



FOR GIRLS
FOR FRIENDSHIP
FOR SOCIETY

GFS CHAIR OF THE BOARD CANDIDATE PACK



MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

Dear Candidate

Thank you for expressing an interest in joining and leading GFS (Girls Friendly Society).

Girls as young as six are facing a self-esteem and confidence crisis. As one of the oldest charities supporting girls in the UK, GFS offers an early intervention programme developed from almost 150 years of experience in supporting vulnerable or disadvantaged girls and young women.

Right now there is much for us to do, and the Board and Committees are dedicated to ensuring we do all we can to support the charity in addressing this need.

It is a great privilege to be appointed as part of the governance team at an organisation with such a rich and inspiring history. It is an even bigger privilege to have the chance to lead it.

We have been working to deliver our strategy, [A Clear View Ahead](#), focussed on culture, growth and sustainability. We have achieved so much positive change and are now ready to develop a new strategic plan for the next three to five years.

At the same time, we are approaching our 150th anniversary and we are looking for a new Chair to help us make the most of such a special time.

From a personal perspective, I've really enjoyed my brief time working with GFS and am sad to be stepping down. I've been so impressed by the team of wonderful, passionate and impressive individuals I got to work with, who clearly care so deeply about helping girls and young women to achieve their potential.

This is a wonderful opportunity to support the charity to deliver an ambitious new strategy during an exciting period of change.

We'd love to hear from you.

Amundeeep Dhanoa
Chair of the Board of Trustees

ABOUT GFS

Our Vision and Mission

Our **vision** is of a world where girls and young women are free to be themselves and feel proud of who they are. Our **mission** is to support and inspire girls and young women.

We will create spaces where they feel safe and valued, so that they can build strong foundations that will prepare them for life's challenges.

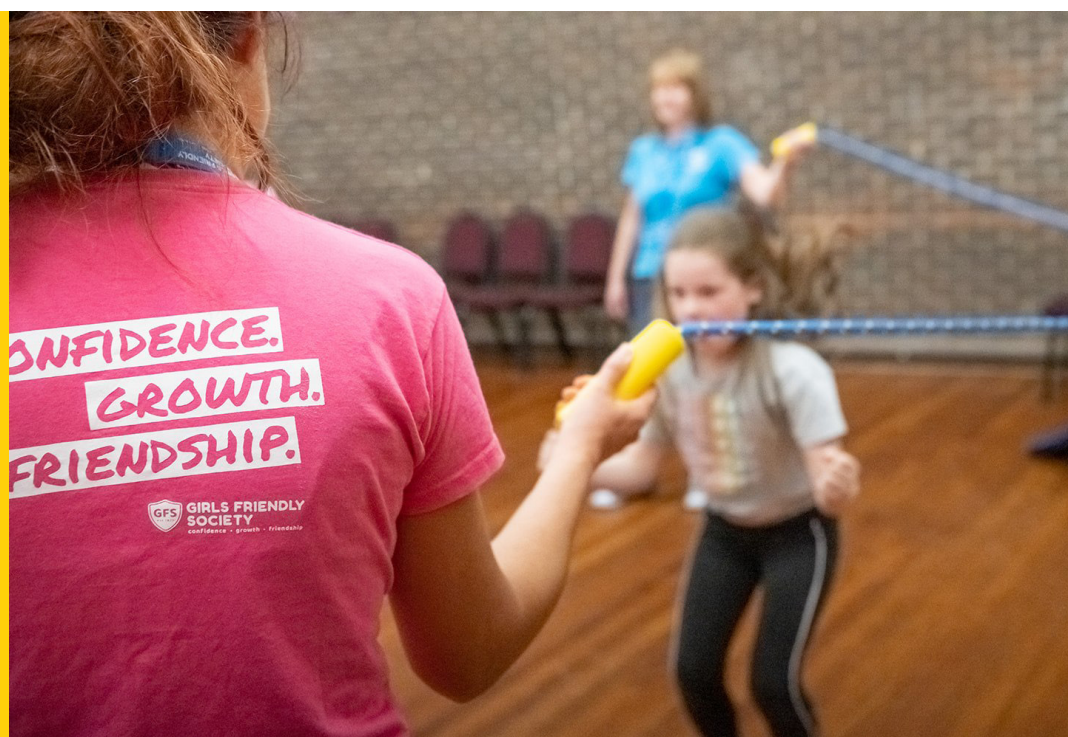
Our staff team and national network of more than 200 volunteers deliver a variety of activities, services and support to girls and young women in a safe, non-judgmental environment throughout England and Wales.

