

Changing our world for the better
Project by project

FEL



Lead the change you want to see

Set the agenda for community action on climate change

FEL Trustee Brief

June 2024



Thank you for your interest in joining FEL as a new Trustee.

It's a fantastic organisation to be part of and I feel very privileged to have been Chair of our Trustee Board since 2020. We've come a long way in that time and helped thousands of people in dozens of communities make social and environmental change happen – project by project.

Whether they're getting more people moving sustainably with a loan from our pioneering Bike Library, seeding healthier and more equitable food systems by helping people grow their own produce, or supporting disadvantaged groups to make sure our projects leave no-one behind, FEL's great people are the experts in helping our communities and planet thrive.

The knowledge and networks we've built over 20 years are now helping us expand our influence and impact by bringing together people, communities, businesses and climate action groups in finding new and more powerful opportunities to create positive environmental change.

Our Trustees play an important role in setting FEL's strategic goals and in helping achieve them. We'd love you to bring your unique experience, expertise and qualities to our Board, so please do apply if you'd like to help set the agenda for community action on climate change.

It's a really rewarding role working with fantastic people in an organisation that's doing great work to help people live well, feel good and look after where they live. Join us now and help us do more of it.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Lynne McNaughton, Chair



Who we are

FEL is an environmental charity that's changing our world for the better, project by project.

We believe that powerful change can be simple to make.

And we design the collaborative social and environmental projects that deliver it – helping everyone take small steps to make their lives better and the world a healthier, happier, more sustainable place.

Our vision, mission and values

At FEL, we're driven by our vision of seeing people, their communities and our planet thriving.

To make that happen, we have a mission to show people how to make everyday changes that help them, their communities and the planet.

And everything we do is rooted in our values:

- We are **grounded and practical**:

Our projects are built on local knowledge and delivered with our sleeves rolled up.

- We are **creative and influential**:

We combine original thinking with practical understanding.

- We are **collaborative and connected**:

We support our partners, generate ideas and share our experience and expertise.

Above all, we don't tell anyone what to do. We show communities what's possible and help them figure out what works best for them. Then we work together to make positive change happen – for people and the planet.

How we do that is what makes our projects succeed:

- **We work in the real world**:

Our projects make 'the environment' meaningful by making it personal.



- **We live here too:**

We know the people and places we help, what they have and what they need.

- **We care about our communities:**

Our projects help people live well, feel good and look after where they live.

- **We speak your language:**

Climate change can be a complicated issue. The way we talk about it isn't.

- **We make good things happen:**

Our projects are taken seriously because they deliver what they promise.

- **We join the dots:**

Our projects bring people together using existing networks and building new ones.



What we do

FEL projects focus on the things that matter to the people they support and show them how they can make the changes they want to see.

Whether it's getting kids on bikes, growing food locally or building cohesive communities, we help them see what's possible and give them the skills and confidence to make good things happen.

We also want everyone we help today to support someone else tomorrow, passing on what they learn and showing that simple change can have powerful effects. By building climate literacy, social confidence and the life skills to grow, cook, repair and share, we're creating more capable communities with bigger sustainability goals.

As well as bringing people and communities together, we're dedicated to connecting organisations and partners too. Our new membership scheme and strong professional networks help everyone working in this space share ideas and experience, find new sources of funding and work collaboratively to support the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

FEL projects

FEL projects are out there making change happen – showing people how to take everyday steps that help them, their communities and the planet.

FEL projects meet people where they're at. Whether they just need a little support or don't know where to start, we get them going and keep them moving. Our projects are inclusive, engaging, educational and fun. They let people learn, achieve and make positive change with lasting effects.

Project Travel

Project Travel helps people get around more sustainably, in ways that are better for their health and for our planet. We make walking, riding or wheeling a smart move economically and environmentally – and we make them accessible to everyone too: Project Travel is



where people build confidence, find others to ride with and develop practical skills like route planning and repairs.

Project Food

Project Food is nourishment for the body and the soul. FEL has been running food projects for more than 20 years. We nurture people's physical and mental health by bringing them together around the simple pleasures of growing, cooking, eating and sharing. We help them gain fair access to nutritious local produce that doesn't cost the earth.

Project People

Project People challenges inequality and promotes community opportunity to improve quality of life. Some activities support specific disadvantaged groups, but our main focus is making sure everyone has equitable access to all the projects we and our partners run. Project People helps young people build healthier futures and amplifies the voices of women and minority genders around social and environmental change. So when change happens, it works for the good of all.

Project Nature

Project Nature protects our environment by strengthening people's connection with the world around them. It brings together the natural strands of our other projects such as active travel, growing food and sharing spaces to raise awareness of biodiversity and the impact of human behaviour on it. It makes the environment meaningful by making it personal.

Project Share

Project Share helps people switch from replacing to repairing and find clever alternatives to buying new. To live more sustainably, we must consume more responsibly. That means making things last and putting old things to new use, pooling resources and preferring pre-loved. From food pantries to tool libraries, Project Share is where nothing goes to waste.

Project Climate

From active travel and fairer food to social development and the sharing economy, all FEL projects deliver positive environmental change. Project Climate makes sure every one is designed not just for maximum impact but also to inform and educate the people taking part and show the wider world that change is possible – and happening right now.



