

## **Relate Birmingham Trustee Candidate Pack - February 2023**

### **Welcome**

Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of Relate Birmingham

Offering counselling, information, and support to individuals, couples, young people and families, we currently work mostly online providing our counselling services to people of all backgrounds and sexualities at all stages of life.

Relate is the leading relationships charity and the Relate Federation is the largest provider of relationship support in England and Wales. The Relate Federation comprises the national charity Relate – which delivers services in 15 Relate Areas – and 23 federated Relate Centres which are independent local charities, as well as other expert partners. Relate Birmingham is one of the federated Relate Centres.

Relationships today often face new and uncharted challenges. When things go wrong, there can be far reaching impacts for both individuals and society. We know that 2.87 million people across the UK are living in relationships which would be described within clinical practice as ‘distressed’. Poor quality relationships have a detrimental impact on people’s physical and mental health with many struggling to access the support they need. Our relationship expertise helps prevent loneliness, depression, abuse, homelessness, debt and many other life shattering events that can arise when relationships are not good.

This is a time of significant challenges and opportunities, and we are looking for Trustees who share our vision of healthy relationships at the heart of a thriving society, and who are able to offer strategic insight and expertise to support the organisation as it moves forwards.

We want to recruit a number of Trustees including a Treasurer and the specification and role description are included. You may already have some form of trustee/board experience from the public, private or voluntary sector or have experience of working or volunteering in similar areas or the community. Most importantly we welcome your support for the work of Relate and willingness to make the time commitment needed. We strive for diversity, including in our Board membership and welcome as broad a representation as possible.

Currently individuals with skills or expertise in digital services, HR or employment law, marketing/PR, health-related sector, lobbying, accountancy or property management would also be desirable.

## About Us

Here at Relate Birmingham, we are the leading relationships charity in the West Midlands area and we provide support across Birmingham, the Black Country, Solihull and South Staffordshire areas for people of all ages, backgrounds and sexual orientations.

Founded in 1946, we are a local independent charity registered with the Charity Commission and are also a Company Limited by Guarantee. The Trustees of the charity are also the Directors of the Company. We are a member of the national Relate Federation.

We have premises in Birmingham and Wolverhampton and access to a network of community venues.

Last year we supported over 3,000 people directly and indirectly benefitted a further 1742 children. We deliver a mix of services that include self-referral, contracts and grant funded projects. We're probably best known for our work helping couples improve their relationships but nowadays we offer a wider range of services for everyone who needs us. Our services extend beyond relationship counselling to family counselling, counselling for young people, sex therapy, mental health and wellbeing services, informal courses and workshops, family mediation and child contact work.

### What we're working on

During the pandemic we changed our operating model substantially. We moved all our services online and closed our buildings. All staff worked remotely apart from a small admin team at the Birmingham office. Over time we had to make some difficult staffing decisions and have been working as a smaller team for the last couple of years.

This year we are working on re-opening our buildings, connecting with our staff and growing our delivery again. We want to diversify our services, update our systems, make the most of Relate's rebrand and increase our use of digital media. We are also developing a clear and focused strategy for the next few years.

## Being a Relate Birmingham Trustee

This is an exciting time to join a local Relate charity as we embark on a new chapter post Covid during a time of instability, with the cost-of-living soaring and the energy crisis facing us and our services are needed more than ever. Increasing financial pressures put more strain on families and individuals and there is also a growing demand for support for children and young people's mental health. Changes in family law are seeing a focus on mediation and reducing parental conflict.

At Relate Birmingham we see ourselves as a charity run on business principles. We are passionate about ensuring we provide services that are accessible to all, regardless of their ability to pay, while at the same time working hard to ensure the books balance and the organisation is sustainable.

### The Role of Trustees

The Board of Trustees provides overall governance and strategic direction for the Charity, developing its aims, objectives and goals in accordance with its Articles of Association, legal requirements and regulatory guidelines.

It is collectively responsible for promoting the success of the charity by directing and supervising its affairs. Its role is to provide leadership within a framework of prudent and effective controls which enable risk to be assessed and managed.

The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining effective governance of the organisation's financial affairs, ensuring its financial viability and proper processes and procedures exist for assuring all financial records, decisions and delegations are maintained.

Further details of the role are included in the appendix.

For more information on Relate Birmingham you can:

- Go to our website or the Relate National website.  
[www.relatebirmingham.co.uk](http://www.relatebirmingham.co.uk)  
[www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)
- See our entries on the Charity Commission and Companies House websites.  
Our registered Charity Number is 1053946 and our Registered Company Number is 03174040
- If you've got any questions or would like an informal chat about the role, please contact our Chief Executive, Ruth Levesley on 0121 643 1638 or [ruth.levesley@relatebirmingham.co.uk](mailto:ruth.levesley@relatebirmingham.co.uk)

## **Appendix: Trustee Job Description**

### Role of the Board

- To ensure the fulfilment of the Charity's purposes
- To set the direction for the Charity
- To have ultimate responsibility for the work of the Charity
- To balance the books
- To ensure the proper use of charitable money and compliance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements
- To assess the risks facing the organisation and to manage the response to them
- To check progress and performance.

