

Michael La Rooy



I am standing for election to the SAS board of trustees. I feel I can bring complementary skills to the board and I will do my best to make SAS successful, ensuring the society's outcomes are first priority. I have been a co-opted trustee since June 2024 and I already see areas where I can contribute.

My Background and Experience:

I have extensive business experience. My 35 year career was primarily at American Express working in Finance and IT and from 2010-22 I was the global head of customer service capabilities.

I also have public sector and board experience at the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership – as a board member and head of their audit and risk committee.

I am passionate about historic preservation. I am a G2* listed building owner and restorer. Our house restoration won a Sussex Heritage Trust award in 2018.

Originally from New Zealand, I have local knowledge having lived in Sussex since 1998. I am now semi-retired, so I have the time to devote to SAS.

What I will bring to SAS:

- Pragmatic, hands on approach to problem solving, leveraging my private and public sector experience
- Financial acumen – budgets, audit, reporting, business case reviews, cost control, risk management
- Knowledge of what is required to operate and maintain historic buildings
- IT knowledge
- Board level experience in the non-profit sector
- A passion for making Sussex Past successful and sustainable

My Vision for SAS:

SAS has a unique portfolio of historically significant sites and collections. It is critical to ensure income streams are adequate to preserve our assets, whilst maximising public engagement, learning and the enjoyment of them. I believe this can be a “win-win” and I am excited about the opportunities, despite the significant challenges. My areas of interest include optimization of energy usage and cost, mentorship of SAS employees, long term maintenance plans and execution, IT strategy, visitor experience and partnerships. My vision for SAS is sustainability – in all senses of the word: historic preservation, public and academic engagement, financial soundness and environmental stewardship. SAS as the forever custodian of what makes Sussex unique.