



GLASSDOOR

A route out of homelessness

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Candidate pack



Who we are

Our vision is a world where no one has to sleep on the streets of London, and we're working every day to achieve this. By partnering with churches and community centres in five boroughs in West London to provide emergency winter night shelter and year-round casework support, Glass Door Homeless Charity is committed to supporting people get—and stay—off the street. We also seek to influence policy in areas where we have a particular knowledge or expertise – to give a voice to those who might otherwise have none.

Over the last 20 years, Glass Door has built and coordinated the UK's largest open-access network of emergency winter shelters and casework support services for people affected by homelessness. From November 23 to March 24 we provided shelter for up to 120 people each night who otherwise would have been forced to sleep on the street. During the severe weather conditions we are able to increase the number of places we offer, made possible by the flexible nature of our night shelter service.

Glass Door operates open access services for people affected by homelessness. Open access means that anyone experiencing or at risk of homelessness can turn to Glass Door regardless of who they are or where they are from.

We offer a variety of services, not all services are right for everyone, but no one will be turned away without an offer of support. Year-round, people can access advice and support through our team of expert caseworkers, to build a route out of homelessness.

We believe everyone has inherent dignity and we welcome those who turn to us as our guests – a term which has a special significance for our Trustees, staff, and volunteers.

It is important to understand that Glass Door relies entirely on voluntary donations and does not seek any funding that would restrict our ability to maintain our open access ethos. This means that statutory funding is almost never an option. As an independent charity, it is thanks to the support of generous private individuals, partners, churches, community groups, businesses, trusts and foundations that we can continue to provide shelter and support to those who need it most.



**We are
welcoming**

What we do

Shelter

The shelter model we offer is thanks to partnerships with churches across West and South West London, who provide their premises at no charge, and to our dedicated team of volunteers who support us with their time, skills and energy.

Glass Door not only saves lives by providing refuge from the cold during the winter, we also help our guests build more stable futures, supporting them to find accommodation, work or training, to access benefits, recover lost ID, set up bank accounts - or even simply to reconnect with family or friends. Year-round, anyone in need can speak with one of our dedicated caseworkers who offer advice, advocacy and practical support.



Casework Advice & Support

Our casework team currently consists of 15 caseworkers including our two Co-Heads of casework, our three senior caseworkers and our Migrant Project Manager. The team works with people in a range of housing related situations (vulnerably housed, hidden homeless, those at risk of homelessness and rough sleepers). We also offer migrant and multiple disadvantage support through a number of specialist roles within the team. This year we opened a women's shelter, in response to the growing number of women experiencing homelessness or living in unsuitable, sometimes dangerous accommodation. We have also opened a women's drop-in service.

The daytime advice service is made possible thanks to partnerships with drop-in centres, including Chelsea Methodist Church, Ace of Clubs, HTB Day Shelter, the Vineyard Community Centre, St Cuthbert's Centre and the Upper Room. Guests visiting these drop-in centres can also access other services provided by the drop-ins, such as lunch, laundry, clothing and showers.

Homelessness in London

People become homeless for lots of reasons, and often it's the accumulation of multiple, constant pressures that act in unison to cause homelessness. Our guests have faced challenges like the loss of a job, domestic violence, mental illness, release from the care system with few resources, breakdown of a relationship and the death of a partner or parent - to name just a few.

Anyone faced with a set-back can stumble; a series of mishaps can cause a life to unravel.

On top of this, the stock of affordable housing is dwindling and the PRS property market in London remains prohibitively high for many. With inadequate benefits, a lack of social housing and a growing cost-of-living crisis, more and more people are finding themselves unable to make ends meet.

Between October and December 2023, 4,389 people were recorded as having slept rough in London. This data, from the Greater London Authority's CHAIN database, tracks rough sleepers in London seen by outreach workers. This is up 23% from the total number of people who were seen rough sleeping in the same period last year (3,570). Within the overall total, 2,283 people had never slept rough in London before, up 34% from the prior year.

While the statistics do reflect general trends, the numbers are widely acknowledged to under-represent the true scale of rough sleeping.

The rough sleeping count represents the tip of the iceberg; those staying in shelters and hostels are not included. Nor are the people sleeping on night buses, staying out of sight, or sofa-surfing.

Combined with the cost-of-living crisis and bills and rent going through the roof, more and more people are approaching us because they have to choose between paying rent and eating, and they're afraid of losing their homes.

As with previous years, most people facing homelessness said being evicted or asked to leave by the person they were staying with was the cause. People are closer to the edge of homelessness than ever before.

