The Listening Centre

TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK 2026

REGISTERED CIO No: 1212235

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 us, please do get in touch!

ANDREA WEST
CEO, THE LISTENING CENTRE
ceo@thelisteningcentre.org.uk

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.

Demand for our support is increasing significantly: in 2024, we saw a 21% increase on initial enquiries compared to the previous year. This is an exciting time in the growth of the charity and our previous Fundraiser and CEO helped us raise over £35,000 this year which means that we can grow our reach within the community. We have ambitious plans and we are now in a pivotal period of transition to implement these and the transition team is in place to drive the required changes.

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 consider myself very lucky to have found a counselling provider like TLC in my home city. It is well established, honing its client offer and organisational skills over thirty years, and is very efficiently run without anyone being officious. There is a wide range of clients, and a suggested course of 26 sessions, which is a liberation (for clients too) from the constraints of statutory counselling provision. We can really do deep and lasting work in this timescale. The supervisory groups are great, and it's wonderful to hear clinical observations from peers who have studied in very different modalities, such as Gestalt!" - One of our Counselling Team

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.
- 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.

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

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:

- Have previous trustee experience.
- Are a qualified counsellor, psychotherapist, or supervisor.
- Have a professional background in fundraising or HR.
- 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 Andrea West at ceo@thelisteningcentre.org.uk to express your interest in the role, ask any questions you may have, and arrange an informal chat.

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.