



Chair of Trustees' Statement

'I am very pleased to report another strong year for the Charity as we continue to expand and develop our services to meet the growing need to support Young Carers.

The Trustees and I are very grateful to the CEO, staff team and volunteers with BFYC for their continued hard work and outstanding efforts to improve the lives of our Young Carers.

The clear evidence is that demand, and complexity of needs, for Young Carer support is continuing to grow across the County.

Our plan over the next few years is to provide on the ground support to the whole of Oxfordshire.

To achieve this, and continue to sustain these services, we will need to increase fundraising, staff and volunteer numbers, and continue to develop partnerships where possible. It's an exciting and rewarding time to be involved with our Charity.

I am very grateful to our excellent group of Trustee's for their continued commitment to the Charity.

In the coming year the Trustee Board will continue to develop its capabilities as BFYC moves to the next stage of the journey.

Thank you to everyone, I look forward to another year where we can collectively make a difference.'

About Us

Be Free Young Carers was established as a charity in June 1994 and is currently the only charity supporting young carers in Oxfordshire.

Be Free Young Carers provides emotional and practical support to young carers and young adult carers, visiting carers in their homes. The service arranges free support activities and trips for young carers between the ages of 8 to 17. Be Free YC works closely with other agencies to help those most in need, signposting where appropriate.

Feedback from young carers is over 95% satisfaction. The Charity has seen rising demand and has grown over the last few years from its base in South and Vale to provide a direct service in Oxford City, with plans to provide support in West and North Oxfordshire in the next few years.

Our Finances

The Charity achieved an overall surplus of £82,979 for the year ended 31 March 2024 against a surplus of £20,762 in 2023. Total funds at year end were £288,577 (2023: £205,598).

Income was received from Grants, Trusts, and Donations. Total Income for the year was £413,413 (2023: £338,145). Total expenditure for the year was £330,434 (2023: £317,383).

Reserves policy The Board of Trustees has designated a reserve of £55,000 to pay liabilities, complete and close work with current clients in the event of the organisation having to close.

A separate designated reserve of £31,340 is to cover the cost of the balance of the loan from Guideposts.

The Charity has £18,100 in restricted funds, and £3,670 invested in Fixed Assets, with the remaining £266,807 as Free Reserves which satisfies the requirements of the policy. Day to Day Operations Sabiene North (CEO) and her team of nine deliver the day to day operations of the charity.

These consist of two part time members of staff, with one staff member working remotely. Each team member has bimonthly 1-2-1 and performance reviews which reflect the charities overall business aims and objectives.

The staff handbook provides information on internal policies and procedures. Our frontline staff all have access to clinical supervision monthly and/or as and when they require this support, to help with the cases that they are dealing with.

We also have a employee assistance programme in place for staff which includes free six week counselling should staff require this.

Role Profile

As Chair of the Charity, you will have the responsibilities of a Trustee, lead the Board of Trustee's, set strategic direction and oversee the organisation. The responsibilities of the role include:

Knowledge & Experience

- Providing leadership to the organisation and the board by ensuring that everyone remains focused on the delivery of the organisation's charitable purposes in order to provide greater public benefit
- Chairing and facilitating board meetings
- Giving direction to board policy-making
- Checking that decisions taken at meetings are implemented
- Representing the organisation at functions and meetings, and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate
- Bringing impartiality and objectivity to decision-making
- With the chief executive:
 - Planning the annual cycle of board meetings and other general meetings where required, for example annual general meeting
 - Setting agendas for board and other general meetings
 - Developing the board of trustees including induction, training, appraisal and succession planning

Skills & Abilities

- Addressing conflict within the board and within the organisation, and liaising with the chief executive to achieve this
- Liaising with the chief executive to keep an overview of the organisation's affairs and to provide support as appropriate
- Leading the process of supporting and appraising the performance of the chief executive
- Sitting on appointment and disciplinary panels
- The vice-chair acts for the chair when the chair is not available and undertakes assignments at the request of the chair

Person Specification

In addition to the person specification for a trustee, the Chair should have the following qualities.

- Leadership skills
- Experience of committee work
- Tact and diplomacy
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.

It would also be desirable for the chair to have a background and experience in social care, education or youth sectors. A wider involvement with the voluntary sector and other networks is also helpful.

Referrals are always welcome, please ask others whom you feel may be interested.

Terms of Appointment

Time Commitment

- Attend quarterly board meetings from 5pm – 7pm,.
- Attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) once per year.
- From time to time or as needed, attend one of our sub-committees so that you can gain a good insight into the Charity's day to day activities and support the team. Sub-committees meet once a quarter, usually 2 weeks before the Trustee Board meeting.
- Get involved in other activities depending on your skills / interests / preferences.
- Attend meetings or visits with the CEO and our staff to ensure we all stay close to the services we are providing.
- Support with matters and or decisions where necessary between meetings.
- Meetings are currently held in person with the option online.

We understand and respect that people who are working full-time and/or have family/other responsibilities may not be able to travel to the meetings in person sometimes.

Chair/ Trustees are appointed for a three-year term at a time which can be extended twice, meaning a maximum of nine years.

How to Apply

Our current Board of Trustees have varied backgrounds and experience. We recognise the need to be entirely representative of the community we serve in Oxfordshire and with this in mind, we're keen for our board to reflect it. We would like to hear from adult applicants of all ages,

gender, ethnicity, sexuality and sexual orientation, socio-economic background, religion, neurodiversity and with lived experiences.

If you wish to apply, please email your CV and covering note setting out why you are interested in becoming the Chair of BFYC. Send to the current Chair of Trustees, David Wells - david.wells@befreec.org.uk, and please do include any specific questions.

Pre-appointment checks

It is important to note that pre-appointment declarations will be requested to ensure that applicants have not been disqualified by law from acting as a trustee.

We will also need to carry out an enhanced DBS check, prior to appointment along with reference checks and other due diligence.

Be Free Young Carers follow Safer recruitment. Please see our Safer Recruitment policy for further information.