Homelessness in one of the richest cities in the world is shameful. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea has the largest statistical gap between the richest and poorest residents in all of London while demand for our services continues to grow.

Our Impact

Glass Door shelters and support services are open to all, providing a safe place to sleep, advice and daytime services for those with nowhere else to turn. Thanks to our partnerships with churches and drop-in centres in West and Southwest London, we provide shelter and the support needed to end someone's chapter of homelessness. Our night shelters save lives, and our support programmes change lives.

Moving beyond homelessness

Between 1 June 2023 and Feb 24:

- 1618 individuals received advice and support from our caseworkers - a 22% increase to the same point last year
- 219 found more permanent housing and 9 evictions were prevented
- 114 helped with grants, freedom passes, mobile phones etc
- 86 accessed benefit entitlements
- 45 registered with a GP and/or received support with their health issues
- 38 received support for their immigration issues
- 18 individuals found work
- 80 received food support/vouchers

Shelter

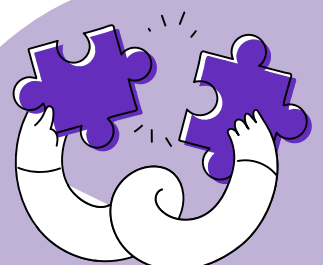
Between 1 June 2023 and Feb 24:

- 420 individuals stayed in night shelters
- 9,599 bed spaces were filled and 61 guests moved into more permanent accommodation
- 1,257 referrals for the shelter received this year to date, a 45% increase to the same point last year

Our Guests' stories

Our shelters and support services are open to all, space provided. The stories and case studies on the glassdoor.org.uk website give some background on some of the people who have sought shelter and support with us. Our team have found permanent housing solutions for some guests, but sometimes individuals need on-going, committed support.

*"If I had stayed on the street, I wouldn't have survived.
This place saved my life"*



We build trust



Chair of Trustees

Join Glass Door Homeless Charity's Board and help us support more people experiencing homelessness or at risk of losing their home.

Our Board & Team

Glass Door is a charitable company limited by guarantee and the Chair role we are recruiting will be both a Trustee and a Director. The current Board of Trustees/Directors is 8, with each Trustee taking a specific role within the charity. Permanent Trustee roles currently cover the Chair, our Winter Services (our night shelters); Casework; HR; Finance and Administration; Fundraising, Communications and Policy; Legal; and Governance.

The charity is led and managed day to day by a Chief Executive Officer, supported by a permanent staff of 32 across the various functions and reinforced through the winter months by a large seasonal complement of staff, many of whom have worked in our Winter Services for some years.

We have a dedicated staff team to deliver both our operational and resourcing priorities, including a number who have longstanding experience with the charity over many years. Our services also rely heavily on the contribution made by our volunteers, who number 1000+. Besides some pro bono legal support, we have a number of unpaid expert volunteers, assisting with specific areas and/or projects e.g. with policy and major donor fundraising.

Role summary

We are looking for a new Chair of Trustees who will offer strategic and supportive leadership to our highly effective, collaborative and committed Board. The Chair leads the board, ensuring that it governs the charity effectively, in service of the charity's vision and mission. The Chair leads in an inclusive way, supporting the Board to work together well, and providing support and challenge to the Chief Executive. The Chair is also an ambassador for the charity.



We are open to all,
without prejudice

Chair role & responsibilities

- Provide strategic leadership to the charity and the Board, ensuring that Glass Door achieves its mission with the interests of Glass Door's guests at its centre.
- Work collaboratively with the CEO, staff and volunteers to achieve our mission and optimise the relationship between the Board and Glass Door's staff and volunteers.
- Provide leadership within the Board, ensuring that it fulfills its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation and promoting good governance among fellow Trustees, providing clarity around boundaries between governance, management and operations.
- Plan and chair the bi-monthly board meetings and the AGM, with colleagues as appropriate and liaise with the CEO, Company Secretary and Governance Trustee with regard to setting up meetings, agenda items and annual report content.
- Facilitate meetings ensuring all have equal involvement in discussions, clarifying any uncertainties, confirming decisions made and actions to be taken and ensuring effective time management of meetings whilst providing appropriate periods of discussion and reflection.
- Act as a spokesperson and figurehead for Glass Door where required.
- Support Glass Door functions and events e.g. attendance at supporter events.
- Support the Head of Fundraising & Major Donors with the cultivation of high-level donors, occasionally attending meetings where value can be added.
- Represent the Board at staff Town Hall meetings.
- Support the team liaising with partner churches and statutory authorities as required and be the public face of Glass Door in the local community.
- Liaise with the CEO and the Board to keep an overview of the charity's affairs.
- Provide supervision and support to the CEO as necessary in addition to planned monthly/bi-monthly 'catch up' meetings and, with the People Trustee, lead the CEO's annual performance review.
- To act as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required.

