

Baby Umbrella - Chair of Trustees Role Description

About Baby Umbrella

Baby Umbrella is an award-winning small charity offering breastfeeding and early parenting support to families in West Kent. Our vision is for every family in West Kent to have access to skilled and compassionate support during their parenting journey. We are here to listen, support and empower parents to make the decisions that feel right for them and their babies. Our service makes a powerful impact on families right from the start of their journey.

Baby Umbrella was founded in August 2020 and has experienced considerable growth and development in the past 4 years, reaching £100k of income and supporting 1,100 families per year with 1,600 specialist 1-1 appointments and 600 social visits. We were recognised in 2022 as the Kent Charity Awards Start-up Charity of the Year, and in 2023 and 2024 we were Highly Commended in the Kent Wellbeing Awards.

The next 3-5 years will see us entering a new phase, that of investment in our charity's core systems and processes to further drive our income and enable us to bring services into additional parts of our community. We are committed to listening to all parts of our community and being creative about how to deliver the support they need from us.

We are single minded in our determination to support all local families and we are now looking for a special person to join us as our Chair of Trustees and help us deliver this next phase when our current Chair's term ends in September.

Role description for the Chair of Trustees at Baby Umbrella

We see our Chair of Trustees as an enabler. You will set the tone for the culture of our board, empowering their diverse voices, supporting them to contribute to the charity as best they can, and bringing an understanding of and compassion for the families we serve. You will be a skilled leader, facilitating open discussion and encouraging listening. You will work closely with our charity management team to ensure we work best for our community.

Previous experience of sitting on boards or committees as well as experience of the charity sector is essential to this role, however we welcome applications from those who have not chaired a board in the past and training will be provided.

The duties of the Chair of Trustees are as follows.

- Ensure that our trustee body functions effectively, meetings are led inclusively, and our board carries out its duties.

- Lead our board in governing itself well, setting Baby Umbrella’s strategic direction, creating a positive culture and holding the management team and staff properly accountable.
- Monitoring the agreed actions from board meetings to ensure that decisions are implemented properly and in a timely manner.
- Ensure that our trustee board annually reviews its structure, effectiveness, delegations and key policies, and implements agreed changes as necessary.
- Build a strong, positive and respectful relationship with the management team.
- Engage staff, beneficiaries and other stakeholders.
- Act as an ambassador for Baby Umbrella, representing our interests and values to external stakeholders.

The duties of a trustee are as follows.

- Ensuring that Baby Umbrella pursues its stated objects (purposes), as defined in its governing document, by developing and agreeing a long-term strategy
- Ensuring that Baby Umbrella complies with its governing constitution, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensuring that Baby Umbrella applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its charitable objects (ie the charity must not spend money on activities that are not included in its own objects, however worthwhile or charitable those activities are) for the benefit of the public
- Ensuring that Baby Umbrella defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets
- Safeguarding the good name and values of Baby Umbrella
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of Baby Umbrella, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place
- Ensuring the financial stability of Baby Umbrella
- Protecting and managing the property of the charity and ensuring the proper investment of the charity’s funds
- Following proper and formal arrangements for appointment, supervision, support, appraisal and remuneration of the management team
- In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

Core expectations

- Attend our 4 annual trustee meetings (held on Monday evenings on Zoom) and one Strategy Day (in person in West Kent) per year (12 hours per year)
- Support our three management team members with quarterly 1-1s (1 hour per month)

- Support our 9-11 Trustees with annual 1-1s (1 hour per month)
- Read official correspondence sent by email in a timely manner and respond appropriately (approx 1 hour per month)
- Support the charity with our fundraising activities (this could include grant applications, corporate approaches, or volunteering at fundraising events as appropriate) (approx 1 hour per month)
- Visit one Baby Umbrella support session per year to keep connected to our purpose (3 hours per year)
- Maintain compliance to our governance and that of the charity commission, including training and checks as appropriate (approx 3 hours per year)
- **Total: approx 5-6 hours per month**

Our trustees are appointed for a term of between two to five years, we are looking for a 3 year minimum term for this role.

Person specification for a Trustee of Baby Umbrella

- A commitment to Baby Umbrella and a passion for our cause
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively
- A willingness to listen
- A willingness to speak their mind
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- A commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

This is a part time, voluntary role, mainly based from home but with occasional meetings in West Kent (Otford, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells). Expenses may be claimed for out-of-pocket payments trustees have to make in order to carry out their duties, for example: travel to and from trustee meetings.

Diversity, Equality, Inclusion and Belonging

We welcome applicants from all backgrounds with the aim that our board represents the diversity of the community we serve and incorporates different perspectives in our decision making. We encourage applications from all candidates regardless of ethnicity, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

To guard against unconscious bias, where possible information such as names, photos, gender and birth dates are removed from applications before consideration in our selection process. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to enable everyone to participate - please let us know how we can meet your needs.

Safeguarding

Baby Umbrella is committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. This role is subject to an Enhanced DBS check and two references.

Application process

Shortlisted applicants will be asked to fill in our short online application form. Applications will close at midnight on 6th January 2025.

Stage one interviews will be taking place on zoom in late January with Ema Saunders (outgoing Chair of Trustees) and Jennie Yelverton (Education and Practice Lead).

Second stage candidates will then meet the rest of our management team and at least one other current trustee.

We intend for the role to start in March/ April 2025.

Got questions?

If you have any questions before you make your application, please get in touch - we are also happy to arrange a brief 1-1 conversation with a member of our team prior to your application.