

General trustee role description

**ABOUT ABBEYFIELD**

Abbeyfield is one of the largest voluntary sector UK-wide providers of housing and care for older people, committed to alleviating loneliness while maintaining independence. Volunteers at all levels are vital in helping us provide support, care and friendship for around 8,000 residents.

**ABBEYFIELD’S MISSION**

Abbeyfield’s mission is to enhance the quality of life for older people. We offer care, support and services which reflect this; we believe that we all deserve to enjoy our later years and get the most out of life – whatever our individual circumstances.

**Duties and Responsibilities of an Abbeyfield Trustee**

Trustees of Abbeyfield member societies are responsible for setting and steering the strategic imperatives of the Society. They provide leadership and vision to ensure the society’s house(s) is/are full, well-integrated into the community, and provide(s) a quality of life to residents on a long-term basis. Trustees have, and must accept, ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of each society, ensuring that it is solvent and well-run, and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the community for which it was set up.

**Reporting to: Trustee Board (Executive Committee)**

**Role Purpose:**

* To agree and regularly monitor the Society’s strategic direction and ensure that it pursues its objectives in keeping with this.
* To actively contribute in giving firm strategic direction to the Society – setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets, evaluating performance against those targets.
* To make sound commercial decisions on the future of the Society which are aligned with market demand.
* With other Trustees, ensure that the organisation functions within the legal, charitable and financial requirements of a charitable organisation and strive to achieve best practice.
* To act in the interests of the Society and to adhere to the requirements laid down in the Membership Agreement and the Abbeyfield Society’s Articles of Association.
* To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the Society.
* To ensure the financial stability of the Society and the proper investment of funds.
* To create a professional staffing structure in each society which supports the business.
* To use a range of skills, knowledge and experience to help reach sound decisions. This could include investment of legacy funds or surplus, scrutiny of proposals, leading and initiating debate, providing advice or guidance on new initiatives, making investment decisions or marketing the society to the wider community.

**The statutory duties of a trustee are:**

* To ensure the organisation complies with its governing document - sometimes known as a trust deed, constitution, or articles of association.
* To ensure that the organisation pursues its objectives as defined in its governing document.
* To ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives - the charity must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objectives, no matter how 'charitable' and 'worthwhile' those activities are.
* To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
* To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
* To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
* To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
* To protect and manage the property of the organisation and to ensure the proper investment of the organisation's funds.
* If the organisation employs staff, to appoint the Chief Executive Officer and monitor his or her performance.

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

* Ensuring that the charity has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction and is focused on achieving these.
* Being responsible for the performance of the charity and for its “corporate” behaviour; ensuring that the charity complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.
* Acting as guardians of the charity’s assets, both tangible and intangible, taking all due care over their security, deployment and proper application.
* Ensuring that the charity’s governance is of the highest possible standard.

As well as the various statutory duties, any trustee should make full use of any specific skills, knowledge or experience to help the board make good decisions.

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.

**Person Specification**

Abbeyfield will require:

* A commitment to the aims and objectives of the Society and to promoting it in the interests of residents.
* A willingness to give some time and effort.
* Strategic vision.
* Good, independent judgement.
* An ability to think creatively.
* An understanding of legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
* An ability to work effectively as a team, contributing an independent perspective.
* Possess integrity, objectivity, accountability, honesty and leadership
* Eligibility. Some people are legally disqualified by law from acting as a Trustee including anyone who has an unspent conviction for an offence involving deception or dishonesty; anyone who is an undischarged bankrupt; anyone who has been removed from the trusteeship of a charity by the courts or Charity Commission for misconduct or mismanagement; anyone who is disqualified from being a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.
* Attendance on the Abbeyfield Society induction programme.

**Terms of Appointment**

Trustee appointments will be reviewed annually, and newly inducted Trustees should expect to serve for no more that 2 terms of 3 years.

Trustees are required to attend scheduled meetings and some ad hoc meetings. Time commitment is to be agreed with fellow trustees and is likely to be commensurate with the maturity of the Society’s business planning process.

Abbeyfield is committed to supporting its Trustees and provides a thorough induction to the organisation and role. You will be expected to attend some training events relevant to the role, as necessary.

Whilst the role is unpaid, reasonable expenses are payable in line with Abbeyfield’s standard expenses policy.