



Barbara Bus Fund

APPLICATION PACK

Chair to the Board of Trustees

Louis Fleischmann Building | Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital | Brockley Hill | Stanmore | Middlesex | HA7 4LP.
Telephone: 020 8416 0733

Registered charity number: 257507

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Dear applicant,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Barbara Bus Fund, may I thank you for your interest in the position of Chair of our charity.

As you may know, the Barbara Bus Fund operates a unique model to support people with disabilities who are unable to travel in a standard car seat and are reliant upon their wheelchair to travel. We provide passengers with comfortable and safe specially adapted vehicles so the passenger is able to remain in their wheelchair throughout their journey.

The vehicles are loaned out to users across the UK by way of a self-drive, or door-to-door volunteer-driven service, with an affordable donation suggested for use of the service.

We are seeking a suitable candidate to fill the important vacancy for the volunteer position of Chair.

Given the changing landscape of transport and healthcare, particularly that of the Community Transport sector, the Board is looking for a Chair with experience ideally in the health, care or transport areas.

The successful appointee will be a trustee and member of the Board working with the other Trustees, the Operations Manager and paid and voluntary staff to oversee the strategic direction and governance of the charity.

If you feel this opportunity is for you, I do hope you follow up your interest by applying for this important and rewarding position.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Liebenberg
Vice-Chair

About the Barbara Bus Fund

Barbara's vision:

to make wheelchair accessible transport available to those in need no matter of financial standing

The Barbara Bus Fund is a registered charity, which was set up in 1968 to help people who cannot get out to use public transport or an ordinary car, because they have a disability that necessitates full-time use of a wheelchair.

Today the BBF has a selection of specially converted vehicles that can accommodate from one to three wheelchairs in comfort and safety, along with several able bodied passengers. All the vehicles are equipped with appropriate wheelchair restraints.

The Barbara Bus Fund has a relaxed yet professional ethos; an all-inclusive culture where everyone is respected, valued and appreciated.

Governed by a Board of 7 trustees consisting a Vice-Chair, a Trustee Secretary and Trustee Treasurer, the charity is steered inclusively, respectfully and openly.

Managed by the Operations Manager who is supported by two part-time and 14 volunteer personnel, the BBF operates effectively, ethically and morally.

With Head Office at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Stanmore, the Barbara Bus Fund celebrates 56 years and still holds close the dedication and determination shown by Barbara when she began her project all those years ago.

The North Wales branch is run by a volunteer coordinator and supported by volunteers based at vehicle bases around the area.

Offering kindness and understanding to all passengers and self-drivers alike, the service is for the benefit of the wheelchair passenger and all staff work together to make it happen.

How it works

The BBF operates a self-drive, and a volunteer-driven service.

Vehicles can be loaned on a self-drive basis where the passenger has their own driver who must complete a simple driver registration process and can use the vehicle for an affordable donation. Vehicles can be booked for up to two weeks to go on holiday and can travel overseas with prior arrangement.

Passengers who do not have their own driver can register to request a volunteer driver. A suggested donation is calculated on a mileage basis.

Volunteer drivers are based at both the RNOH and North Wales.

Branches

BBF Head Office is at the RNOH, Stanmore. There is an in-house satellite branch at Harpenden Mencap and a community branch at MHA Hillside, Aylesbury.

Barbara Bus North Wales is a community branch with vehicles based at various locations to maximise accessibility.

The BBF is keen to expand and place vehicles at strategic location 'Satellite Branches' to maximise the accessibility of those who need them.

We offer:
safe, comfortable wheelchair accessible transport | inclusivity |
a service tailored to meet the user's needs | discretion and support

The Barbara Bus Fund background

Barbara Werndly was an inpatient at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital having contracted polio, and becoming paralysed, at the age of 13.

Having access to a wheelchair accessible vehicle herself, Barbara wanted other patients to benefit from this freedom so from her hospital bed, Barbara started the Barbara Bus Fund. She began by organising a huge fete in the hospital grounds to raise funds to purchase the first "Barbara Bus."

Barbara was the coordinator and through her determination and magnetism, she engaged support from family, friends and hospital staff to assist with the running of, and driving for the BBF.

Following Barbara's death in 1995, her friend Frankie took over as Coordinator and held Board Meetings at her house, furnished with food and fun.

When Frankie also died it was decided to recruit a paid Coordinator and this role was filled from 1996 to 2015, then our current Operations Manager was employed.

Richard Holland MBE, Barbara's nephew took over as Chair in 1998 and when he resigned in 2023, one of the trustees David Thomas stepped up to take the role. David very sadly died at the end of 2023 and the role of Chair has been vacant since.

The current Trustees are made up of Barbara's family, friends and people who have benefited from the use of the BBF services.

The Board of Trustees has strong ethics, is transparent and knowledgeable, not afraid to challenge or disagree and always conducts itself respectfully and professionally.

The BBF vehicles have been based at the RNOH since the beginning and the first Coordinator worked from home until the office opened in 2004.

All the vehicles are named after Barbara, her family and friends, and those who have made a significant contribution to the Charity.

Responsibilities of all trustees

Trustees should use their specific skills, knowledge, and experience to help the Board run effectively and in the best interests of the Barbara Bus Fund.

This role is non-remunerated and undertaken on a voluntary basis. Reasonable expenses will be covered.