### Duties of Board Members

- To seek to further the strategic objectives of the organisation and to act in its best interests at all times
- To contribute to setting policy and strategic direction, business plans, budgets etc, and to ensure that such plans are in keeping with the Charity's aims
- To provide advice and guidance in subject areas where the Trustee has particular expertise or particular responsibility within the Board
- To attend, prepare for and take a full part in meetings of the Board and of formal or informal sub-groups
- To exercise prudence and care in respect of all the affairs of the Charity and to fulfil the fiduciary duty vested in Trustees, undertaking the duties in a way that adds to public confidence and trust in the Charity
- To monitor and evaluate the progress of the organisation against its strategic aims, objectives and financial targets
- To monitor regularly the context and operating environment in which Relate works and to address emerging issues that may impact on strategy, implementation of plans or reputation with key stakeholders
- To undertake an induction upon appointment, and ongoing training and periodic appraisal, to remain alert to, and aware of, Trustees' duties and responsibilities and of the regulatory environment – financial, charitable, health and safety, data protection etc – in which the Charity operates
- To meet other requirements of Trustees and directors relating to such matters as declaration of conflicts of interest, maintaining confidentiality, approving annual reports and returns, and risk management

- To maintain good communications and working relationships with the other Trustees and to abide by and support the collective decisions made by the Board To take ultimate responsibility for the management and administration of the Charity, employ and supervise a Chief Executive and delegate to him/her the day to day management of the organisation and implementation of the strategy
- To act as an ambassador for the Charity.

#### Additional Duties for Treasurer

- To provide leadership of the Board and the Charity in all areas of finance.
- To take on additional tasks as required including (but not limited to): oversight of financial performance reports; oversight of the annual accounts and their recommendation to the Board/AGM; oversight of the annual budget and its recommendation to the Board; acting as an authorised signatory for our online bank accounts.

#### Person Specification

You should be able to demonstrate and provide evidence of the criteria listed below within your written application. These will be tested further at the interview stage.

#### Essential

- An understanding of the role and responsibilities of boards of charities and companies, and of individual Trustees and Directors.
  - Able to contribute to setting the strategic direction and objectives of the Charity, and its budget, and to monitor performance towards achievement of the objectives and budget.
  - Able to work in accordance with the usual protocols of meetings – agendas, minutes, reports, decision-making etc.
  - Able to participate constructively as a member of a meeting, contributing good and independent judgment, willing to speak one's own mind, and also hearing and considering the contributions of others, and assisting the Board to arrive at lawful, responsible, competent and well-judged decisions in pursuance of the objectives of the Charity.
  - Willingness to participate in appropriate induction, training and development, and collective and individual appraisal processes.
  - Willingness to act according to high ethical standards, and to identify, understand and manage conflicts of interest and loyalty.
  - Experience of particular areas not (or under-) represented on the Board at present.
  - Commitment to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity and inclusion.
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- Additional for Treasurer: Expertise in finance, accountancy or legal services in the private, public or charitable sectors.

## Desirable

- Knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the organisation.
- Prior experience as a Trustee or a wider involvement with the voluntary sector.

## Time Commitment

- The Board meets four times a year; currently on a weekday afternoon.
- The Treasurer is also expected to attend quarterly finance meetings.
- Attendance at strategy days and the AGM is required.
- You will be invited to attend occasional internal events / away days.
- There are opportunities to participate in board sub groups and forums at local and national level.

## Additional Information

- The role is not accompanied by any financial remuneration.
- Travel expenses may be claimed.
- An induction to Relate locally and the wider Federation will be provided
- There is some mandatory training required in Safeguarding and EDI (e-learning)
- This position is subject to a Basic DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Check.

Relate Birmingham's Policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is available by email from [ruth.levesley@relatebirmingham.co.uk](mailto:ruth.levesley@relatebirmingham.co.uk) and the DBS Code of Practice is available at [www.gov.uk/government/publication/dbs-code-of-practice](http://www.gov.uk/government/publication/dbs-code-of-practice).

## **How to Apply**

To apply for this role, please supply the following:

- A short supporting statement explaining your motivation and interest in the role, as well as how you believe your skills and experience meet the requirements set out in the person specification.
- A comprehensive CV, ideally highlighting relevant achievements in each role. Please include details of two referees (who will not be contacted without your prior knowledge or consent).

**Please send these documents to [ruth.levesley@relatebirmingham.co.uk](mailto:ruth.levesley@relatebirmingham.co.uk)**

**Closing date for applications: 28 February 2023**

Interviews will be arranged to meet individual's availability.

Relate welcomes applications regardless of gender, age, ethnic background, disability, sexuality or religion.