



# GCA BOARD INFORMATION PACK



## INTRODUCTION

**GCA** is a third sector volunteer led organisation which works with individuals, families and communities to promote health and wellbeing. We offer direct support for people to abstain from alcohol or reduce their alcohol consumption. We provide training, education and work with other agencies and communities to achieve our main aim of reducing harm caused by alcohol and drugs. We currently have over 60 volunteers and over 50 staff, all dedicated to the success of the agency.

## A SHORT HISTORY

GCA was established in 1965. It was the first council on alcohol of its kind in the UK and is the longest continuously operating. After some years, similar councils were founded in Aberdeen, Dundee and Edinburgh and GCA became the inspiration for a network of Local Councils on Alcohol (LCAs) formed across Scotland. Today, there are Councils on Alcohol located throughout Scotland with GCA still operating as the largest.

For the first ten years, every newcomer to GCA was counselled personally by the Director. After a few months they were passed on to groups of fellow 'recovering drinkers' run on the same lines as AA (Alcoholics Anonymous). The organisation was entirely volunteer based with funding largely derived from individual donations and contributions, with a very small contribution from the then Glasgow Corporation.

From the mid-1970s GCA experienced a gradual transformation in two areas.

A psychologist engaged by the Scottish Council on Alcohol (SCA) led the training in one-to-one counselling and, for the first time, the concept of 'controlled drinking' was introduced as an option alongside that of total abstinence. A national training scheme was developed to provide a consistent standard of training for volunteer counsellors in GCA and in all Councils on Alcohol in Scotland.

In the early 1980s, volunteers performed all the counselling and much of the funding was still by individual contributions and donations. In the mid-1980s, GCA became a company limited by guarantee and recognised as a charity and there were fifty-three voluntary counsellors deployed over several sites in the city. Throughout the 1980s, GCA steadily expanded its workforce of fully trained volunteer counsellors and the service began to diversify.

GCA developed a number of new services in different areas, including:

- Counselling services within Barlinnie prison
- A community-based drug advice and counselling service in Ruchill
- A project in Easterhouse which later became the Greater Easterhouse Alcohol Awareness Project (GEAAP) providing alcohol counselling, advice, and information as well as prevention and education work

- A Hostels Project, providing advice, information, and counselling work in the hostels for people who are homeless
- Counselling services in several GP surgeries

During this period, the profile of alcohol was much less than it is currently, with the focus of government attention being on illicit drugs. Alcohol was and still is regarded as an acceptable drug which is very much part of our culture.

All through the 1990s, the core counselling service expanded and significant steps were taken to ensure consistent quality. A full-time practice supervisor was employed to raise the level of professionalism among counsellors. In tandem with this, GCA took the decision to train all its volunteers to the Confederation of Scottish Counselling Agencies (COSCA) standards with the addition of a specialist course on Alcohol and Addictions (also now validated by COSCA). GCA employed counselling staff to deliver services alongside the volunteers.

GCA both augments and adds value to the range of addiction services within Glasgow and it looks forward to continuing to provide services for at least another 50 years to reduce alcohol problems in every section of the community of Greater Glasgow.

**GCA** uses its position to:

- ✓ Improve health and wellbeing
- ✓ Address inequalities in service provision and enable wider access to services
- ✓ Improve alcohol and drug education
- ✓ Work alongside partners in the provision of services and education
- ✓ Influence the social climate to reduce harmful alcohol consumption

**GCA** values and respects the diversity of people and understands that:

- ✓ Health is vital to individuals, families, communities and society
- ✓ Everyone has the right to live in safety
- ✓ Everyone has the right to be accepted and treated equally
- ✓ Everyone should have access to education, information and high quality confidential services
- ✓ Services should be client centred, respectful and non-judgemental
- ✓ their staff and volunteers do not exploit, oppress or cause physical or emotional harm to others

## OUR SERVICES

GCA's services are the key to enabling us to reach out to the communities in which we serve. Annually GCA reaches out to over 8000 individuals and families. We have developed a range of recovery focussed services designed to meet the needs of those affected by alcohol – related problems, these include:

- Alcohol Brief Interventions
- Young people service
- Counselling – one-to-one, relationship, younger people and family
- Employability Services
- Group Work programmes and workshops
- Community Justice Services

- Health improving activities such as food and nutrition, art and exercise
- Women's service

Our services have been commissioned and funded by a number of partners. We work with the Scottish Government, NHS greater Glasgow and Clyde, Glasgow City Council, Health and Social Care Partnership, Criminal Justice Social Work and Community Safety Glasgow. GCA generates income through our own fundraising activities which raises monies to support our service delivery.

