

National Liberal Club Ltd: August 2021



The Board of Directors – Who’s Who?

The National Liberal Club is owned by the members. There are more than 1800 of us in the summer of 2021 and, collectively, we are the Club’s sovereign body – expressing our will through the Club’s Annual General Meeting and the General Committee, which we all elect. GC members are profiled separately: [click here](#)

Club members are now also the sole shareholders in the limited Company, called **National Liberal Club Ltd** – formed in 1978, which manages all the day-to-day operations of the Club, runs its various services and also employs all the staff.

Set out below, the Company’s Board of Directors tell us a little about themselves. The Board includes the Club’s Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Chief Executive, alongside voluntary independent Directors, appointed for their wide range of professional expertise from among the Club membership.

The working relationship between Club and Company has been under review, following the Club's recent purchase of the controlling share in the Company from the Robson Charitable Trust – which saved the Club from financial ruin in the 1970s. The Club and the Board continue to work towards establishing working practices that produce the best outcomes for the Club and its members. So here is what you need to know about the Board of Directors.



JAMIE SHARPLEY

Chair of the Board *Joined Club 2002 Director since 2018*

A Club member for nearly two decades, I chaired the Membership Committee then became an independent Director of the Company, *The National Liberal Club Ltd*, and was chosen to chair the Board two years later, in 2020. I am determined to do all I can to make the Club even more successful and a place that members really value.

After graduating from London University in Sociology, I joined the NHS management training scheme and went on to run clinical and other services in a number of major teaching and general hospitals, mainly in London. I’ve also worked as a tutor for the healthcare thinktank, *The King’s Fund*. My Board-level experience has included voluntary (non-executive) directorships in housing, social care and the arts.

For the Liberal Democrats, I was President of the South East England region for six years and my wife, Rosie – a former LibDem mayor of Woking and retired nurse - is also a Club member and a constant support in my current role. For relaxation, I am a keen gardener and dog walker – both offer space to ponder Club matters too!



KRISTINA (Krissie) BYNG

Joined Club 1999 Director since 2017 Chair 2018-20

After taking over as Chair of *National Liberal Club Ltd*, I oversaw the sale to the Club of the majority shareholding held by the Robson Charitable Trust (set up by my father) as well as the expansion of the Board to bring in a wider range of relevant expertise.

I stood down as Chair in 2020 and now, as the senior independent Director, I am keen to help work towards a thriving Club underpinned by a financially viable Company. I chair the Board's Staffing Group and remain a Trustee of the Robson Charitable Trust.

Trained as a linguist, I served as a researcher at the Soviet Desk of the Foreign Office before leaving to focus on family life and bringing up three daughters. I later worked for 15 years as Director of the Oxford Gallery, a contemporary fine and applied arts gallery.

I have been a fundraiser for British Red Cross and the National Autistic Society, and my other interests include walking, tennis, reading, art and photography.



TOMASZ BILAKIEWICZ

Joined Club 2018 Director since 2021

I am a financial services professional, having spent most of my time designing and launching business and corporate lending products that help small and medium-sized enterprises, like the NLC, to grow and expand.

I have worked for high street banks including Barclays but also smaller neo-banks and digital lenders like *Funding Circle*. My board-level experience has included the UK and Europe.

I also serve as a non-executive director on the board of *Bighous* - a social housing organisation that provides affordable accommodation to those most vulnerable.

I have a Cambridge masters degree in business and am proud to hold the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) charter... the gold standard in finance credentials. On the NLC Board, I sit on the Finance Committee and the Space Utilisation Committee.

On the personal front, I am a British-Polish dual citizen. While born and raised in Poland, I have lived in London since 2008 and the NLC has played a significant role as my 'home away from home'. In the little free time I have, you can often find me on the Club Terrace with a book (most likely about antiquity) or simply socialising with fellow liberals.



GLENDA BURKHART

Joined Club 2011 Director since 2018

In a varied career, I have been a senior corporate executive for several international companies spanning industries in Britain and the USA – running human resources, corporate marketing and strategic planning.

I was invited to join the NLC Board three years ago. I sit on its Staffing Group, and the joint (Club and Board) Space Utilisation Group.

