

**LITTLE VILLAGE
CHAIR OF TRUSTEES
RECRUITMENT
PACK, 2026**



**Baby things,
big impact.**

Our vision is for every child to have the essentials they need to thrive.

Are you passionate about tackling child poverty and motivated by Little Village's values of Love, Solidarity, Thriving and Sustainability?

Do you believe in our model of bringing families together to help each other?

Would you enjoy contributing to the development of an ambitious and growing organisation?

If so, you could be one of the people we're looking for to help support Little Village on the next stage of our journey. We're ambitious to expand our work with families in London and to further build our work as a 'force for change' to tackle child poverty and we need a new Chair of Trustees to help us move into the next phase of our work.

Our current Chair's term of office comes to an end in 2027. Under Olivia Gillan's leadership, Little Village has grown from a small start-up charity to a pan London operation supporting thousands of families each year with essential items. In 2025, Little Village supported children nearly 12,000 times, reaching families in every



Kate Husselbee
Chair of People Committee

London borough. We kept growing the wraparound support that helps families take their next step; supporting families with signposting 3,005 times and helping to unlock an estimated £55,137 in financial benefit. We also redistributed 147 tonnes of children's items, avoiding an estimated 203 tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

All of these figures are substantial increases on 2024, despite no additional investment in capacity, thanks to the creativity and innovation of the Little Village team. So it's no surprise that Little Village was recognised with a number of awards during the year, including shortlisted for Charity of the Year at the Charity Times Awards (£1 – 10m category), winning

Social Value within a Community at the Awards for Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management and our CEO being named on the Resource Hot 100 List, which recognises individuals making a significant impact in the circular economy.

2027 will see us celebrate ten years of impact alongside the launch of a new strategic plan focused on supporting even more families with babies and young children experiencing poverty across our capital city.

We would like to attract someone with the energy, commitment and experience to lead our skilled and dedicated Board of Trustees as they support our CEO and Senior Leadership Team to take Little Village through its next stage of development.

We'd ideally like to find an experienced charity Board Chair, but most importantly we are looking for someone who really cares about the work we do and who will work collaboratively with our team of Trustees and staff to make sure we reach our ambitious goals.

We are always keen to broaden the diversity of skills and experience on our Board and would particularly welcome applications from people with lived experience of poverty (as a parent or as a child), and those with volunteering experience (at Little Village or elsewhere).

If joining the Little Village family sounds interesting, we are very much looking forward to hearing from you.





ABOUT LITTLE VILLAGE

Why we're needed

Four million children live in poverty in the UK, the highest figure ever recorded, with **38%** of London's children experiencing poverty.

UK families that face a higher likelihood of poverty:

- **44%** of larger families (three or more children)
- **43%** of lone parent families
- **36%** of families with young children (0-5 years)

Day to day, families supported by Little Village tell us this is what that means for them:

- **60%** prioritise housing costs over buying essentials like clothing and toys
- **40%** skip meals so their children have enough to eat
- **21%** ration nappies so a pack lasts longer
- **10%** water down formula to stretch it further



What we do

Little Village makes a big difference to families with **babies and young children** living in poverty across London.

Via our network of baby banks, we pass on loved goods from one family to another – clothes, toys and equipment – so that many more babies and young children have the essential things they need to thrive.

Families either visit a Little Village hub or receive items that have been packed with care and delivered to their home. But it doesn't stop there. We also connect families into a wider network of support, helping them to build and extend their

own 'village'. And we raise our voices for change, sharing the stark realities of too many children's lives in London.

Thanks to the generous donations of loved items, precious time and money, since we launched in 2016, Little Village has supported more than **36,000 children**.