Girls as young as six tell us they cannot be themselves and we can see that they are disadvantaged by this. The pressures on girls in today's world make it hard for them to feel like they can be themselves.

This affects their confidence, self-esteem, resilience and social connections, and holds them back, contributing to the ongoing issue of gender inequality.

GFS provides safe spaces where girls can be themselves, feel accepted and develop the skills they need to cope with these pressures, particularly before they enter their teenage years where these challenges can grow.

Further information about GFS can be found at girlsfriendlysociety.org.uk



GFS Board Members (Trustees)

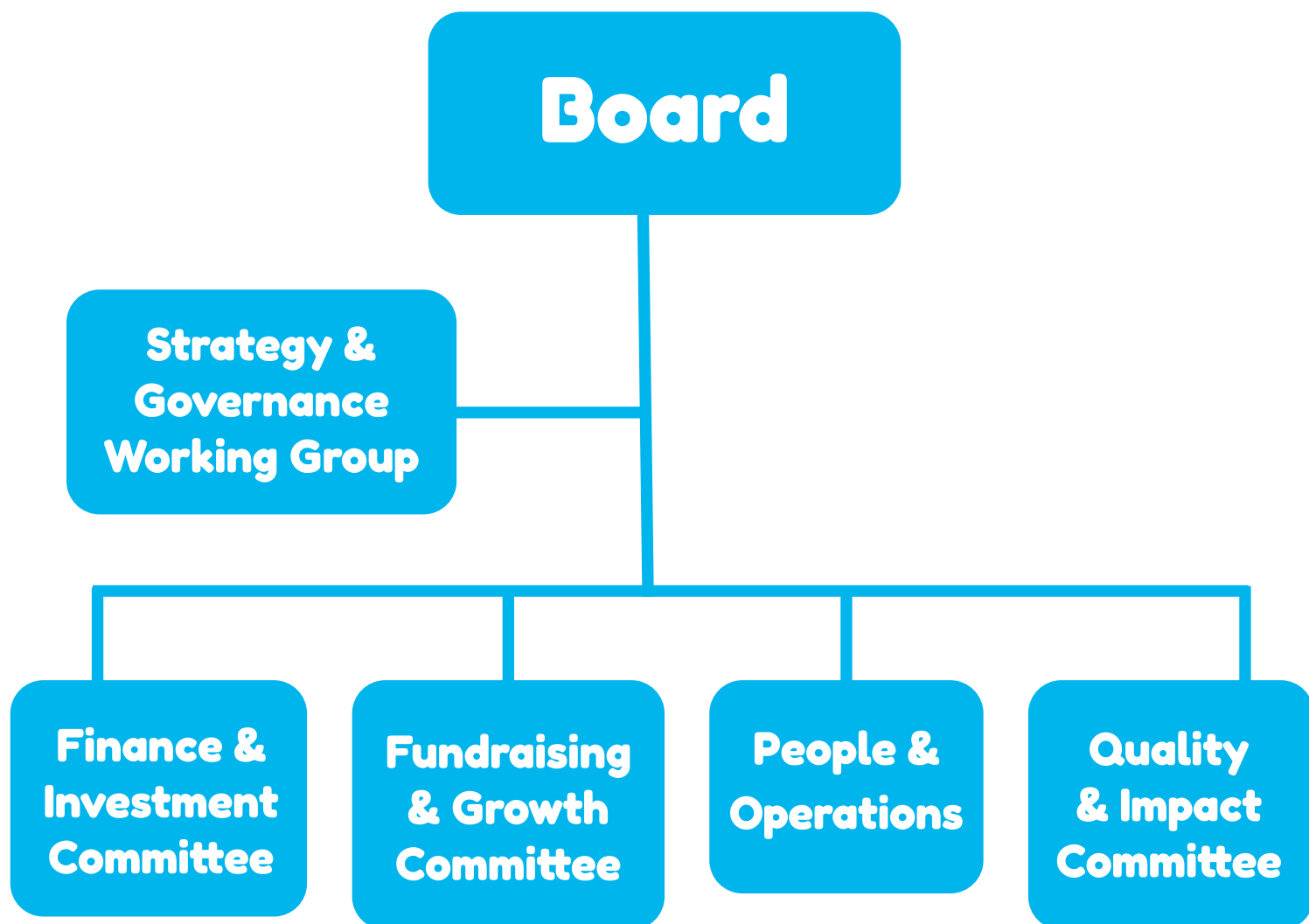
Our current board and committee structure is shown below:

