

BEING A TRUSTEE

Being a trustee is a very important role, which makes a huge difference to the success and impact of our charity.

What Is A Charity Trustee

We are an incorporated charity, registered with Companies House as well as the Charity Commission. The company is a legal entity in its own right and so, centre trustees are also directors of the company.

All our trustees have a valuable role to play. Responsibilities include ensuring the organisation;

- Has clear strategy
- Remains true to its aims, objects and vision
- Abides by rules and meets our legal obligations

Collectively, trustees are known as the board. We have 7 people currently on the board. Their roles sometimes cover a specific area of responsibility for example, the Treasurer, will make sure proper accounts are kept and the Chair will plan and chair meetings and represent the charity at important events.

However, when it comes to making decisions about the charity, the trustees make them together.

How Much Time You Need To Give

You don't have to volunteer to do something every month but if the centre is to keep moving forward, we need active trustees, who are willing to take on tasks.

Basic expectations are to;

- ◆ **Attend meetings.** Currently trustees meet once a month held at 7.30 pm at the centre. The meeting generally lasts about two hours
- ◆ **Trustees are expected to take on specific tasks that arise from the meeting.** Depending on what you offer to do, you might take on tasks in relation to your availability, skills, or experience. Some tasks take more time than others; offering to supervise a volunteer running a stall at Lambeth Country Show, would take more time than ringing the local press and inviting them to cover an event at the centre.
- ◆ **Fufil your key role.** Trustees who have a key role tend to concentrate on their area of responsibility. So if you are on the board as a fundraiser, you would be expected to undertake fundraising tasks
- ◆ **Attending the Annual General Meeting (AGM)** held every eighteen months where the chair of trustees gives a report about the previous year and supporters are invited to have refreshments

The Skills You Need

Trustees need a wide range of skills and experience if the trustee board is to do its job. Typically it is important that the centre board has members with experience of the following:

- ◆ Financial planning
- ◆ Business planning
- ◆ Project management
- ◆ Staff/Volunteer management

- ◆ Fundraising

Not all trustees need all these skills. Each trustee brings their own skills and experience but it might be helpful to think about the particular skills and experience you can offer as a trustee or would like to develop.

However to be a trustee you must meet the following requirements;

- ◆ Aged over 18 years
- ◆ Are not an undischarged bankrupt
- ◆ Have not previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by a Court or the Charity Commissioners

Training

There is a lot of training available for charity trustees, the centre would, within our budgetary constraints, support any trustee who wanted to build on their expertise in their area of responsibility. Most training is free so cost is not normally an issue.

Length of Time on the Board

A year's minimum is ideal.

The rewards of being a trustee

- ◆ There can be great satisfaction gained from knowing you are helping a charity achieve its goals
- ◆ Being a charity trustee gives you real insight into how an organisation is managed.
- ◆ You can gain a lot of additional knowledge and hands on experience of the area you are interested.
- ◆ It gives you a chance to develop your management and leadership skills.
- ◆ It teaches you a lot about making decisions in a team.
- ◆ Can advance your paid employment opportunities.

How to Apply

Stage 1

- ◆ A CV with covering letter by email or post to the Chair Caroline Funnell
- ◆ Informal telephone conversation about your interests and the role

Stage 2

- ◆ Induction which includes; tour of the centre, background organisational information i.e our accounts, policies and annual report

Stage 3

- ◆ Attend 3 meetings as a trial for both parties
- ◆ Invitation to stand for election to the board