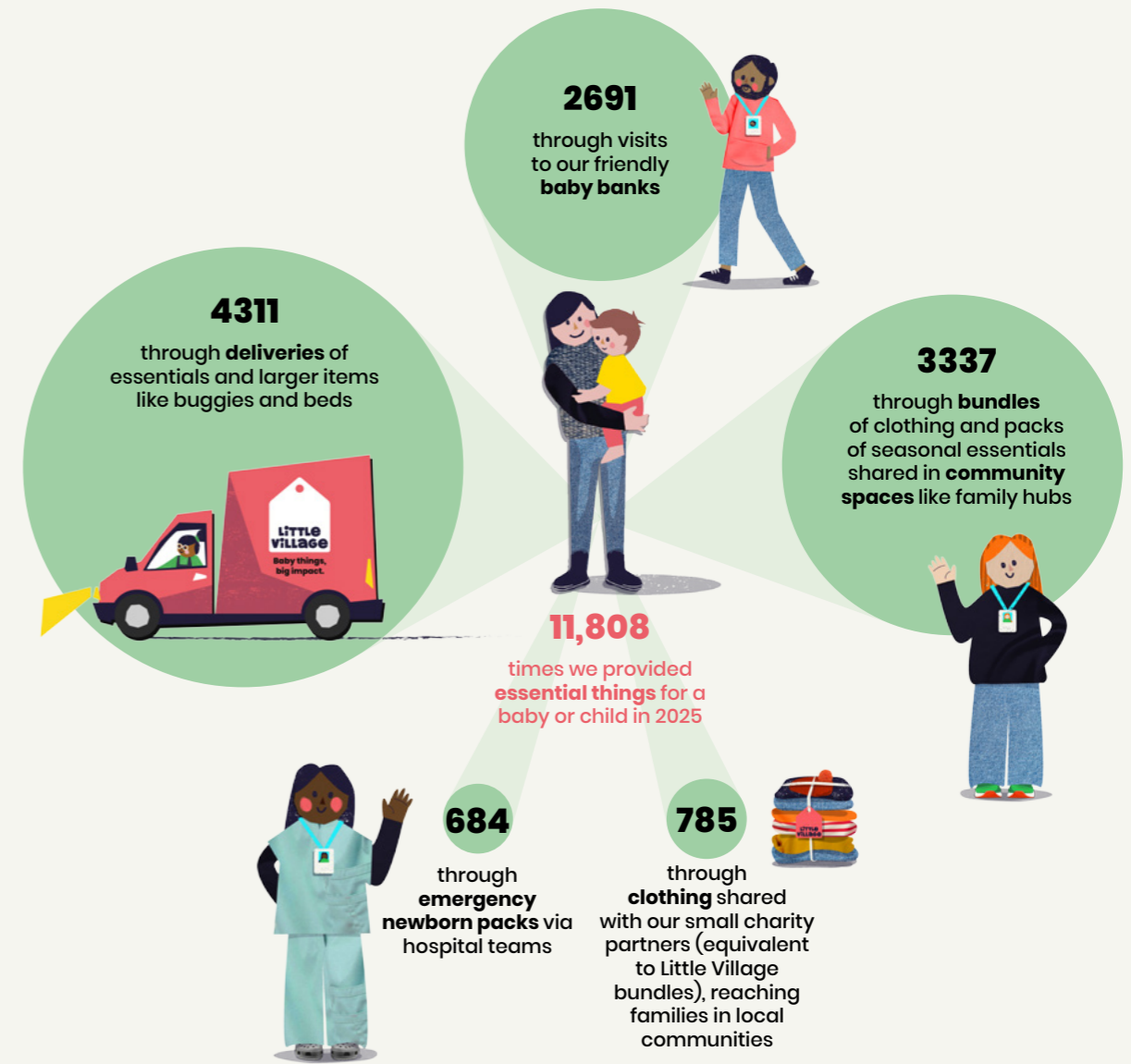
In 2025, Little Village supported children **11,808 times** (up from 9,269 in 2024) and reached families in **every London borough**.



"Families are delighted to receive their bundles and have been attending our sessions more regularly and accessing the programs we offer."