Board and Committees

	Finance & Investments	Fundraising & Growth	Strategy & Governance	Quality & Impact	People & Operations
Board	Margaux Young Treasurer Committee Chair Olivia Lewis Investment Trustee	Chandni Radia Fundraising Chair Remi Turton Trustee	Deeps Dhanoa Board Chair	Sacha Rose-Smith Safeguarding Trustee Committee Chair Bryony Thomas Legal Trustee Acushla Young Young Trustee Frances Payne History Trustee	Parv Sangera Board Vice Chair Committee Chair Tasila Banda EDI Trustee Georgia Whitfield Young Trustee
CEO		<<<<<<<< Laura Sercombe CEO >>>>>>>>			
SLT	Nic Shoults Head of Finance & Support Services	David Hannam Head of Fundraising & Comms		Beverley Huie Head of People Jemma Moonie-Dalton Head of Operations S	Charlotte Hunt Head of Operations N
Committee	Anna Blomqvist Chloe Timms Georgia Mylona Julia Hedley	Olivia Williams Olivia Weston Fleurie Forbes Martin Cat Barry Natasha Iles Ellie Rich Poole Iza Seabrook	Board members and selected committee members as required	Laura Shafi Anne Hewitt Madison Kerr Carina Spaulding Voke Aghoghovbia	Charlotte Dickinson Shadei Rabeie Cass Potter Faye Cooper Aran Pascual Kat Link

Time Commitments

- GFS Chair meets with the GFS CEO once a month and chairs the GFS Board meeting once a quarter.
- GFS Chair leads any strategic meetings – typically once a year and some occasional meetings in between.
- GFS Chair does not attend any of the committee meetings at present
- GFS's Board Members (Trustees) serve an initial three-year term and are eligible for reappointment for an additional term.
- The four Board meetings a year are held virtually, in March, June, September and December on a Saturday morning.
- There are times where we will ask for additional meetings where board decision making is required on key matters between meetings and these are typically held on a mutually agreeable evening



Focus areas

- Focus Areas
- Finance
- Investments
- Finance and Investment Risks

Focus areas

- Fundraising
- Growth Plan
- Market Research

Focus areas

- Serious Incidents and Safeguarding
- Engagement, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Audit
- Girl-shaped GFS

Focus areas

- Employee and volunteer wellbeing
- Retention
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Regional Committees

Find out more about our existing trustees and committee members here:

www.girlsfriendlysociety.org.uk/what-we-do/meet-the-team/our-trustees-and-committee-members

Our Staff Team

We have a dedicated staff team who care passionately about achieving our vision and mission for girls and young women.

We are all excited about our work and welcoming new trustees and committee members to be a part of this journey with us.

Over the last few years we have done so much work to review our place in the sector and map out a strong strategic plan.

