



ABBNEYFIELD  
Southern Oaks



Trustee Recruitment  
Candidate Information Pack  
November 2024

## Welcome from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in the opportunity to join our Board as the Residents' Support Trustee.

Effective governance involves a range of responsibilities not least ensuring that the leadership of an organisation has a good mix of skills and experience. We have been a charity for many years and, having opened Nonsuch Abbeyfield, a wonderful community hub for local older people and with potential growth in the coming years, we're now recruiting a Trustee who will bring the skills and experience to continue the important work of ensuring our residents have the best possible experience with us.

Trustees with skills in marketing, the public sector (many of our residents' accommodation is funded by Local Authorities) and project management have recently joined us, but we are sadly losing due to retirement the Trustee who has for some years ensured that our residents' support needs have been fully met. We have a clear vision for developing the charity and the residents' support needs. Our existing and new Trustees are skilled people, and we all have a passion for and real commitment to what we are doing. We are also supported by competent and professional staff who share our vision.

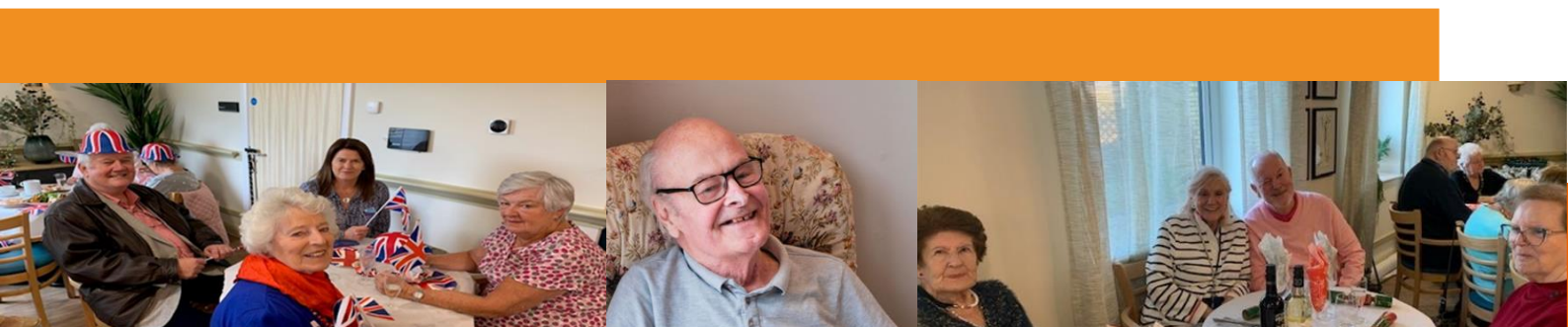
We recognised some years ago the need to change from being almost entirely volunteer run, to one with professionally employed staff. With the opening of our new community at Nonsuch Abbeyfield we've been implementing new ways of Trustees and staff working together and is how we see the charity progressing to the next stage of its development.

We are seeking someone enthusiastic about what we want to achieve with professional or personal experience of dealing with older people, and who can operate at both a strategic and executive level. This role involves much more than attending quarterly Board meetings and we hope to find someone interested in getting thoroughly involved, enthusiastic about enhancing the support we offer, and who will enjoy liaising and working with our team.

We very much look forward to receiving your application.

*Nick Shore*

Chair



## About us

Abbeyfield Southern Oaks is deeply interconnected with the local community on many levels in the spirit and practice of our vision and values. Residents, employees, trustees, volunteers and service professionals are all drawn from the local area.

Abbeyfield Southern Oaks is a not-for-profit organisation. We provide supported housing for people who are still able to care for themselves and wish to remain independent. Our residents generally don't want the responsibilities of maintaining a house or flat, or a garden, but they're not ready to go into a care home. We currently have five supported houses with between 7-11 residents in each at any one time and a 60-unit independent living facility.

People may also like extra support for things like meals and cleaning, and most of all they want the possibility of the company of others if they choose. Our supported housing offers that extra help: someone around to offer a bit of security in case they fall or feel unwell although supported housing isn't for people who need more dedicated care.

We have recently developed Nonsuch Abbeyfield, a supportive, vibrant retirement hub in Surrey, where active, independent living is at its heart. Thirty-six of the flats are leaseholds while the remaining twenty-four are rented at an affordable rate, when the local council has referred residents.

Although our growth over recent years has been funded in part by donations and bequests, we aim to cover the full cost of providing housing and support by the charges we make to residents. However, we aim to raise funds in a structured way to support the growth of our housing capacity and the development of new services. Our dedicated volunteer input is invaluable and makes what we provide have a greater impact.

Abbeyfield Southern Oaks is affiliated with Abbeyfield England, but we are independent and run our own affairs. We pay an annual affiliation fee to Abbeyfield England and enjoy the benefits of a national brand and access to knowledge and networks of good practice.



