



Online Conversations with the Third Sector: Sustainability

During our Roadshows in 2022, sustainability was identified as one of the most important themes third sector organisations wanted assistance with.

Our third Online Conversation with the Third Sector, therefore, was dedicated to that theme.

While there is no agreed definition, it can be understood as persevering and being able to continue the core work of an organisation, even if an element of sustainability is withdrawn. This includes need and demand, people, materials,

or project planning. Sustainability is secure finance and funding by strategically planning ahead, while allowing the organisation space to be reactive when required. It allows your organisation to continue working effectively towards achieving your organisational vision.

During the session, key speakers presented on the theme of sustainability for organisations, boards, and communities. Based on this information, we present the emerging themes that arose during our key speakers' sessions.

Emerging Themes

- Organisations need to be able to respond to change quickly. Learn to be adaptable. Focus on core purpose and structure. Diversified activity doesn't necessarily mean reduced risk.
- Sustainability does not mean self - sustaining. Invest in capacity building.
- When inviting young people on your Board be open to change and adapt to young people's working pattern. Be ready to make changes.
- Including young people on boards should be meaningful and not tokenistic.
- When sustaining your Board, produce a robust induction programme, think about succession planning, and invest in skills and development.
- Invest in local leadership, have knowledge, and understanding of the community, invest, and develop in partnerships and collaborative practice.
- Expand knowledge of national policies/funding opportunities.
- Ensure the voice of communities is listened to and value the contribution of all community groups/residents.



Participation Findings: We listen to understand

What type of leadership approach is used in your organisation and what can TSDG do to support you?

The results from this poll highlighted that there is a variety of different leadership approaches used in the region. Most commonly, there appears to be collective board leadership, with either a hierarchical structure of a Chief Executive, managers and officer roles, and also a flat structure where staff were directly accountable to the board. It is important to consider structures, as these can have an impact on planning for future sustainability of your organisation. For example, how you upskill your staff and allow for progression and build capacity within the organisation.

TSDG support third sector organisations with effective leadership. We would recommend reaching out and discussing this with one of our skilled engagement officers. We can support with training or with sustainability and succession planning, as well as support with a variety of other good governance practices.

What is your current focus/challenge in establishing board sustainability?

The current challenges within the sector are achieving diversity on boards, board recruitment, and board ownership of future continuing professional development and training within the role.

It was highlighted that TSDG could host

workshops for potential trustees to gain more knowledge about what a trustee is and what is expected of them in this role and the invaluable experience this can provide individuals.

What is your current focus/challenge in terms of organisational sustainability?

Revenue funding is a huge challenge due to the current financial climate. Furthermore, organisations are focussing on moving to net zero but rising heating costs and renting a building makes this difficult to achieve.

Event Feedback

I will pass this information on to my organisation.

It was very interesting and informative.

Thank you for an engaging session.



THIRD SECTOR
Dumfries and Galloway

Takeaway Fact Sheet

Bitesize Workshops – Board Sustainability

Considering sustainability to ensure that your organisation runs effectively should be high on your agenda as a trustee. Consider these steps to achieve a sustainable board:

As a trustee

- Ensure you understand your roles and responsibilities
- Read and understand your Governing Document
- Familiarise yourself with Good Governance Code
- Participate in meetings
- Engage with decision-making process
- Attend training/learning
- Ensure collective responsibility

As a board

- Trustee role description
- Induction pathway for trustees
- Mission statement and Vision statement
- Robust policies and procedures
- Organisational values
- Business plan
- Funding strategy
- Reviewing governing document every 2-3 years

Useful Information

The Lasting Difference - Free guides and consultancy practice for sustaining non-profit organisations - www.thelastingdifference.com

SCVO - How good is your organisation's governance? - governance.checkup.scot

Home Energy Scotland - Support with funding through Community and Renewable Energy Scheme - www.homeenergyscotland.org

DGLocator:

Download the free DGLocator mobile app for Apple at <https://apple.co/3BbTNs8> and Android at <https://bit.ly/dglocatorandroid>. Website: <https://dglocator.org.uk/>

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Third Sector, Dumfries and Galloway is the operating name of Dumfries and Galloway Third Sector Interface, a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC043832.