The last 20 years have been spent as a Board member for international humanitarian NGOs, including the *International Rescue Committee*, which responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises. I currently chair the Board of *Marie Stopes International* and am a lifelong advocate for women's health and right to choose.

My consulting experience includes the restructuring of British Airways North America Sales and Marketing, and the restructuring of the Human Capital organisation at the NY City Department of Education.

I'm a wife, mother, and grandmother and particularly love being a grandmother



TIM LAYTON

Joined Club 2017 Director since 2021

My career has been in catering management, and I was recently invited to join the Board to oversee improvements to the Club's catering operation. My goal is to help make the cuisine at the NLC among the best on offer at any London Club. I am a member of the Club's Catering Liaison Group and also of the Space Utilisation Group.

I love food and am fascinated by the dynamics of catering – the teamwork involved in producing the best. I have managed catering for Birkbeck College, London and Bath University, worked with multiple retail food outlets and coffee shops, and spent time running events management for major football clubs including Chelsea and Tottenham. Interesting times working with the WAGs!

Outside work, I'm involved with several charities, promoting positive links with Commonwealth countries, and also the *Chain of Hope*, which treats children from war-torn countries suffering from heart disease.

A former chorister at Salisbury Cathedral and the BBC Symphony Chorus, I enjoy all sorts of music, and support the Cathedral Music Trust – which sponsors choirs in need of financial help. I also love travelling, historic sites, walking, and photography.



GORDON LISHMAN CBE FRSA
Joined Club 1978 Director since 2018

Until my retirement, I was the Director General of *Age Concern* (now merged into *Age UK*) and Chief Executive of the *Age Concern Group*. My experience is in the fields of organisational leadership, in employment and in governance as well as campaigning and influencing.

I am a Burnley Borough Councillor, an elected member of the NLC General Committee, Treasurer of the Social Liberal Forum, and Secretary of the Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidates Association.

As a Director of the NLC Board, I sit on its Staffing Group and also chair the Board's Governance Group which oversees risk management for the Club. We are also reviewing with the General Committee's Rules Revision Working Group the future relationship between the Board and the Club.

I have held many senior roles in the Liberals and Liberal Democrats over nearly 60 years and have been a Parliamentary candidate seven times and a European Parliament candidate twice.

With three children and five grandchildren, I take delight in organising family holidays for groups of 13.



TIM McNALLY
Club Chair Joined Club 1985 Director since 2018

In my role as Club Chair, I attend all our main committees and also sit on the Board of NLC Ltd and the Space Utilisation Group, while also serving as the link person for relations with the Liberal Democrats, Liberal International and the Alliance Party. I am a former LibDem councillor, and an Alderman of the London Borough of Southwark.

I run a Greenwich-based charity ICT company, TISL, and chair or serve as trustee for seven charities, mainly targeted at supporting the elderly, as well as chairing an educational foundation. As a Liveryman and Chair of Membership of the Worshipful Company of Glaziers, I am a Freeman of the City of London where I am active in five guilds.

When not working, I enjoy opera, wine and walking – particularly in my beloved Madeira. I live in Bermondsey with my partner, Claire Mayne, who is also active in the Club, and our 17-year-old son, Matteo.



NADIA MONTASSER

Joined Club 2018 Director since 2021

One of the newest members of the NLC Board, I am an Egyptian who moved to London nearly a decade ago. As well as being currently the youngest Board member, I serve as the Vice-Chair of the Club's Marketing and Communications Committee.

With a Master's degree in Charity Management and a Bachelor's degree in Economics, I have 17 years' experience in Project Management, Translation, Social Media & Website Management, and Events Coordination.

As a committee member of the *Oscar Wilde Society*, I launched their website and social media channels and now manage these on a voluntary basis.

I was one of the very early animal rights activists in Egypt, having managed many successful regional campaigns and protests in collaboration with local and international animal rights organisations, winning several awards in the process.

My aim is to contribute my experience in marketing, while adding an element of diversity to the Board, and bringing a fresh pair of eyes to the work of promoting and improving the Club.



Dr VANESSA POTTER

Joined Club 1999 Director since 2018

For most of my life I have been connected to the NLC through my parents' involvement in helping to rescue the Club from financial disaster in the late 1970s.

