



FIRST LOVE FOUNDATION

Trustee & Treasurer Recruitment Pack

2024

For a Britain without Poverty



OUR ORGANISATION

Charity Name: First Love Foundation,

Charity Address: Unit 901, Import Building, 2 Clove Crescent, E14 2BE

Charity Registration Number: 1137819

Date Founded: March 2010

Board of Trustees: Aerold Bentley (Co-Founder), Samuel Okafor (Chair), & Rachel Redfearn

CEO: Denise Bentley (also Co-Founder)

OUR VISION

A Britain without poverty.

MISSION

To empower people to create their own independent lives, by working alongside them, with love.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We are a Christian organisation committed to serving all members of the community regardless of faith, ethnicity, socio-economic background, or any other factors. We are motivated by the biblical commands to pursue justice, dignity, and equality for all members of society.



HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

First Love Foundation, a grassroots organisation established in 2010, has been at the forefront of addressing high levels of deprivation experienced in the borough of Tower Hamlets. Our unique approach and unwavering commitment to transforming lives make us an invaluable resource for assistance and community support.

Our inaugural project, the Tower Hamlets Foodbank, provided valuable insights into the drivers and root causes of poverty and crisis. Through a 'listen-learn-design' process, we develop solutions to address the underlying causes of poverty, stabilise households, and dismantle unseen barriers to social mobility.

One pivotal development involved integrating expert welfare rights advice and holistic, comprehensive support beyond food provision. This was delivered in partnership with expert benefit advisers and key decision-makers from the local authority and Department of Work & Pensions.

Spearheaded by our CEO, Denise Bentley, this approach marked a significant shift. Instead of advice being confined to advice centres, it is now effectively delivered in community settings. This change emphasises accessibility and community engagement, ensuring that individuals receive the support they need where they live.

Through strategic partnerships with the Child Poverty Action Group (CAPG) and key stakeholders, including Tower Hamlets Council Benefits Directorate and the Department for Work & Pensions, we were able to leverage their expertise and resources. As a result, we became the first charity in the UK to adopt a collaborative model, paving the way for collective efforts that benefited various segments of the community.

Emerging from the pandemic with deeper understanding of the challenges faced by households, we strategically transitioned. In 2021, we achieved accreditation to independently provide expert advice services. This transition, a testament to our adaptability and effectiveness, was a significant milestone.

Additionally, in a UK first, we closed our foodbank in 2022. This decision was spotlighted in a [Guardian article](#) that discussed how foodbanks were not the ultimate solution. Our move allowed us to channel all resources toward addressing the more complex issues that service users were presenting, a decision that has proven extremely impactful.

Advocacy and Holistic Support for Vulnerable Households

As dedicated advocates and welfare rights experts, we specialise in reaching the most marginalised households—those with low or no income and who may not actively engage with local support services. By dismantling barriers to success, we achieve transformational outcomes.

How we achieve this:

- **Holistic Approach:** Our services extend to comprehensive support. We recognise that poverty is multifaceted, and our approach addresses immediate needs and long-term stability.
- **Trustees:** Our Board of Trustees provides knowledge and experience to build strategy and progress the charity.
- **Advisory Board:** Our organisation benefits from the wisdom of an advisory Board comprising individuals from diverse backgrounds and skill sets.
- **Respected Impact:** Our work is highly regarded for its ability to engage with vulnerable and hard-to-reach households. Our ultimate goal is to lift households from poverty by removing employment barriers, increasing income, and reducing reliance on emergency food aid. We empower households to thrive independently and sustainably.

THE ROLE OF TRUSTEE

First Love Foundation is recruiting new trustees who will bring their experience, knowledge, dedication, and forward-thinking skills to help govern and manage the charity's financial commitment.

We rely on dedicated individuals to ensure its success. As a trustee, you play a crucial role in guiding the charity and positively impacting the community and society. Let's delve into the responsibilities and qualities expected of our trustees:

Overall Control and Responsibility: Trustees hold the reins of the charity, ensuring it remains aligned with its original purpose. They lead and shape its direction.

Decision-Making with Impact: Being a trustee involves making choices that directly affect people's lives. Your decisions will shape the charity's trajectory.

Skills and Experience: Trustees leverage their expertise to support the charity's mission. Your unique skills contribute to achieving our goals.

KEY ATTRIBUTES:

- **Commitment:** Dedication to First Love Foundation and a willingness to invest the necessary time.
- **Courage:** Prepared to propose unpopular recommendations and the ability to express your viewpoint.
- **Availability:** Willingness to provide advice and respond to inquiries as needed.
- **Judgment and Vision:** Independent thinking and strategic foresight.
- **Legal Awareness:** Understanding of trustees' duties, responsibilities, and liabilities.
- **Team Player:** Effective collaboration within the trustee and senior management teams.
- **Role Clarity:** Awareness of the distinct roles of the Chair, Trustees, and CEO.
- **Supportive Leadership:** Assisting the Chair in leading the charity alongside the CEO.
- **Self-Reflection:** Seeking feedback and personal development.
- **Networking:** Utilising connections to advance the organisation.
- **Faith-Based Commitment:** First Love Foundation is a Christian charity, and we exclusively recruit practicing Christians to serve on our Board.

By becoming a trustee, you don't just join a Board, you actively contribute to lifting households out of poverty, promoting social justice, and fostering sustainable change.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A TRUSTEE

Statutory Duties

The Board of Trustees are jointly responsible for the charity's overall governance, strategic direction, and financial health, and for ensuring the organisation's activities align with its mission and values per the governing document's legal and regulatory guidelines. This includes:

- Ensuring the organisation complies with its governing document, i.e. articles of association.
- Making sure the organisation pursues its objectives as defined in its governing document.
- Monitoring the organisation's application of its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives.
- Contributing actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- Safeguarding the good name, reputation, and values of the organisation.
- Observing the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.