— Referral partner

Figure 1: The number of times we provided essential things for a baby or child in 2025

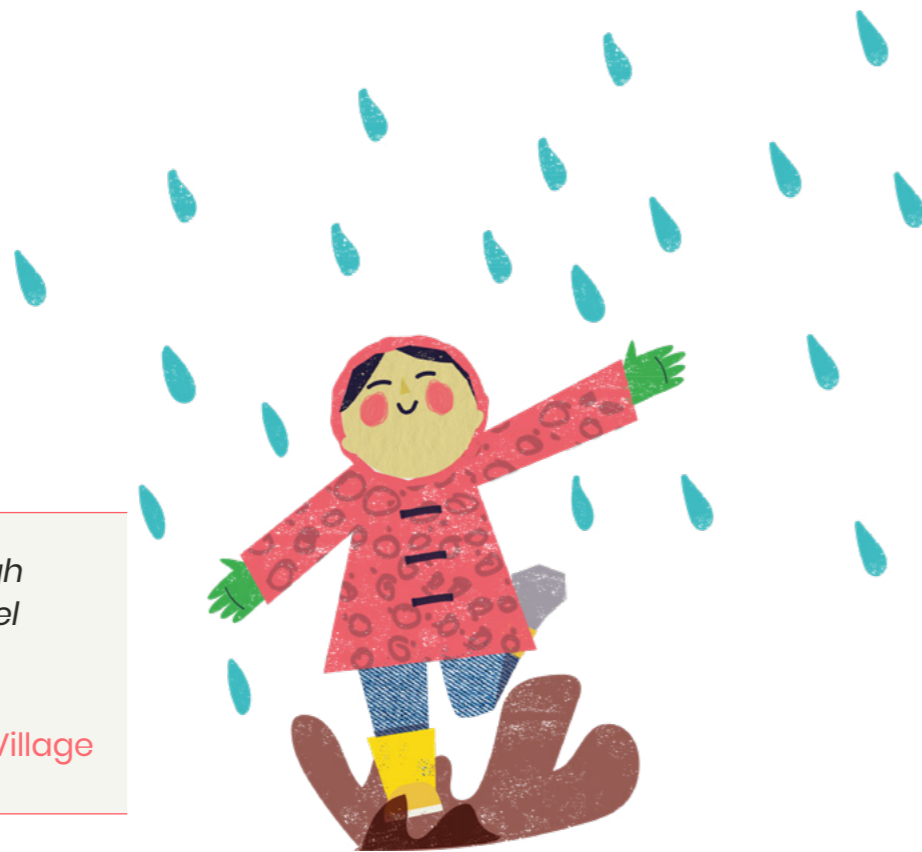


Our 2024–2026 strategic plan focuses on **four** key ambitions

- **Supporting families:** Continuing to share both essential items and understanding, so that babies and children in London can thrive.
- **Inspiring:** Growing the “village” of support and inspiring more people to join us.
- **Raising awareness:** Using our voice for change, to raise awareness of family poverty and baby banks, and build the Baby Bank Alliance.
- **Resilience:** Ensuring the sustainability of this work by developing a strong and resilient organisation.

Little Village’s full 2024–2026 Strategy, ‘It Takes a Village’, is available on [our website](#).

More detail on what we achieved in 2025 will be available in our Impact Report which we are launching in late April and will be available on our website. You can read our [2024 Impact Report here](#).



“Little Village helped me through hard times which made me feel so loved.”

— Family supported by Little Village

What we believe



Our vision

For every child to have the essentials they need to thrive.



Our mission

To bring about change for children and families through the power of sharing, reusing and connecting.

Our values



Solidarity

We bring people together across economic and social divides, united in a shared belief that every parent deserves to give their kids the best possible start in life.



Sustainability

We achieve our mission whilst treading lightly on the planet, joining forces with other parts of the circular economy to reduce waste and promote re-use.



Love

Everything we pass on to families is a gift, not a handout. We see love as an action – an act of donating precious baby kit, of volunteering valuable time and of offering solidarity during tough times.



Thriving

This means having a sense of agency, belonging, and hope. And these are the qualities we focus on in how we work as well as what we do.

Who we are

Trustees

Olivia Gillan, Chair

Marcia Holmes, Deputy Chair

Simon Langford, Chair of Finance & Risk Committee (appointed March 26)

Gerry Wright, Finance Trustee (outgoing)

Kate Husselbee, Chair, People Committee

Matthew Chisambi

Jacqui Penalver

Clare Phillips

Rachel Polnay

Lily Shaw

Helena Simpson

You can read biographies of our Trustees here: www.littlevillagehq.org/who-we-are/

Our staff team

We have over 70 part and full time staff in a variety of roles across London, including at our three hubs (Euston, Tooting and Wembley) and our warehouse (Wandsworth), as well as many based from home.