What we are looking for

- Experience of being a Trustee, ideally in the third sector, and an understanding of the legal responsibilities and liabilities of a Trustee/director.
- A keen sense of strategic purpose.
- Strong leadership skills able to foster and promote a collaborative team environment and an inclusive and collaborative leadership style: able to inspire and support everyone to participate on an equal footing.
- An ability to facilitate, mediate, influence and respect the confidences of colleagues. The ability to listen and engage effectively. You are comfortable with challenge and debate and are able to encourage that in others whilst fostering a collaborative board environment.
- Excellent presentation and communication skills.
- Advocate and ambassador – possess gravitas to lead the organisation and be able and willing to champion Glass Door.
- Demonstrate a strong and visible passion and commitment to Glass Door's guests and ensure that the interests of our guests drive the decisions of the Board.
- A strong personal commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- A willingness to devote necessary time and effort to your duties as Chair and be available and responsive (e.g. when things sometimes 'come up' that require the Chair to advise, support or give consent to).

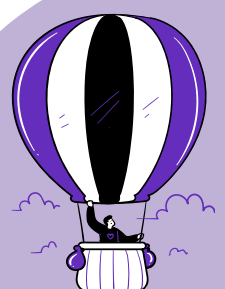


**We are ambitious and bold,
but we grow sustainably**

Responsibilities of all Trustees

In addition to the above, the Chair will have the responsibilities and qualities of all Trustees:

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



We believe individuals can
turn their lives around



Essential qualities and attributes of all Trustees

- Willingness and ability to understand and accept their responsibilities and liabilities as Trustees and to act in the best interests of the organisation.
- 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 equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Personal empathy for our vision and mission.
- Willingness to lead according to Glass Door's values.
- Commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Glass Door values diversity, promotes equality and encourages applications from people of all backgrounds. We particularly welcome applications from people with lived experience of homelessness.

Although Glass Door's services are often offered within churches or church-owned properties, individuals with connections to a variety of faiths or none work for, volunteer at, and use the services of Glass Door.

What's in it for the new Chair?

Our vision is a world where no one has to sleep on the streets of London and we're working every day to achieve this. Your role as Chair will offer you an incredibly rewarding experience to use your skills and collaborate with the rest of the Board and staff members for the benefit of people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.



Time commitment

- Attending 6 Board meetings annually. Currently meetings are held in person at Glass Door's offices in Fulham (evening meetings lasting approximately 2 hours).
- Bi-monthly scheduled meeting with the CEO with flexibility to respond swiftly to ad hoc issues.
- Annual CEO performance review.
- Attending an annual full day strategy session.
- Attending staff Town Hall meetings (currently 3 one-hour meetings per year).
- Attending Glass Door supporter events and local functions (approximately three/four evening events).

Terms of office

- Trustees are appointed for a 3 year term of office, renewal for 2 further terms to a maximum of 9 years.
- This is a voluntary position, but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.
- A full induction will be provided.

Under the Glass Door Trustee Recruitment Policy, successful candidates act as Advisers to the Board for six months before being formally appointed to the Board. The purpose of this advisory period is to enable the candidate to understand what the role entails in practice, and for the Board and staff to get to know the candidate on a practical level, before the candidate's appointment is formally progressed.



We know we can have a bigger impact when we work together

How to apply

To apply, please email your covering letter and your CV or similar (LinkedIn profile, portfolio, etc.) to our HR Manager Louise: louise@glassdoor.org.uk

We are keen to make our recruitment process as fair as possible and to reduce bias. All applications will be anonymised for review.

Please make sure that you include the following information in your cover letter.

- Why you are interested in joining our Board.
- Your relevant skills and experience. (see Who we are looking for)
- How you think you could apply your skills and experience to strengthen our Board in the role of our Chair.

Closing date for this application is Friday 17th May 2024.

If you have any questions prior to making an application please email louise@glassdoor.org.uk



Glass Door Homeless Charity, Argon House, Argon Mews, London, SW6 1BJ | Tel: 020 7351 4948

info@glassdoor.org.uk | www.glassdoor.org.uk | [@glassdoorlondon](https://twitter.com/glassdoorlondon)

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