GCA also income generate through the delivery of a variety of accredited training courses on:

- Integrated Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Alcohol and drug work
- Counselling skills
- Peer support skills
- Motivational interviewing
- Working with children and families
- Relationship counselling

We have a strong record of partnership working with a wide range of voluntary sector partners. GCA is the lead partner and chair of VSDAA (Voluntary Sector Drug and Alcohol Agencies) which is a Glasgow based third sector partnership which links directly to the ADP (Alcohol and Drug Partnership).

## MANAGEMENT SKILLS

There is a Board of Directors (trustees) whose wide and varied skill base includes voluntary sector management, finance, public relations, psychology, counselling and human resources. The Board delegates the day to day running of GCA to the Chief Executive Officer.

## DIRECTOR ROLE

Strengthen the organisation's ability to continue achieving its strategic objectives, plan for the future and provide robust leadership of the organisation.

GCA is a registered Scottish charity and a company limited by guarantee. Each Member of the Board is also a Director of the Company and has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that GCA is well managed and delivers its charitable objectives.

GCA values and promotes diversity and is keen to ensure its Board reflects the diversity of Scottish society. We are keen to attract people who can offer one or more of the following:

- Experience of change management / business transformation/strategy
- Expertise in commissioning/procurement of services
- Accountancy/financial management
- Human resource management
- Academic/research
- Therapeutic approaches
- Legal expertise

- Social media, marketing, digital marketing and PR
- Experience of working in a senior position with public health and social care agencies
- Expertise in the field of alcohol, drugs, addictions, criminal justice, homelessness

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIRECTORS

- Ensure that GCA complies with its articles of association, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensure that the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuit of its goals
- To work jointly with the other Trustees
- Safeguard GCA's good name and values
- Ensure effective and efficient administration of the GCA
- Ensure its financial stability
- Protect and manage GCA's property and ensure the proper stewardship of its funds
- Appoint the Chief Executive and monitor their performance
- Use any specific knowledge or experience they have to help the Board of Directors reach sound decisions. This will involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues and providing advice and guidance requested by the Board on new initiatives, or other issues relevant to the area of the company's work in which the director has special expertise
- To contribute actively to the board's role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets

### Collectively, the role of the Board is to:

- Ensure the continuing relevance of the mission
- Determine strategy
- Provide strategic leadership
- Ensure financial viability

## EXPECTATIONS OF DIRECTORS

GCA's Board of Directors is responsible for the overall determination of the strategic plan and organisational policy. Each member may serve for up to three years then must retire. Retiring Board members may put themselves forward for re-election to the Board for one further period of three years. There are a range of sub-committees, which have authority delegated from the Board e.g. Human Resources, Finance, Quality and Fund Raising and Public Relations.

### Trustees are expected to:

- Abide by the majority decisions of the Trustees acting as a body
- Bring to the attention of the Trustees any conflict of interest which might affect decisions, including financial or other interests in commercial or voluntary organisations, membership of other boards or committees, or employment
- Represent the organisation, as available, in attending events, visiting projects and speaking about the work of GCA
- Maintain confidentiality about any discussion among the Board, which relates to outside bodies, whether financial, commercial or voluntary

- Respond within a reasonable time to any communication from the Chair, from other Trustees or from the CEO
- Avoid involvement with detailed management decisions
- Avoid pursuance of personal agenda through membership of the Board or inappropriate relationships with management and staff
- Assist the organisation where appropriate by attracting potential income streams or helping to expand the organisation's support base
- Show appropriate respect to other Directors, staff, volunteers and users of the organisation

#### **What Trustees can expect from GCA:**

- Comprehensive induction process to understand the organisation, mission and values and insight into the operating environment
- Board papers distributed in advance of meetings
- A participative style of meeting where all are encouraged to contribute and listen
- Access to other Board members and Chief Executive Officer to help you to learn about the organisation and discuss ideas
- Access to training opportunities
- Ability to become involved in areas of special interest
- Opportunities for personal skills development through joint working

## **TIME COMMITMENT**

Directors are expected to attend and participate in the following:

- All Board meetings (Ten including one Annual General Meeting) per year
- An annual Board development day

## **SUB-COMMITTEES**

There are sub committees of the Board which each meet throughout the year. The sub-committees, which are subject to change, are:

- Quality
- Finance,
- Reputation
- People

Each sub-committee has at least one Board member, as well as staff and external experts. From time to time, Directors may also get involved in short life working groups to address organisational priorities.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Essential

Commitment to GCA's aims and objects

Ability to think strategically

Understanding of the challenges facing charities and the third sector

Ability to think creatively and challenge constructively

Ability to advocate on behalf of the organisation

Team working skills

Understanding of the duties/responsibilities involved in being a Director

Motivation to devote the time specified above

### Desirable

Understanding of the third Sector

Academia/Psychology/Counselling or Psychotherapy

Charity Law/Finance

Awareness of political environment

Experience on a charitable Board