good insight into the process, but not necessarily a 360 degree view. I always found this very frustrating and felt that there was nothing I could do about it. Almost all of banding organisation seemed to be about competitions - with a series of rules all inherited from the mid 1800s. In banding, we were still bound by these Victorian rules and values.

In early 2013, British Bandsman magazine brought what was then the British Federation of Brass Bands (BFBB - the precursor to BBE) to my attention. BFBB ran the English National Championships and the National Registry, but due to personnel and governance issues were facing the toughest period in their existence. I was asked to get involved to look at how to resolve it and was soon asked to take on the Chair. I thought, 'wouldn't it be fabulous if there was an organisation that can be more valuable to people directly - not one that's just about rules, but a proper support organisation.' I set about trying to understand what the organisation was and what it did, where it sat within the brass band landscape and what it could become. From being in business since the age of 21, I know that a clear vision and strategy is important to survive and grow. I brought that thinking to BBE. It was hugely important that it was not about what BBE can do for me, but about how we, as trustees, could guide this organisation for the benefit of everybody else.

Has anything frustrated you?

There was plenty of resistance to change, but I was used to that as I had bought businesses and taken them over previously. What I found more frustrating was the embedded culture of entitlement of some people involved. It's always difficult to shift fixed attitudes and there were some that were stuck like glue. My catchphrase at every board meeting was, 'how is this decision about everyone else?' and it really irritated some people! Out of that came our mission - Better Banding for All. In 2018, I was asked if I wanted to have a celebration for 50 years of BBE. I said 'no', as it hadn't achieved anything truly meaningful in the wider banding sense in those 50 years. It hadn't managed to instigate change for the better for participants, audiences and stakeholders, That's what we still needed to do.

I think of organisations as being surrounded by supply chains, staff, regional economies etc. We weren't making an impact back then, or even having a ripple effect, but we are now. The brass band environment is stronger. Arts Council England has seen this, the Department for Education has seen this, and we're now broadening our reach all the time. I could see the potential of it all back then, but it took four years to see what changes were needed. We even tried to scale up one-to-one delivery, but in 2016 we decided to change it completely. We took some time to dream up what today's brass band would look like, which meant BBE moving from a volunteer-led charity, which could only work when they had time, into a professional organisation. We've now flipped over into that professional organisation that provides members' services 5-7 days a week.

What has surprised or delighted you?

What's surprised me is that, outside of our immediate sector, people have welcomed BBE in so readily. Other organisations outside of brass bands, like Arts Council England, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Welsh Assembly etc. What has also pleased me is that, after 50 years of relatively little achievement, the brass band community isn't more suspicious and cynical.

I'm delighted with the growth of the organisation. The commitment and excellence of staff is a dream come true. I have managed lots of people, so can observe where tensions arise, and there's very little of that at BBE. It astonishes me that the team pulls together so well to achieve whatever the goal is - like the European Brass Band Festival in 2022. I'm delighted too by the wide variety of projects BBE runs, the value that we bring into the banding community, and the uptake of growth in membership.

Our members will hopefully realise they are part of the biggest single group in brass bands there has ever been and that they have a lot of power. At the moment, many choose not to use it by voting at the AGM or coming to our annual conference in the numbers they could, but there is scope for a truly democratic brass band sector that can self-determine. I grew up in bands where you were told what to do and had no influence. In the next 5-10 years, hopefully this will change. I'd love to see members take up the opportunity to have more of a say in what happens.

What changes are you keen to see through next?

I'd like to see diversity increase in banding. In 2020, we set out Challenge 2030 to do just that. In my view, we generally don't represent our country's society properly. It's such a shame as there is so much latent talent that is waiting to be tapped into - creative ideas, new music, great players, cultural excellence, new approaches. We've focussed on playing marches, overtures and hymn tunes for too long. When you look at what you could be doing, musically and culturally, brass bands can appeal to many more people.

In history, banding was all about giving the workers something creative to do whilst being an outlet for bands to be the 'jukebox' of the day. We've become more insular though, driving ourselves into a situation where we're isolated. My hope is that we can open the door to different people from different backgrounds and reap the benefit of their input, just as they reap the rewards of banding.

The other change I like to see is that major events consider players first and foremost. They are the stars of the show, but behind the scenes it can be more like a cattle market. I would like this to be different. I want it to be such that whoever you are, you walk through the door of any concert hall and feel like you belong. It's there for you and you're part and parcel of the event.

I'd also like to make sure the audience is not short changed. Bands tend to pick programmes from their view, not from that of the audience. Programmes need more consideration and careful thought. Traditional competitions that have been running for many years have managed to survive through tradition and habit. The signs are that audiences are turning their back on it, though, and there's no atmosphere at some of the bigger events. Like a struggling patient, it needs surgery if it's going to survive.

And looking to the future....?