- Support and provide advice on the Barbara Bus Fund's purpose, vision, goals, and activities.
- Develop and approve operational strategies and policies; monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Oversee the Barbara Bus Fund's financial plans and budgets and monitor and evaluate progress.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- Ensure that key risks are identified, monitored, and controlled effectively.
- Review and approve the Barbara Bus Fund's annual financial statements.
- Provide support and challenge to the Barbara Bus Fund's Operations Manager in the exercise of their delegated authority and affairs.
- Keep abreast of changes in the Barbara Bus Fund's operating environment.
- Contribute to regular reviews of the Barbara Bus Fund's own governance.
- Attend Board meetings, adequately prepared to contribute to discussions.
- Use independent judgment, acting legally and in good faith to promote and protect the Barbara Bus Fund's interests, to the exclusion of their own personal and/or any third-party interests.
- Contribute to the broader promotion of the Barbara Bus Fund's objects, aims and reputation by applying your skills, expertise, knowledge, and contacts.

Essential qualities and attributes of all trustees

- Willingness to attend occasional meetings/events at the Barbara Bus Fund offices at RNOH, Stanmore (unlikely to be more than once or twice a year).
- Willingness and ability to understand and accept their responsibilities and liabilities as Trustees and to act in the best interests of the Charity.
- Ability to think creatively and strategically; exercise good, independent judgement and work effectively as a Board member.
- Effective communication skills and willingness to participate actively in discussion.
- A strong personal commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Enthusiasm for BBF's vision and mission.
- Willingness to act in accordance with the Barbara Bus Fund's Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Role of Chair of the Board of Trustees

Summary

The Chair leads the Board of Trustees, ensuring that it governs the Charity effectively in service of the Charity's vision and mission.

The Chair leads in an inclusive way, supports the board to work together well, and provides support and challenge to the Operations Manager.

The Chair is an ambassador for the Charity.

Responsibilities and main duties

- Provides strategic leadership to the Charity and the Board, ensuring that the Barbara Bus Fund achieves its mission.
- Plans and chairs board meetings and the AGM, with others as appropriate.
- Provides a report in advance of each committee meeting.
- Provides an annual report in advance of the AGM.
- Leads the Board to ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities for the correct and proper governance of the Charity.
- Optimises the relationship between the Board and the Barbara Bus Fund's staff and volunteers.
- Works in partnership with the Operations Manager and staff team to achieve BBF's mission.
- Acts as a spokesperson and figurehead for the Barbara Bus Fund.

What the Barbara Bus Fund is looking for in a Chair of the Board of Trustees:

Essential

- Experience of being a Trustee; you do not need to have been a Chair before, but previous experience of chairing committee meetings is desirable.
- A keen sense of strategic purpose.
- An inclusive leadership style with the ability to inspire, and support everyone to participate equally.
- Be able to listen and engage effectively; you are comfortable with challenge and debate, able to encourage that in others whilst fostering a collaborative board environment.
- Advocate - be able and willing to champion the Barbara Bus Fund's work through personal networks, social media, and other channels.
- A strong personal commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Be responsive. As a small charity, things sometimes 'come up' that will require the Chair to advise, support or give consent to, and occasionally by return.

Desirable

- Experience of chairing committee meetings.
- Good financial acumen and the ability to read and interpret charity management accounts.
- Experience of working in a healthcare, health-related or transport role.
- Ideally located within 25 miles of the Barbara Bus Fund Head Office, Stanmore.

Terms of appointment

- This is a voluntary position, but reasonable expenses can be reimbursed.
- There is no set period of term however a commitment to a minimum of 3-years is preferred.

What the Barbara Bus Fund is looking for in a Chair of the Board of Trustees, contd .

Time commitment

The time commitment is estimated at one to two days per month. Trustees are in the minimum expected to:

- Attend 8 Committee meetings annually. Currently meetings are held remotely over Zoom, every 6-7 weeks.
- Attend the AGM (held with the May committee meeting.)
- Respond to weekly emails from the Operations Manager, with the flexibility to respond swiftly to the occasional ad hoc issue.
- Attend meetings/events at the Barbara Bus Fund head office (no more than twice a year).
- Attend the annual Barbara Bus Fund volunteers' meal, usually in January.

The BBF supports a growth mindset and if all requirements have not been met, for the suitable candidate there is the opportunity to grow within the role with the support and guidance of the trustees and BBF staff.

Safeguarding

The Barbara Bus Fund has a commitment and duty of care to safeguard all its users and assets.

It is therefore necessary for the Chair to undertake an Enhanced DBS check.

All Trustees, paid, and voluntary staff are subject to an initial then three-yearly DBS check, basic or enhanced, depending on their role.

Application process

In the first instance, please send your Curriculum Vitae with a covering letter to the Board of Trustees at chair@barbarabus.com.

A telephone conversation with the Secretary Trustee will be arranged, followed by a Zoom meeting with the Board of Trustees.

You will then be invited to an in-person meeting with the Secretary, Operations Manager, and other Trustees at the BBF office.

All new Trustees complete a term of 3 – 4 meetings as a Committee Member before being appointed as a Trustee. Newly appointed Trustees are officially voted on the Board of Trustees at the following AGM in May.

Further information on becoming a trustee

For further information on the role of a charity trustee please visit the Charity Commission website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved>

For further information about the charity please visit our website:

www.barbarabus.com