

VICTORIA HALL

CHAIR OF TRUSTEES, THE FOUNDRY SHEFFIELD

INFORMATION PACK



Background information

INTRODUCTION

In my eight years as Chair I have been privileged to serve alongside dedicated and talented staff and fellow trustees. I joined a fledging organisation which had just taken on responsibility for a historic venue with an uncertain future. As I prepare to retire, I look back on a period of remarkable growth and renewal. Today Victoria Hall is home to a flourishing ecosystem of charities and community organisations. We are starting to grow our reputation as a venue for events and conferences. And the Methodist congregation who entrusted their building to us are pioneering new forms of city centre church and chaplaincy.

And yet now is not the time to be complacent. A cost of living crisis combined with a rapidly evolving city centre mean that The Foundry Sheffield must continue to be bold, adaptable and purpose-driven. If you are passionate about the heart of our city and inspired by the challenge of leading a strong team into a new chapter, then I encourage you to read this information pack and get in touch.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "r. borkett", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Rev Phill Borkett



ABOUT US

Since 2015, The Foundry Sheffield CIO has been responsible for the historic Grade II Victoria Hall Methodist Church premises, in Sheffield's city centre. During this time it has begun an extensive programme of renovations, opened the building up to many more people, and set a path towards a sustainable and purposeful future.

Victoria Hall has always been a place of Methodist worship in the city, and this continues to this day. Typical of a Methodist "central hall", it was designed as a concert venue, with numerous rooms for other activities, and acted as centre of mission and social action from its opening in 1907: "a church at the heart of the city, with the city at its heart". It has since been sympathetically remodelled to remain relevant to changing needs and contexts. Under The Foundry Sheffield's stewardship we have maintained the widely recognised and respected public facing identity of Victoria Hall.

Today we provide a home for a community of charities and organisations including Age Active, Assist, Urban Theology Union, DAB Music, The Samaritans, City of Sanctuary and The Sunday Centre. Victoria Hall remains home to active Methodist and other churches.

Built almost 20 years before Sheffield's City Hall, Victoria Hall also has a history as the main city centre concert venue. We are proud to be home to Sheffield Philharmonic Orchestra, and to host a range of musical events throughout the year. In 2022 we replaced the fixed 1960's cinema style seating in our Main Hall with flexible seating, a first step towards our ambition to significantly increase use of this magnificent space for concerts, conferences and other events. A range of smaller rooms and halls allow us to cater for groups from a handful up to 450. Over 1,500 people visit our premises each week.

The Foundry Sheffield is governed by a small and highly collaborative team of trustees, some appointed by local Methodist bodies and some co-opted directly by the board. The board of trustees are a friendly and positive team who willingly work together to steer the charity in the right direction, working with a small staff team of nine and our committed volunteers, keeping the building open 7 days a week 360 days a year.

OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES

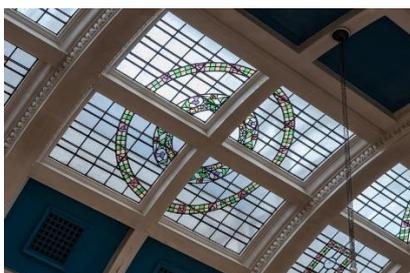
The Foundry Sheffield CIO was created by the Methodist church to bring together the expertise and clarity of purpose necessary for Victoria Hall to continue to flourish for the people of Sheffield, without bias, in an ever changing world. We maintain a close working relationship with the Methodist Church, supporting the church in advancing its mission, but intentionally welcome, and work for the collective good of all people without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, age, race or of political, religious, or other opinion, in the heart of our multicultural city.

Our core values are to:

- Provide a safe space with good, accessible facilities
- Prioritise people suffering from economic or other marginalisation
- Model positive and respectful relationships with our partners, leaseholders, licensees, stakeholders and clients
- Provide a high standard of hospitality and welcome

During our first decade we have grown our staff team, created policies and procedures to underpin our activities, built new partnerships, increased use of our building, tackled a maintenance backlog and begun a programme of proactive venue enhancements. We now have diversified income streams from shop units, major events and conferences, regular and occasional room bookings and office tenants, supplemented by grants.

We have ambitious plans to continue to redevelop Victoria Hall, making it viable and fit for purpose for years to come. Having survived the coronavirus pandemic, we are alert to the multiple pressures the cost of living crisis will place on the charities we host and us as an organisation. We will need to be strategically nimble to adapt to the changing face of Sheffield's city centre, and networked to foster new partnerships.



Being our Chair of Trustees

TIME COMMITMENT

- Preparation for and attendance at six board meetings per year. Our board currently meet face to face during the working day, but we have always been flexible to adapt to the accessibility needs of our trustees, including use of video conferencing technology.
- Membership of some of our board subcommittees, subject to needs and specific expertise. (We currently have HR, Buildings and Health & Safety subcommittees, each meeting twice per year. The Chair would not be expected to be a member of all subcommittees)
- Meeting with Organisation Manager for support and oversight each month, plus additional ad hoc mentoring and support as required.
- Ad hoc conversations with fellow trustees as required.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

- With the board and management, define and oversee The Foundry Sheffield's strategic direction and plans
- Hold an overview of The Foundry Sheffield's compliance with its charitable and legal obligations, including its ongoing relationship with the Methodist Church
- With the trustees, maintain a clear grasp of the The Foundry Sheffield's financial position
- Convene and chair board meetings, in consultation with the Organisation Manager
- Be a mentor and critical friend for the Organisation Manager
- Be an advocate for Victoria Hall/ The Foundry Sheffield amongst key stakeholders
- Act as the final reviewer/ adjudicator for grievance and disciplinary matters
- Speak on behalf of Victoria Hall/ The Foundry Sheffield on relevant occasions
- Support board members individually as appropriate
- Ensure relevant training is made available for trustees, in consultation with the Organisation Manager
- Maintain an overview of Board composition, lengths of service and trustee recruitment

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- Bringing a collegiate approach as chair, acting as a first amongst equals
- Experience of strategic oversight, charity governance and senior leadership
- Strong inter-personal skills, capable of relating well to a broad range of stakeholders
- Committed to developing the mission of The Foundry Sheffield
- Having a good understanding of and aligned to the ethos and aims of the Methodist Church of Great Britain

HOW TO APPLY

For an informal conversation about becoming our Chair, contact Phill Borkett revphillb@outlook.com

If you wish to be formally considered for this role please submit a letter explaining why you are interested, what experience you bring, any adaptations we may need to make to the role to make it accessible for you, and listing two people who can act as referees for you to Rose Durant, Organisation Manager rose@victoriahallsheffield.org / 0114 272 1749 by 1st February 2023.

Shortlisted applicants will be given an opportunity to meet members of our staff team and our trustees through a series of structured conversations so that you and we can make the best possible decision in this important step for Victoria Hall.

Our new Chair will initially become a trustee and, following a phased handover, will formally take on the role of Chair when Phill Borkett, our current Chair, retires this summer. A full induction will be provided.