The Robson Charitable Trust (set up by my father) took a majority shareholding in the Company set up to run the Club, and I joined the Board in 2018 in my role as a Trustee of the Robson Trust. Together with my sister, Krissie Byng, I helped negotiate the return of the Trust's shareholding to the Club.

I have remained a committed member of the Board and want to ensure that the Club has a secure and stable management structure in place. I have also been involved in expanding the Board to widen the skills sets needed and broaden its representation.

In my own life, I trained as a doctor and became a partner in a GP practice in Kent for 20 years. I developed skills in working as a team as well as sharing the responsibility of running a small business. I have three children and eight grandchildren who keep me busy. I also enjoy tennis, walking, golf, bridge and painting.



PHIL REEVES

Club Treasurer *Joined Club 1987 Director since 2018*

I sit on the Board in my role as Treasurer of the Club, and chair the Board's Finance Group, which has a key role: reviewing management accounts, supervising cashflow, assessing how the Company's investments are performing and liaising with the Company's auditors to produce the annual accounts.

Having qualified as a barrister, I went into tax advisory work where I was persuaded (perhaps unwisely) to take the chartered accountancy exams, which I passed but not without significant effort.

After 30 years in the tax profession, I semi-retired to work on one main client and am also Treasurer of The Cricket Society, which aims to promote cricket in all its spheres – playing, watching, listening and reading.

A member of the NLC for nearly 35 years, I am currently also Vice-Chair of the Beer, Wine & Spirits Committee.

When not busy with my duties for Club and Board or other work, I travel the world playing golf, watching cricket and trying to reduce my golf handicap – this is a work in progress.



KARIN REHACEK

Club Vice-Chair *Joined Club 2013 Director since 2021*

Elected as the Club's Vice-Chair in July 2021, I became a member of the Board, and also sit on the Staffing Group.

Soon after joining the Club I was invited to chair the German Circle, encouraged to stand for General Committee, and subsequently joined the Membership Committee where I have served two full terms.

With a degree in German and a postgraduate degree in Business, I spent more than three decades working in Human Resources in international Financial Services in London. Having just retired, my focus... outside of the Club... is now on charity work. I am a Freeman of the City of London and a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Glaziers.

My interests include the arts, literature, walking, cooking and travel so, having explored more than 80 countries, I am very honoured to chair the Reciprocal Clubs Working Group.



SIMON ROBERTS

Chief Executive & Club Secretary Director since 2018

After a classical training in hotel management at Ealing Hotel School, I spent some time learning the business in Milan and, from there, went on to work in many of the top hotels of London's West End.

After 10 years at the Stafford Hotel in St James's, I left as Manager in 1992 to become only the eighth Secretary of the National Liberal Club in more than a century.

In 2018 I was invited to join the Board and, as the Company's Chief Executive, I lead the Senior Management Team and have overall responsibility for the day-to-day running of the Club. I am a member of the Board's Finance, Staffing and Governance Groups.

A Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality, I have served as President of the Réunion des Gastronomes and Chairman of the Association of London Clubs. Away from work, I am a Sidesman and Server at St George's Church, Hanover Square.

I love music, theatre, opera and ballet and enjoy playing the trombone, singing, skiing, walking, travel and – as a self-confessed Italophile – I have a great and enduring love of all good things Italian.



DEREK WEST

Joined Club 2018 Director since 2021

I was raised in and around Toronto after my family moved to Canada from Lancashire. I have only been a Club member for a couple of years, but the NLC had long been my favourite reciprocal club when visiting London.

My partner and I moved here after 22 years in Chicago, where I once campaigned door-to-door for our state senator, one Barack Obama, when he ran for the US Senate. I became a naturalised US citizen and was able to cast my first vote for a *President* Obama a few years later.

For most of my career, I was a financial market regulator and now work in the City for a market utility. I co-chair my company's global LGBTQ employee resource group, and am an active LibDem supporter in Battersea.

I look forward to contributing to the Board, in particular the work of the Governance and Finance groups. The current evolution of the club, its range of facilities and expanding membership will provide no shortage of exciting projects.



Any Club member wishing to raise a matter with the Board of Directors, or with Club Officers or the General Committee, is advised initially to contact the Secretary, at secretary@nlc.org.uk so your enquiry can be directed to the appropriate person. Or call the Club's main telephone number: 020 7930 9871.