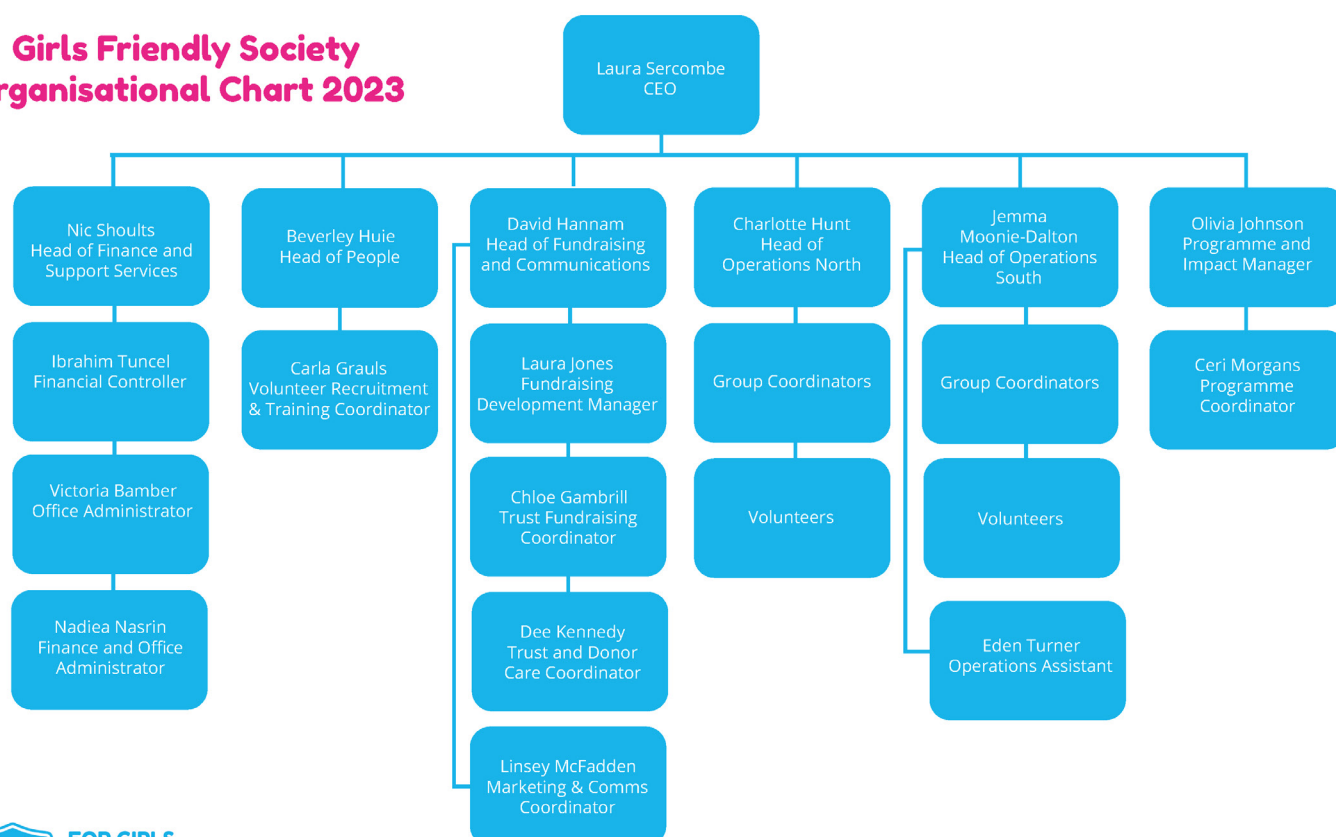
This meant we also had to consider making some tough decisions as we prioritised our work around listening to the girls, championing inclusion and EDI more broadly because these matter to us as team.

As a result we know who we are and how we want to operate. What comes next is an exciting conversation we are looking forward to have!

We would love you to get in touch and be part of changing society for girls and young women but especially those who need it the most.

Find out more about our staff team at girlsfriendlysociety.org.uk/staff

Girls Friendly Society Organisational Chart 2023



WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

We are looking for a natural leader who cares about the work we do. The Charity has worked hard on establishing the team, infrastructure, governance structure and resources to be able to do meet the need that exists. We are now looking for a Chair who can help us develop the next chapter of our life and a strong strategic plan.

To do that well, an understanding of the 'support and challenge' approach that works well in the third sector is helpful but so is an interest and excitement around strategic development. The organisation is also in a good place to be able to scale and so raising awareness and supporting with sound income generation strategy is helpful.

We would love to talk to you because you are reading this. We know that you need to find out more and our welcome evening is a chance to get to know us a little better. So please come along and find out more or e mail or call our CEO who always enjoys talking all things GFS!

Our values are important to us and we are looking for those who join us to want to embrace them too:

Ambitious: We have big aspirations. For our organisation, for the girls and young women we interact with and for a fair future.

Girl focused: We are here to make a difference for girls and young women. Everything we do will be in the interest of and informed by them.

Brave: We make brave choices in support of what we know is right.

Feminist: GFS is a community, where girls and women support each other, seeking to address inequalities faced by women in all that we do.

Inclusive: We believe in a fair society for everyone, and all girls and women are welcome at GFS. We will not let personal circumstances to be barriers to engaging with our services.

Fun: Although girls and young women face challenges, we also believe in the importance of approaching our mission with a sense of fun.

We welcome applications from everyone irrespective of sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, faith and religion, disability and age.

ABOUT THE ROLE

Role Description: Chair

Overall purpose

Provide leadership and contribute to the Board of Trustees enabling the fulfilment of responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of GFS.

Assist in developing GFS's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the Memorandum & Articles, Bye-Laws and legal and regulatory guidelines.

Helping to drive the organisation forward, increasing its effectiveness for the benefit of girls and young women.

Key responsibilities:

- Ensuring that the values and mission of GFS are upheld in all of the decisions and decision-making processes of the Board.
- Leading the Trustees' discussions on the strategic plans for GFS and enabling the Leadership Team to implement them.
- Providing support and guidance to the CEO and ensuring that GFS is run in accordance with the decisions of the Trustees and its Memorandum & Articles, Bye-Laws, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Providing line management to the CEO and monitoring their performance.
- Supporting the CEO with a mutual responsibility for developing this relationship.