Climate Action Hub

Our Climate Action Hub for the Forth Valley and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park belongs to a national network set up by the Scottish Government as part of its efforts to prepare communities for climate change and ensure a just transition to net zero emission living. Climate Action Hubs are here to:

- Make everyone aware of the climate and nature emergency we face
- Strengthen community resilience to climate change
- Promote cooperation, collaboration and shared learning between places
- Develop responses to climate change that reflect local circumstances and priorities
- Build communities' capacity to create and implement their own action plans
- Amplify community voices and the reach of local campaigns
- Advance social equity through a just transition to low-carbon future living

FEL has been awarded £375,000 to deliver the government's Climate Action Hub strategy for Forth Valley and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. This transformative initiative will see FEL lead a local partnership helping communities prepare for climate change by offering seed funding, expert advice and specialist training. We've recruited some great people to work in our Climate Hub and take its work into our communities, helping coordinate local activity and increase public participation in climate action.

Seeding action on climate change with community grants

To mark the launch of our Climate Action Hub, we awarded seed grants of between £250 and £1,500 to help community organisations kick-start projects to make people more aware of climate change and its effects, build climate-focused partnerships between local groups, help communities come up with new ways of taking action on climate change, amplify people's voices in calling for climate action, or support their communities in creating a fairer, more sustainable future.



Active School Hubs

We also run five Active School Hubs, where we help students and staff make everyday changes that let them, their communities and the planet thrive. They're a place to learn and build confidence and skills. They're how we are making change happen in communities across the Forth Valley and National Park. Changing our world for the better. School by school.

Celebrating five years of getting young people moving

Scotland's first Active School Hub opened at Lornshill Academy in 2019. Today, the Alloa high school has cycling rates nearly seven times the national average and has been joined by four other schools in the programme. Our Active School Hubs now support more than 4,000 young people and have been recognised for their positive impact on those with complex and significant needs, who are offered dedicated ASN sessions and alternative teaching styles.

We've assigned a dedicated full-time FEL project officer to each School Hub to engage students, staff, parents and carers in activities ranging from guided rides and walks, outdoor health and wellbeing sessions and bike maintenance classes to active travel taster sessions, primary transition work and even skateboarding. We hope the proven success of the model will now attract more funding as we expand our School Hub network in the next academic year.



Where you fit

The opportunity: Become a Trustee

We're looking to appoint new members to our Board of Trustees, to help develop our long-term plans and oversee their delivery. If you're passionate about the environment and community climate action, have good independent judgement and are a strong strategic thinker, this could be a great role for you.

If you've got experience in any of the following, fantastic – fundraising; equality, diversity and inclusion; research and evaluation; digital leadership; project management; youth engagement; and including lived experience of food or transport poverty are all priority areas for us.

If yours is a different background, still come and talk to us too. Everyone brings something unique and we could well be looking for yours.

We particularly want to add more diversity to our Board in its make-up, knowledge, age and experience. So we're really keen to meet younger people, candidates from an ethnic minority background and/ or anyone who has taken part in an FEL project or used any of our services. Don't worry if you don't have any previous Board experience – we'll give you the training and support you need to play your part.

FEL is an Equal Opportunities Employer and a Registered Charity. We promote equality, diversity and inclusion in our workplace and actively encourage people from all backgrounds to apply to join us.

The role: What's involved

FEL Trustees' main duties are

- Promoting and representing our vision, mission and values
- Setting our long-term strategic direction and goals
- Making sure we have the structure and resources to achieve them
- Agreeing the policies and procedures through which we work



- Offering support and advice to the FEL board, staff and volunteers
- Making sure we correctly monitor and report on what we do
- Managing risk, guaranteeing accountability and ensuring we comply with all requirements of our governing document, regulators and the law
- Making sure we manage our finances prudently and report on them accurately
- Representing FEL in our dealings with external stakeholders and partners

Above all, our Trustees use their skills, knowledge and experience to help our Board make the right decisions that will keep us changing our world for the better. They do this by:

- Scrutinising board papers
- Leading discussions
- Focusing on strategic priorities
- Providing guidance on new initiatives

The commitment: What you'll need to do

FEL Trustees are all volunteers, and we expect them to give at least 10 days a year to the organisation. Although the role is unpaid, we reimburse expenses incurred on FEL's behalf and in travelling to Board meetings. The Trustees meet every other month, normally at the main FEL office in Stirling but potentially also online. Apologies for absence are by exception only and can be given for a maximum of two meetings a year. For this reason, we prefer our Trustees to be able to control their own diary. FEL Trustees are appointed for a three-year term and can be re-appointed twice.



How to apply

If this sounds like you – and you like the sound of us – then please apply: email us your CV and in a word document explain why you'd like to work for us and what you can bring to the role (500 words max) at the following address to info@felscotland.org by Sunday 7th July.

And if you need more information, any support in making your application or would just like to chat to us about the role and how your skills and experience might fit, do get in touch: just email info@felscotland.org to arrange a time to talk.

We look forward to hearing from you and working together to help people, their communities and our planet thrive.