



The  
Listening  
Centre

# TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK 2024

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1098571

# WELCOME

Hello, and thanks for your interest in joining The Listening Centre (TLC) as a trustee!

Trustees play a vital role in ensuring that the charity functions well, acts responsibly, and is on track to achieve its strategic aims. They're also an important part of the wider TLC team, supporting the charity's paid staff and volunteer counsellors by sharing their personal and professional experiences and helping us to think differently about risks and opportunities.

We very much hope that this pack provides you with all the information you need to decide whether becoming a TLC trustee might be right for you. However, if you have any questions at all or would like to arrange an informal chat with either of us, please do get in touch!



CLAIRE JACQUES  
CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

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SIAN RENWICK  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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# Our values

## **affordable**

We believe that psychotherapy and counselling should be available to all those who need it and can benefit from it regardless of their income.

## **inclusive**

We want everyone to feel welcome, enabled and supported to achieve their potential without discrimination. We are committed to having a diverse range of clients, therapists, trustees, and associates.

## **safe**

We provide clients with a safe space in which to develop and grow at their own pace, by providing suitable counsellors or psychotherapists who adhere to strict codes of ethics and safeguarding that are aligned with recognised accrediting bodies.

## **supportive**

We nurture and encourage mutual support and self-care among all members of the organisation.

## **innovative**

We embrace change and aim to continually improve our service through listening, learning, and innovating.

# About the charity

The Listening Centre has been making high quality counselling accessible to those who would otherwise struggle to afford it for 30 years. Since the first session was held in October 1995 at a community in Blackbird Leys, TLC has supported thousands of Oxfordshire residents with their mental health. In that time, we've successfully weathered many storms; most recently, of course, the COVID-19 pandemic, thanks to our ability to flex and adapt to highly challenging circumstances

In July 2023, CEO and original founding member of TLC, Julian Sharples, stood down after 15 years at the charity's helm. Sian Renwick, a former TLC volunteer counsellor and an experienced and successful charity CEO, was appointed as his successor with a remit to bring renewed strategic focus and operational rigour to TLC.

Demand for our support is increasing significantly: in 2022-23, we saw a 30% increase on initial enquiries compared to the previous year. We have ambitious plans and 2024 will be a pivotal year in implementing these. By joining us now, you could help to define the charity's strategic direction as we look forward to the next 30 years of supporting Oxfordshire's mental well-being.

**"I can't thank The Listening Centre enough. Their affordable counselling services are a blessing. The counsellors helped me overcome the trauma I've carried for years. I feel stronger, happier, and more in control of my life."**

# About the role

## What will it involve?

Our approach is based on the Charity Commission's recommended trustee duties. A summary can be found [here](#) and more detailed guidance [here](#).

As a trustee of TLC your key responsibilities would be to:

- Work with other trustees and the CEO to set the TLC's strategy and make sure the things we do operationally are in line with, and support the achievement of, this.
- Act as a critical friend by providing constructive challenge to other trustees and the CEO.
- Make decisions with other trustees that are in the charity's best interest and don't knowingly create conflicts of interest.
- Manage TLC's resources responsibly for the short and long term.
- Help TLC comply with statutory accounting and reporting requirements.
- Help to ensure that TLC operates in line with charity laws, other relevant regulatory requirements, and our own internal governance and policies.
- Act with reasonable care and skill, making use of your expertise and experience for the benefit of TLC.
- Help raise the profile of TLC by promoting the charity through your personal and professional networks, attending events hosted by TLC, and attending networking events on behalf of TLC.
- Help with securing funding for our continued operation

# About the role

## How much time will it take?

As a TLC Trustee, the time commitment will vary, but should be no more than five hours per month on average. This will include:

- Attending Trustee Board meetings four times per year, including reading papers ahead of the meeting and undertaking follow-up actions. Meetings are currently held in-person in Oxford on Tuesday evenings.
- Attending additional 'special' meetings of the Board if/when needed.
- Supporting the charity's staff team between Board meetings on issues where you have relevant knowledge and experience.
- Attending TLC community meetings (which bring together staff, trustees, volunteers, and associates) on three Saturdays each year.
- Attending occasional networking or other events on behalf of the charity.
- Promoting the charity to your networks, and making connections.

If you take on extra responsibilities (e.g. Chair, Treasurer, Secretary) the time commitment will increase accordingly.

Trustees are appointed for a term of three years, with the possibility of re-appointment.

# How to apply

## Am I eligible?

In order to be a TLC trustee you must be:

- Eligible to act as a charity trustee (see the Charity Commission's [Trustee Eligibility Declaration Form](#) for more details).
- Committed to the values of TLC outlined above and to maintaining a culture of radical transparency within the charity.
- Able to dedicate the required time to the role.

We're open to considering a wide range of people to broaden the skillset of the Board, but we would particularly welcome hearing from you if you:

- Are a qualified counsellor, psychotherapist, or supervisor.
- Have a professional background in finance; particularly accountancy.
- Have lived experience of mental health problems.
- Are from the global majority, are LGBTQ+, or are disabled.

## How do I apply?

In the first instance, please email [sianrenwick@thelisteningcentre.org.uk](mailto:sianrenwick@thelisteningcentre.org.uk) to express your interest in the role, ask any questions you may have, and arrange an informal chat with either the Chair of Trustees or the CEO.

We'll then ask interested candidates to send in a CV and brief covering letter, telling us a bit about yourself and why you would be a good addition to the TLC team.