Main responsibilities:

- Planning meeting schedules and setting agendas with the CEO and according to Board procedures.
- Ensuring the efficient conduct of GFS's Board meetings and monitoring that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.
- Ensuring that all Board members are given the opportunity to express their views before important decisions are made, and that the values and mission of GFS are observed.
- Meeting periodically with the CEO to ensure efficient communication between management and the Board. Leading the process of appraising the performance of the CEO and carrying out monthly review meetings.
- Ensuring that GFS receives professional advice when it is needed, either from the Leadership Team or from external sources.

- Ensuring that the performance of the Board and the Trustees is reviewed periodically and that Trustees skills are up-to-date to carry out the role.
- Ensuring the recruitment of the CEO and sitting on appointment and disciplinary panels when necessary.
- Working with the CEO to oversee the Annual General Meeting.
- Act in the best interest of GFS and ensure its work is carried out.
- Take legal responsibility for the work of GFS and ensure everything is legal and safe.
- Delegate the day-to-day management of staff and volunteers to the CEO.
- In the absence of CEO, being available to staff for decisions/ advice.

Duties of a Trustee:

- To ensure that GFS complies with its memorandum and articles of association, Bye-Laws, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that GFS pursues its charitable objects as defined in the memorandum of association.
- To ensure the charity applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects i.e. GFS must not spend money on activities that are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are.
- To contribute to the strategic direction of the organisation, agreeing overall policy, goals, targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of GFS.
- To ensure the financial stability of GFS.
- To mentor new Trustees, provide encouragement, support and sharing of expertise.

Additional information:

Offer of this role is conditional on receipt of two professional references and a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We are looking for an exceptional individual to build on the work that our previous chair has done to lead and grow the charity for the next generation of girls and young women.

We believe that this is an excellent opportunity for people who really care about our mission and who bring experience, skills, and expertise but also who want to work with a great team of people!

GFS is a charity dedicated to enabling girls and young women to become unstoppable. We are seeking people who have an interest in the development of girls and young women and have an appreciation of the pressures currently facing children and young people.

To be a trustee of an organisation is an exciting and fulfilling role and the most effective boards are ones which benefit from individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences and skill sets.

We have an amazing board and set of committees built around this premise and who are all looking forward to working with their next chair to build an exciting future for GFS.

Experience:

- Experience of developing strategy.
- Evidence of having led a team.
- A track record of commitment to promoting EDI.
- Experience of having inspired developmental change management.
- Successful experience of operating within a board in a charitable, public sector or commercial organisation, or for an NGO or other statutory funder.
- A proven track record of sound judgement and effective decision-making.
- A history of impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.
- We would particularly be interested in candidates with experience in scaling organisation through natural growth, acquisitions or mergers

Specific skills:

- Expertise in leadership, people management, strategic development
- Great sense of humour

Knowledge skills and understanding:

- Commitment to the organisation and a willingness to devote the time.
- Good, independent judgement and strategic vision.
- Skilled meeting facilitator, able to get the best from all members of the board and ensure all feel safe to contribute and know that their opinion is valued
- Able to encourage constructive challenge, whilst being able to effectively draw conflicting views to conclusion in a positive manner
- An understanding and acceptance of legal duties, responsibilities, liabilities of trusteeship.
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
- An understanding of the respective roles of the Chair, Trustees and CEO
- Able to establish a strong relationship with the CEO, providing the right balance of support, challenge and autonomy to deliver.

Time Commitment:

- GFS's Board Members serve an initial three-year term and are eligible for reappointment for an additional term.
- Four Board meetings a year either in Central London or virtually, in March, June, September and December. These meetings are currently held on Saturday.
- Occasional strategy days, workshops or working groups to support the development and delivery of the charity's strategic aims.

Personal qualities:

- A commitment to GFS
- Integrity
- Good, independent judgement
- Strategic vision
- An ability to think creatively.
- A willingness to speak their mind in a respectful way

Additional information:

Offer of this role is conditional on receipt of two professional references and a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check.

HOW TO APPLY

To find out more:

E-mail our CEO to ask a question and ideally book a chat because she loves to talk about all things GFS: laura@girlsfriendlysociety.org.uk

To apply for this role, please supply the following:

- A copy of your CV, including details of two referees (who will not of course be contacted without your prior knowledge or consent).
- Supporting statement, explaining your interest in GFS and how you believe your skills and experience match the requirements of the role.
- A completed Fit and Proper Persons Declaration (available from Laura).

These documents should be sent to laura@girlsfriendlysociety.org.uk by **9th February 2024**.