Senior Leadership Team

Sophie Livingstone MBE, CEO 

Sophie joined Little Village as CEO in February 2021 after spending over twenty years in the social sector. She is currently chair of the [Baby Bank Alliance](#) and the [End Child Poverty Coalition](#).

Emily Compston, Director of Operations 

Calleigh-Marie Lawrence, Director of Volunteering 

Liz Alleston, Director of Fundraising & Communications 

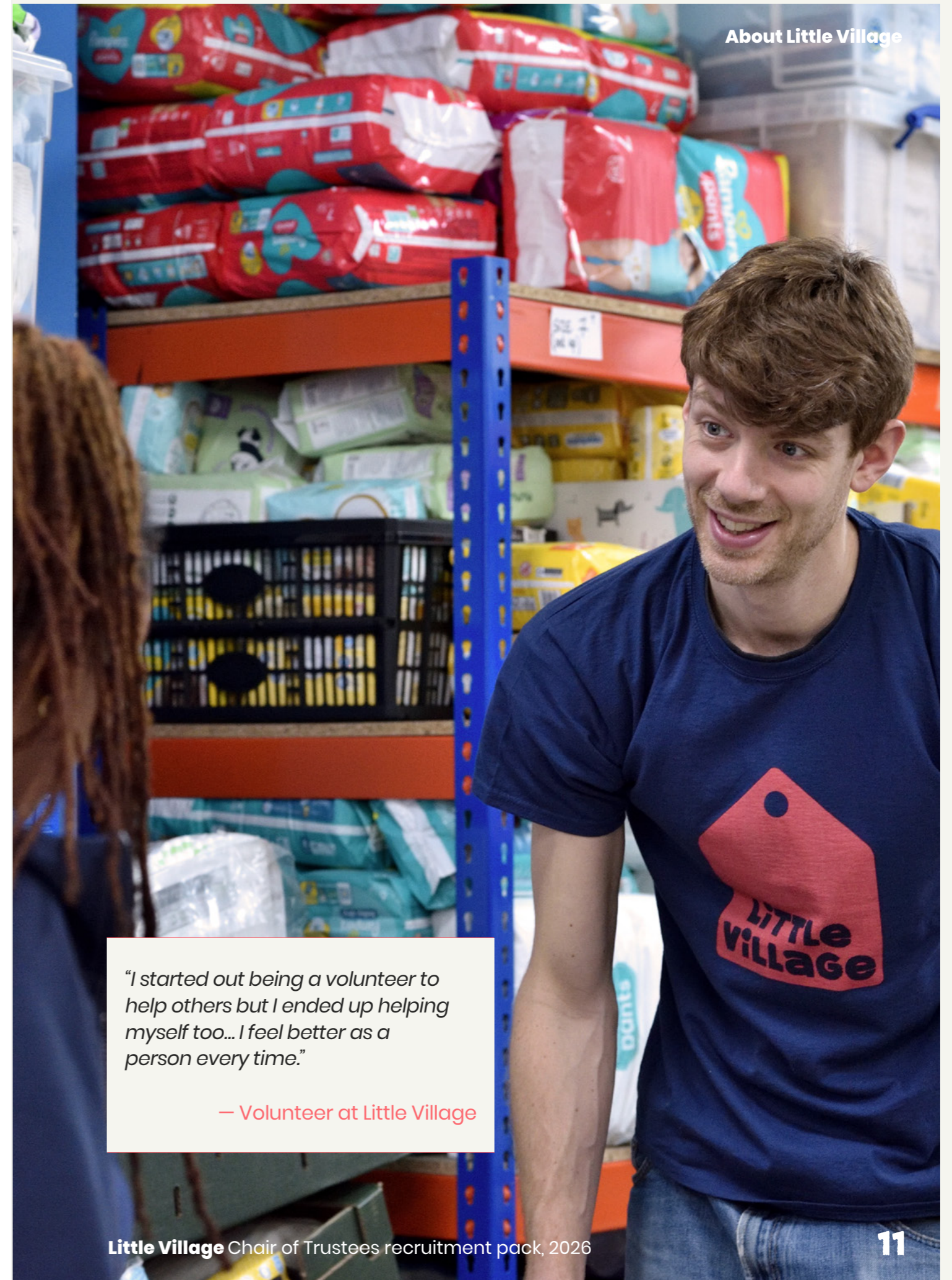
Andrey Ashwell, Director of People 

Aniq Read, Director of Finance 

Our volunteers

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Little Village. We have 699 regular volunteers, giving an ongoing commitment to Little Village's work by sorting and packing at a hub, speaking to families on the phone or driving deliveries to families' doors. In addition, we provide a range of flexible one off volunteering opportunities and in 2025 we had 1,100 volunteers donating their time to us either via their company or individually.

Nationally, volunteering is in decline and we are bucking the trend thanks to our recent switch to more flexible ways to give back. Our volunteers gave us an average shift 'rating' of 4.9/5 last year, and a Net Promoter Score of 85 (which rates us as world class).



"I started out being a volunteer to help others but I ended up helping myself too... I feel better as a person every time."

— Volunteer at Little Village

ABOUT THIS ROLE



Purpose of the role

Purpose of the role

The Chair of Trustees leads the Board in stewarding Little Village's vision—to ensure every child under five has the essentials to thrive. They provide strategic direction, uphold governance and legal compliance, support the CEO, and act as an ambassador for Little Village.

Key responsibilities

Governance and strategy

- Lead the organisation, in partnership with the CEO, in support of Little Village's charitable objectives, mission, vision and values.
- Ensure Little Village adheres to good governance protocols, the Charity Governance Code and charity law, and manages risk and any potential conflicts appropriately.
- Ensure that the Board operates effectively in the consideration, iteration and approval of the strategy proposed by the CEO.
- Chair effective and inclusive board meetings, facilitating discussions to which all can contribute and ensuring well-evidenced, considered decision-making. Maintain oversight of Board sub-committees.

- Champion DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging) on the Board and ensure that Little Village's decision-making is grounded in DEIB thinking.
- Act with integrity, upholding and modelling Little Village's values and creating a culture that supports the organisation's charitable purpose.

Ambassadorial

- Represent the Board of Trustees at internal events when needed and volunteer across Little Village's sites.
