



**Garden  
House**  
Hospice  
Care

**Information for Prospective Trustees**  
**September 2023**

## Information for those interested in becoming a trustee

### Governance

Garden House Hospice Care is a registered charity, governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. In the event of the Charity being wound up trustees would be required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

The Hospice which costs over £5m per year to run, relies heavily on support from volunteers to enable them to provide free end of life care and support at the Hospice, in people's homes and out in the community to local families living with a terminal illness.

### The Board

The Board strives to be inclusive and representative of the community the hospice serves. It is currently made up of 11 persons including the Chair and Vice Chair, with half having joined within the last two years. Trustees offer a mix of business, professional and clinical health skills as well as a range of talents, skills and perspectives. The CEO and other members of the senior leadership team attend all Board meetings.

Trustees are elected to serve for a period of 3 years, after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The Board is primarily concerned with direction, policy, financial management and strategy including:

- Governance matters.
- Core strategies and policies and changes to them.
- Financial /legal/contractual commitments and/or obligations entered into by the Hospice.
- All matters identified in the risk register.
- Effective, efficient and economic use of the hospice's resources including approval of expenditure above any delegated threshold.
- Ensuring solvency and financial strength and the keeping of financial records.

Our existing strategic plan expires runs from 2022 to 2025. A new CEO took up post in January 2023 and since then we have embarked on a process of transformation, re-thinking our services to better meet needs across our community.

Reflecting our strategy and transformation plans, we are keen to recruit trustees with a background in financial management/accounting and/or IT/digital transformation. We welcome applications from members of underrepresented groups.

## **Committees**

The Board delegates administration through its committees. These are:

- Clinical Governance Committee
- Finance and General Purposes Committee
- People & Culture Committee

Committees oversee policies, scrutinise the hospice's performance in certain areas and make recommendations to the main Board on aspects of forward planning and budgets. Each committee is led by a trustee and each has specific terms of reference. From time to time, the Board may identify a need for a sub-group of trustees, working with the CEO, to research a special project lying across the committee structure, and reporting the Board.

## **Time commitment**

There are usually six Board meetings per year lasting two to three hours and commencing at 3 pm. Away Days are held for strategic planning and Board training and development. Board members are expected to attend the hospice's AGM, to serve on one of our committees and to take part in hospice wide initiatives from time to time.

## **Qualification to be a trustee**

The Charities Act 1993 disqualifies certain people from acting as trustees. For example, you must be over 18, you cannot be a trustee when you have taken out an IVA, are undischarged bankrupt, have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception, or are disqualified from being a company director.

In most cases, trustees are committing an offence if they act as a trustee whilst disqualified, and decisions that they take part in may be invalid. Garden House will take reasonable steps to ensure that its trustees are eligible to act. As part of the application process to be a new trustee, the Board will obtain a declaration from applicants that they are not disqualified, search the register of removed trustees, check the insolvency register and conduct a DBS check.

## **The selection process**

The first stage in the selection process is to invite those interested in becoming a trustee to complete the online application form and submit a copy of their CV with a brief covering letter to the Chair of the Board.

We invite potential trustees to visit the Hospice and meet with the Chair of the Board, the CEO and one other trustee informally, and to have a tour of the Hospice with the CEO. This informal meeting is to ensure that every prospective trustee has a clear understanding of the commitment expected of him/her, in terms of time and attendance, and is given sufficient material about the Hospice to allow a well-informed judgement to be made before committing themselves to the appointment process.

During the visit, we will make sure that potential trustees receive details of the Hospice's work and the work of the Trading Company, forthcoming events and relevant publicity material.

At the informal meeting, potential trustees will be informed of the need to provide details of two referees who can be approached and the statutory checks that are required as part of the appointment process. Referees will only be approached if/when the applicant has decided to accept our provisional offer to join the Board.

Potential applicants will be informed that information given to them during this preliminary visit may be sensitive and/or confidential. They will be required to acknowledge as soon as possible that such disclosure is made to them in confidence and to undertake not to divulge it to a third party without the Hospice's consent.

## **If you decide to apply**

After meeting the CEO and Chair, applicants with the expertise and experience we are looking for will be invited to attend as an observer at a meeting of the Trustee Board, the Trading Board, the Clinical Governance Committee, the Finance and General Purposes Committee or the People and Culture Committee.

Should the prospective trustee maintain his/her interest in becoming a trustee, he/she will be invited for interview by two trustees who will make an "in principle" recommendation to the full Board.

Before inviting applicants for interview, we will ask applicants to undertake the Fit and Proper Person test and ask for evidence that they are not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee.

The appointment will be confirmed on receipt of two satisfactory references.

## **Training for new trustees**

An induction programme, including support and mentoring, is offered to all new trustees with opportunities for training both in and outside the hospice. Access to specialist advice will be available, when necessary, from other trustees and the CEO and staff are more than happy to answer questions and offer guidance.

## **Making an application**

Can you answer 'yes' to the following questions?

- Could you add value to the overall management and administration of our charity?
- Could you commit some of your time regularly to Garden House Hospice Care?
- Do you enjoy working with individuals who share a commitment to offer excellent palliative and end-of-life care in a highly regulated environment to our local community?
- Do you have some of the specific skills and experience that we seek?
- Would you like to play a part in delivering the strategic plan and vision for Garden House Hospice Care?
- Do you have an understanding and acceptance of the responsibilities and liabilities of charity trusteeship?

If so, we hope you will apply to become a trustee.