

Lancaster District CVS – AGM 20 February 2026

Election of trustees – personal statements

Ali Richards (re-election)

As a nurse I have excellent communication skills and this enables me to teach and facilitate other nurses and health professionals at the University of Cumbria where I currently work. During my eight-year stint as a board member of the Royal College of Nursing I gained experience in contributing to the governance of the organisation as well as working on sub-committees. I also bring previous board experience from two organisations in the third sector, including as a communications director for a charity in North Yorkshire. I mentored Chief Executives of various charities and businesses in the charity sector during my time with a CIC in Blackburn called Community and Business Partners. I have also worked as chair of a board of governors of a primary school and worked on a variety of co created and collaborative networks looking at areas such as research into diverse leadership and consulting in mental health organisations.

I pride myself on my attention to valuing diversity and the contribution of communities. Community organisations should expect trustees to be honest brokers between the organisation and the community and to work collaboratively and in partnership with all stakeholders in the organisation. I am a firm believer that every community has the ability to address its own issues and needs given enough support.

I've really enjoyed being a trustee of LDCVS, including chairing the Leadership & Government Sub-committee, working on policies and compliance. I especially enjoy getting to work with the amazing staff and understanding more about my local community. I was blown away by co-hosting the Volunteer Awards in 2025 which made me so proud to live in such a caring and supportive community.

Anthony Murray (re-election)

I've been a trustee of Lancaster District CVS since 2023 and I'm standing for re-election because I really believe in the work CVS does to support local voluntary and community groups. I've also been part of the Governance Committee, helping with policies, governance and oversight.

In my day job, I'm a director at Specialist Care Team, a social care provider based in Morecambe. We're part of the local community and work closely with many CVS members to support people across the district. That gives me a practical, grounded view of how voluntary, community and statutory organisations work together – and the challenges involved in delivering real outcomes for people on the ground.

Earlier in my career, I spent many years working in the co-operative and voluntary sector, including as editor of Co-operative News, with a focus on engagement, accountability and clear communication.

As a trustee, I try to be practical, prepared and easy to work with. I care about good governance, long-term sustainability and making sure CVS continues to be a trusted, useful support for local groups.

I've really enjoyed being involved with CVS and, if re-elected, would be very happy to continue giving my time and experience.

Roda Ogunpehin (co-opted since the last AGM)

I am an inclusion and organisational culture consultant with over 23 years of experience working across the public, private and voluntary sectors. My professional background includes roles within the UK Civil Service and JP Morgan, where I developed strong experience in governance, risk, stakeholder engagement and organisational change.

I am the founder of RQ Consult, where I work with organisations to build inclusive, practical and sustainable ways of working. My work focuses on ensuring that people from all backgrounds feel seen, supported and able to thrive, particularly those who are often underrepresented or excluded. This includes supporting charities, community organisations and small businesses to strengthen their leadership, policies and impact.

I am also the author of *Not Too Small for Inclusion*, a practical guide to diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The book draws on real experiences and provides clear, accessible guidance for leaders and organisations, reinforcing my belief that inclusion should be embedded in everyday practice rather than treated as a tick box exercise.

Alongside my professional work, I have a strong commitment to communities and volunteering. I am passionate about the role of the voluntary and community sector in reducing inequality, strengthening local networks and supporting people at key moments in their lives. I bring a clear understanding of how governance, strategy and accountability can enable organisations to deliver meaningful outcomes for the communities they serve.

I have experience supporting boards and senior leaders to make informed, values-led decisions, and I am comfortable working with complex issues while keeping people and purpose at the centre. I am particularly interested in ensuring that community voices are heard, that services remain accessible and that organisations are supported to be inclusive, sustainable and future focused.

I am standing for election as a Trustee because I believe in the vital role Lancaster District CVS plays in supporting voluntary organisations, volunteers and communities across the district. I would welcome the opportunity to contribute my skills, experience and commitment to help strengthen the organisation's work and ensure it continues to make a positive and lasting difference.