- Act as an ambassador for Little Village and on occasion, represent the organisation externally.
- Support income generation activity and be willing to use connections to advance Little Village's aims.

Leadership of the Board of Trustees

- Build and lead a diverse and inclusive Board team with the right level and mix of knowledge, skills and experience to ensure Little Village delivers on its objectives and strategy.
- Ensure that Trustees are clear about the roles and that their expertise is well used.

- Create the environment for a high-performing Board team, nurturing productive relationships with and between individual Board members and reviewing individual Trustees' and the Board's performance on an annual basis.

Financial

- Ensuring sound financial oversight including review and approval of the annual budget.
- Providing oversight of high standards of financial management.

Guidance and support to the Chief Executive and SLT

- Develop and maintain a positive and productive working relationship with the CEO, staying in regular contact and acting as a sounding board to discuss strategic or staffing issues, coaching, supporting and challenging as necessary.
- Support the development of the CEO including overseeing an annual appraisal.
- Build strong relationships with members of Little Village's Senior Leadership Team and support them when needed.

Person specification

We're keen to attract applications from people who can bring broader perspectives, networks and energy to driving our ambitious future plans. We want someone who will be keen to support us as we think about raising the income that can help us achieve them.

Essential

- Experience of chairing boards, committees or senior leadership meetings.
- Experience of acting as an external ambassador, representing an organisation or cause and building external relationships and partnerships.
- Strong understanding of governance best practice (e.g. Charity Governance Code).
- Experience of working with or line managing a Chief Executive or senior leader.
- Ability to balance support with scrutiny.
- Strong strategic thinking skills.
- Commitment to DEIB and building an inclusive Board culture.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to build consensus.

- Tact, diplomacy, and ability to respect confidentiality.
- Impartiality and fairness in decision making.
- A strong and demonstrable commitment to Little Village's vision, mission and values.

We want our Board to reflect the communities we work in and to have a range of different voices within it. We know that diverse groups of people make better decisions. We also know that we will be stronger and more relevant as a Board that reflects the diversity of our Little Village family.