It's going to take a collective effort, including a lot of new ideas and input from people who are not bound by tradition and heritage - the two concrete traditions moulded around brass bands' feet - to change banding. By way of example, the first piece ever played aged 16 at C.W.S. (Manchester) was Little Suite for Brass by Malcolm Arnold. I joined Brighouse and Rastrick Band 30 years later, and guess what the first piece I played with them was? Little Suite for Brass, again, all those years later. I felt I'd give anything to play something new and exciting.

What I love the most is seeing organisations flourish. It's about the collective. We need to think outside of our own boundaries. The BBE Board's strength has also delighted me. I do find it challenging, but that's the point! I always think it's important to find people who are better than you at what they do, as that makes us collectively stronger. I know I'm not irreplaceable. I'm reminded of a sign on the wall at Black Dyke Band, where I used to help out - 'If you think you're irreplaceable, put your hand in a bucket of water, take it out and see where the hole is.' All you can really do is your best, then hopefully someone will come along and do it even better!



The Role of Treasurer

Purpose

The Treasurer will lead the trustees in the oversight of the charity's strategic financial management. While all trustees are collectively responsible for the management of the charity's resources, the Treasurer will act as the lead trustee in articulating the financial governance of the organisation and will play an active role in ensuring that all trustees are fully able to understand the charity's financial arrangements and contribute to financial discussion and decisions.

Commitment

You will be expected to attend four online meetings a year in September, December, March and June. Meetings usually last around two hours. In preparation for the meeting, we would expect you to have read papers which will be sent out in advance.

In addition to board meetings, the role of Treasurer will require a further commitment of approximately 2 – 4 online zoom meetings per month, likely to last approximately an hour at a time. This time may be spent on activities such as reviewing financial reports, liaising with staff or fellow trustees, supporting the development of financial strategy, and ensuring the charity maintains strong financial controls and compliance.

Specific responsibilities

In addition to your responsibilities as a trustee, you will be responsible for:

- Overseeing and presenting budgets, accounts, management accounts and financial statements to the board of trustees after discussion with the Chief Finance Officer (CFO), where applicable;
- Ensuring that proper accounts and records are kept, ensuring financial resources are expended and invested in line with charity policy, good governance, legal and regulatory requirements.
- Being instrumental in the development and implementation of financial, reserves and investment policies;
- Liaising, where applicable, with the CFO or other appropriate member of staff responsible for the financial activities of the organisation;
- Chairing any finance committee in line with standing orders and terms of reference, and reporting back to the board of trustees;
- Liaising with the charity's auditors or independent examiner, where appropriate;
- Monitoring and advising on the financial viability of the charity after liaising with the charity's auditors;
- Creating, in liaison with the CFO, sound financial instruments for the control of charity assets;
- Implementing and monitoring specific financial controls and systems and ensuring that they are adhered to;
- Advising on the financial implications of the charity's strategic plan;
- Liaising with the CFO to ensure that the charity's annual accounts are compliant with the current Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice);
- Where the charity has an internal audit function, the treasurer will be required to work closely with the internal audit team and any committee of the board of trustees;
- When necessary, acting as a counter signatory on charity cheques (including any electronic transactions) and any applications for funds;
- Maintaining sound financial management of the charity's resources, ensuring expenditure is in line with the charity's objects;
- Contributing to the fundraising strategy of the organisation and helping to ensure that fundraising targets are aligned to the overall purpose of the charity and its agreed strategy; and
- Providing leadership and support to the CFO, where appropriate. Qualities and Characteristics

You will have the following qualities:

- A strategic and inclusive leader, able to create change and deliver development;
- A confident facilitative approach, able to work with the Board, the Chief Executive and the CFO to deliver everyday business as well as strategic progress;
- Open minded and curious, an effective communicator;
- Strong business and financial acumen;
- A good understanding of financial management and accounting;
- An understanding of and commitment to EDI. Comfortable with an anti-discriminatory approach personally, as well as in an organisation striving to behave in that way;
- Familiarity with the charity and voluntary sector world, prepared to be an ambassador for BBE;
- Credible personal capacity to commit sufficient quality time, to be able to attend between 2 to 4 online meetings each month in addition to the quarterly board meetings;

You may also have one or more of these characteristics:

- Relationship building and stakeholder management skills;
- Communication skills, able to articulate complex situations and problems to non-finance people;
- The propensity to learn with an innate curiosity;
- Risk tolerance and change resilience, with a willingness to embrace change;
- Enthusiasm, personal drive, action-focussed and results-oriented.

How do I apply?





Application is by this [application form](#). You will need to provide a CV and a covering letter which describes why you feel you are suitable for the position, and why you feel your skills and experience would be of benefit to BBE.

If you require an alternative method of application i.e. a short video answering the questions, we can accommodate this.

Timeline

The deadline for applications is **9am on Monday 28th July** with shortlisted candidates invited to attend an online interview on **Monday 18th August**.

www.bbe.org.uk

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