- Ensuring the financial stability of the organisation, including projection.
- Protecting and managing the organisation's property and ensuring the appropriate investment of the organisation's funds.

In addition, in accordance with other trustees, to hold the charity "in trust" for current and future beneficiaries by:

- Ensuring the charity has a clear strategic direction.
- Responsible for the charity's performance and "corporate" behaviour.
- Acting as guardians of the charity's tangible and intangible assets, taking all due care over their security, deployment, and proper application.
- Ensuring that the charity's governance is of the highest standard.
- Working creatively and collaboratively with the other trustees.

The above list of duties is indicative only and not exhaustive. The Trustee will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with the role. All new trustees will receive an induction which includes experiencing first-hand the crisis work we do in Tower Hamlets and beyond.

THE ROLE OF TREASURER

The **Treasurer** will monitor the charity's financial responsibilities and report to the Board of Trustees regarding the organisation's economic health in accordance with the governing document and legal and regulatory requirements. As one of the Trustees, you will be responsible for the charity's overall governance and strategic direction and for developing the organisation's goals per the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

As Treasurer, help to ensure the smooth running of the charity's finances.

- Chair meetings of the quarterly held Finance Sub-Committee.
- Oversee the organisation's investments, budget, and accounts.
- Guide and advise the Board regarding management accounts and financial statements within the relevant financial policy framework.
- Keep the Board informed about its financial obligations.
- Ensure that First Love Foundation's financial resources meet its present and future needs and that an appropriate reserves policy exists.
- Support the development of a robust financial model to support strategy for growth and keep the charity on track with delivering it.
- Ensure that the accounts are prepared and disclosed as funders and the relevant statutory bodies require. Moreover, they are audited, and auditor recommendations are accepted and implemented.

Financial Reporting

- Monitor management accounts and raise concerns/variances with the CEO.
- Monitor cashflow with CEO.
- Prepare the Treasurer's report for discussion at Trustee Board meetings.

Acting as a full member of the Board

- Attending quarterly held Trustee meetings.
- Ensure the charity's operations is in strict adherence to its governing document and other relevant legislation or regulations

- Ensure compliance with its policies and procedures. Monitor policies, practices, quality standards, and the organisation's culture, ensuring they keep with its ethos.
- Oversee the organisation's risk management process.
- Provide leadership around equality, diversity & inclusion
- Assist with investigation and/or decision making relating to complaints, grievances, and staff disciplinary issues.
- Act as Ambassador, promoting First Love Foundation's work
- Fulfil any other duties and assignments that may be required from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

Sympathetic to the Christian beliefs of the charity

- Promote the organisation and enhance its reputation by being a good ambassador.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

SKILLS & EXPERIENCE		Ess	Des
1.1	Excellent communication skills and listening skills	X	
1.2	Ability to analyse information effectively and challenge appropriately.	X	
1.3	Performed as a finance professional, including managing intricate accounts.		X
1.4	Commitment to First Love Foundation's purpose, vision, values and aims.	X	
1.5	Willing to devote the time and effort needed to the role, including sharing relevant skills and expertise.	X	

QUALIFICATIONS		Ess	Des
2.1	Professional Accountancy Qualification (ACA, ACCA, CIMA or CIPFA)		X

KNOWLEDGE		Ess	Des
3.1	Understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities, and obligations of Trustees.	X	
3.2	Understanding the Memorandum and Articles of Association.	X	

OTHER REQUIREMENTS		Ess	Des
4.1	Flexibility: Willingness to participate in occasional activities, e.g. online/in person (where appropriate) fundraising events and communicating with churches in the local area.	X	
4.2	Integrity and Confidentiality: Handle sensitive information disclosed by service users in an appropriate manner, ensuring client consent, never breaching client confidentiality, and always in the best interests of the service users we serve.	X	
4.3	DBS Check: This will need to be undertaken in accordance with Safeguarding requirements as the role will involve working with sensitive information.	X	
4.4	Considerate of the Christian aims, beliefs & values of First Love Foundation. Respectful of our core values of love, compassion, dignity, and justice.		X
4.5	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion: Value all people who interact with or work with First Love Foundation and its associated projects.	X	

OUR FUTURE

First Love Foundation is an organisation where the team is at the heart of its operations. Led by Denise Bentley, the charity's Co-Founder and CEO, it consists of individuals with a burning passion to serve. The organisation is established with members from diverse backgrounds, but each member's core value is in unison: to combat injustice.

A message from Denise Bentley, Chief Executive Officer of First Love Foundation:

"First Love Foundation is on an insightful journey, and I wanted to thank you for wanting to join us.

*When I started this charity, I had hoped the need for it would end, but the opposite has happened. There is now a **bigger necessity** for our organisation, and that is due to the greater injustice, poverty, and suffering.*

*The team and I see individuals from every aspect of life, and they all have one need that unites them: they want help but with **love** and **compassion**.*

*My lifelong mission has been to bring **justice** to those who have been denied it, and every member of First Love Foundation **champions the same battle**.*

We all look forward to working with you and continuing to make a difference in the lives of those we serve."

Denise Bentley
Chief Executive



Interested?

Here's how to apply for this role:

- Send your CV and a covering letter to recruitment@firstlovefoundation.org.uk detailing how your experience and qualities meet the requirements of this role and why you are interested in the role.
- Deadline: **12 July 2024, 12:00pm**
- If you are interested, please submit your application as early as possible, since interviews will be held on a rolling basis.
- Please note: We reserve the right to close this vacancy early if we receive sufficient applications for the role.