That's why we are particularly keen to receive applications from under-represented groups including: people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people with lived experience of poverty either personally or through family, experience of the care system, candidates without a higher education background and first-in-family graduates.

Desirable

- Lived experience of the issues faced by the children and families Little Village supports, as a child or as an adult.
- Experience of charity fundraising and income generation .
- Experience in financial oversight or risk management.



Commitment

The Chair of Trustees will serve a term of three years (renewable for a further three years). The total time commitment is approximately two days per month, but this may fluctuate as need arises.

This includes:

- Attending all Board meetings and Finance Committee meetings (one Board and one Committee meeting per quarter).
- Regular meetings with the CEO.
- Annual strategy day.

Our current Chair's term runs until April 2027, but we are recruiting early to make sure that we have enough time to identify and appoint a great candidate and put in place a good handover. The new appointee could join as Chair at the end of 2026 or, if they have other commitments that are coming to an end, we could wait for the Chair to join us in 2027.

It's important to us that the Chair and Trustees are fully engaged in the work that Little Village does and that they regularly interact with families, volunteers and staff members. All Trustees all commit to doing regular volunteering sessions at one of our sites. Our volunteering sessions take place in the

day or during the evening, and attendees are welcome to bring their children (with prior arrangement).

We are keen to work with all our Trustees to run our meetings in ways, at times and at places that are as accessible as possible. We're always happy to pay travel and childcare expenses to enable them to attend meetings.



How to apply

If you'd like to apply, please submit answers to the following questions. You can write your answers in this [online application form](#) or record them as a [voice note](#) or [video](#).

Please illustrate your responses with examples or evidence from your own life experiences – these could be from your working, volunteering, community or personal life.

- Why are you interested in joining Little Village specifically? (300 words or 3 minutes).
- How do you relate to our values – solidarity, love, sustainability and thriving? (300 words or 3 minutes).
- What knowledge, skills and experience have you gained in your life that you would bring to chairing our Board? (500 words or 5 minutes).
- How would you make a difference to Little Village? (200 words or 2 minutes).

Please also include a copy of your CV.

We will also invite you to complete an [anonymous equal opportunities form](#). The information contained in this questionnaire will be treated as confidential and will be used for monitoring purposes only. The information won't be seen by any person involved in the selection process for the Trustee role but will enable us to monitor how we are doing against our diversity and inclusion commitments.

Please submit your application by 12pm on Wednesday 3rd June 2026.



Recruitment timetable

We're aiming to keep to the timetable outlined below. First interviews will be conducted remotely via MS Teams. If you need additional support with this then please do let us know what you need and where we can help to make this accessible.

Application deadline

12pm, Wednesday 3rd June 2026

First interviews

First interviews will be held online on MS Teams with a panel of Trustees: Wednesday 24th June 2026

Second round

Candidates will be invited to visit one of our hubs with our CEO as an opportunity to see our work and to meet her in person: w/c 29th June or w/c 6th July 2026.

Final interviews

Final interviews will be held in person at a Central London venue on Monday 6th July 2026. Candidates will meet a panel of Trustees and the CEO.

It is anticipated that, following reference checks, and subject to their availability and existing commitments, the successful candidate would observe the Board meeting scheduled for 8th October, and be formally appointed at the following meeting in December. However, we are open to discussion with candidates about their timings and our current Chair is able to stay on longer to accommodate this if needed.



Want to find out more before putting in an application?

If you'd like an informal and private chat about the role of Chair of Trustees at Little Village and what it might involve, we encourage you to get in touch.

To organise a chat with one of our team: our CEO, **Sophie Livingstone**, the People Committee Chair **Kate Hesselbee**, or our current Chair, **Olivia Gillan**, please contact Vikki at Victoria@littlevillagehq.org

Thank you for your interest in Little Village. We look forward to receiving your application.

**"I CAN'T TELL YOU
HOW GRATEFUL I
AM TO EVERYONE
WHO DONATED. THE
HELP HAS BEEN
LIFE-CHANGING."**

— Parent we supported



**Baby things,
big impact.**

Design and typesetting: hampson.studio

Photography: Jo Mieszkowski