**Transforming Governance Q+A**

The following document collates comments from the Transforming Governance Workshop - Overview of Governance for Charity Trustees.

### During the session, participants were asked to engage in a short breakout session to explore the Seven Deadly Sins’ of Boards, as listed below (*John Williams, Civil Society, 2016):*

* *No formal evaluation*
* *Lack of finite terms of office*
* *Not enough attention to sustainability and risk*
* *Skimping on recruitment*
* *Lack of engagement between meetings*
* *Lack of respect for SMT*
* *No investment in induction and training*

Participants were then posed the following questions:   
What challenges have you experienced or witnessed on your Boards?

Responses included:

* A lack of affordable board training and induction support.
* A common challenge for organisations was board recruitment, with limited opportunities to advertise affordable vacancies.
* A need to find better ways to engage board members between meetings, in order to not crowd board agendas. Engaging members can also be challenging when volunteer time is limited.
* Complexity around the demands placed upon ‘reluctant chairs’ and how to ensure good succession planning.
* Limited terms which, although they can help, also pose problems as recruiting new board members can be challenging.
* A challenge for many non-charities was in balancing the board vs executive team role. This can be particularly complex for founder-led organisations.
* A need to focus on board diversity and supporting colleagues. This is challenging when there is a lack of support in the sector and a lack of time to focus on diverse recruitment.

What could be improved or implemented to help?

* Free and low-cost resources should be provided to small organisations to support training, recruitment, and board diversity. Some examples include:
  + [Reach Volunteering](https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/), which enables charities to advertise vacancies for free.
  + [The Trustee Leadership Programme](https://cause4.co.uk/trustee-leadership-programme), which showcases new vacancies in a monthly newsletter for free.
  + [Trustees Unlimited](https://trustees-unlimited.co.uk/), which exists to help new Trustees join the boards of arts organisations. It also helps organisations find skilled individuals with valuable experience from diverse backgrounds.
  + Institute of Chartered Accountants, which offers a [free governance training programme](https://www.icaew.com/technical/charity-community/trustee-training-modules), providing an overview of the legal and financial responsibilities, and strategic and operational considerations.
* Ways to engage board members between meetings to ensure effective governance. Some examples of resources include:
  + [Nine ways](https://www.ibabs.com/en/board-management/ways-to-engage-board-members/) to engage board members and keep them in the loop.
  + Bays Business School – [Building Better Governance](https://www.bayes.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/632042/CCE_BBG_Effective_Board_Meetings-Sept2021.pdf).
* A key concern is ways to ensure successful succession planning. Some resources to guide this process include:
  + [Peridot](https://www.peridotpartners.co.uk/5-steps-to-creating-a-board-succession-plan/), 5 ways to creating a succession plan.
  + [OnBoard](https://www.onboardmeetings.com/blog/board-succession-planning-complete-guide/), Board succession planning: the complete guide.
* Ways to ensure effective governance in Community Interest Companies, including ensuring a balance between the board and executive, and embedding term limits. Useful resources include:
  + Office of the Regulator of Community Interest Companies: [Information and guidance notes.](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a81c409ed915d74e33fff0f/13-712-community-interest-companies-guidance-chapter-9-corporate-governance.pdf)
  + [Community Companies](https://www.communitycompanies.co.uk/community-interest-companies): Guide to Community Interest Companies.
  + [Community Companies](https://www.communitycompanies.co.uk/directors-as-company-employees#:~:text=A%20directorship%20is%20an%20office,the%20director%20becomes%20an%20employee.): Directors as Employees.
  + [Arts Council England](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Importance%20of%20Good%20Governance%20information%20sheet%20-%202023-26%20Investment%20Programme_.pdf): The importance of good governance.
  + [Bates Wells](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d53d643e5274a42d282e064/A_handbook_for_good_governance_in_starting_up_your_Mutual.pdf): Ready Set Governance.
* More information and guidance around ensuring board diversity and providing support to board members:
  + [Inclusive Boards](https://www.inclusiveboards.co.uk/): provides guidance, training, and resources to ensure effective board diversity.
  + [Young Trustees Movement](https://youngtrusteesmovement.org/): powered by The Social Change Agency offers free monthly training sessions and provides regular resources.
  + Arts Council England, [how to create diverse boards](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/How%20to%20create%20diverse%20boards_0.pdf): provides information on best practice and guidance on recruitment and support.