## Background and candidate brief for Resident Support Trustee

We are keen to appoint a new Trustee to bring skills, knowledge and experience to the Board of a charity that is passionate about providing older people with supported independent living for companionship and social interaction and diminishing the effects of loneliness and isolation.

Our colleague, Anne Carrington, is stepping down having done a sterling job on our Board since we merged with Abbeyfield Purley, where she had been their Deputy Chair and volunteers' team leader. We are seeking someone to join the Board to continue her focus on the welfare of our residents, working closely with our Community and House Managers and sharing the oversight of the work done by our Director of Business and Operations and his team, namely: resident communications; new residents pipeline; admissions; medical policy; relationships with care partners; staff recruitment and training; volunteer recruitment, training and management.

This is an important role as it directly links residents, House Managers, our Community Manager, and the Board. It demonstrates our commitment to the care of our residents and to the people who volunteer at our Houses and at Nonsuch Abbeyfield. It ensures good communication allowing information and messages to be passed directly from our Operational Services Committee to residents and to the House Managers. It encourages activities and outings to be arranged, is a connection to all staff who visit the houses, and overall provides a social link for all concerned.

In addition to our quarterly Board meetings, Trustees may be asked to sit on other committees and attend ad hoc meetings. The time commitment will be on average one to two days a month and can be delivered across the year in a flexible way.



# Being a Board member – what's involved

Every not-for-profit organisation has a Board – a group of volunteer Trustees who ensure that the organisation is effective in carrying out the purpose for which it was set up. Trustees have responsibility for overseeing the work of Abbeyfield Southern Oaks, ensuring it is financially stable, well-run, and fulfilling its 'objects', as set out in our Articles of Association.

Boards govern effectively by:

- Focusing on their governance responsibilities
- Ensuring the board itself operates effectively

As an Abbeyfield Southern Oaks Trustee you'll be an ambassador for the organisation and its work. You'll share our vision to help older people in our local communities.

## Trustee duties

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Abbeyfield Southern Oaks is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The Board are the Trustees and directors of the Charity. The Trustees are responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the Charity, in accordance with the terms of its constitution and with legal and regulatory requirements and best practice.

## What we can offer you

Becoming a Trustee is a fascinating way to engage in the not-for-profit sector. It's a role that will give back just as much as you put in and often much, much more. Our Trustees have already proved themselves and recognise that they have developed a wealth of personal and professional skills that they can continue to apply outside the salaried work environment, for the benefit of others, as well as continuing to apply those skills in their personal lives. So, becoming a Trustee will empower you with a new sense of contribution in the pursuit of a wider purpose.

## Contributing to a great cause – sustainability

There is no doubt that being a Board member in a not-for-profit organisation is one of the most powerful ways in which you can contribute to a cause you really care about. As an Abbeyfield Southern Oaks Board member, you will have an opportunity to have a real impact on our work addressing the needs of older people, especially loneliness, across the wider communities in which we are located. Our work helps them to live the life they want and do the things they choose.

## Personal development

Joining a Board can be a very interesting experience, not least because it allows you to adapt and apply everything you have learnt to date into an entirely new context. Through a not-for-profit Board role, you can gain a clearer idea of your own strengths and weaknesses whilst simultaneously learning altogether new skills. Understanding how to adapt your knowledge to useful and impactful ends is a good reminder of your own versatility, giving you confidence in your existing abilities whilst challenging you to push the boundaries of your expertise. Most of us are idealists at heart, even if life has shown us that things are not as simple as we once thought. As a Trustee of Abbeyfield Southern Oaks, you will be able to combine your own sense of purpose with your expertise and skills to bring a great deal of benefit to others.

## Teamworking

As a Board member at Abbeyfield Southern Oaks, you will be part of a team and will have the opportunity to apply your unique skills and experience, while also learning from others. Working closely with a passionate team of people who have different perspectives is often one of the most enjoyable aspects of the role.

The ability to collaborate effectively with others and to challenge constructively the ideas of fellow Board members, as well as those of the Senior Management Team, is essential to ensuring the Board's strategic decisions are fully informed, reasonable and effective. Negotiating, empathising, listening and clearly communicating ideas and concerns are key factors in this process and often help to set the tone and culture of Board meetings.

# Resident Support Trustee job description

<b>Location</b>	Ewell, Sutton, Cheam, Purley and Parson's Green
<b>Time Commitment</b>	<p>Quarterly Board meetings (2-3 hours).</p> <p>Monthly Services Committee meetings (2-3 hours) – The Services team is the group of Trustees who, along with the Director of Business Operations (DBO), provide the operational oversight and guidance to the professional staff, and report to the full Board quarterly.</p> <p>There are other sub-committees and it would be useful, at least initially, to attend meetings to learn about the charity's activities</p> <p>Periodic phone calls, discussion of issues as they emerge, liaison with professional staff between meetings (an average of 1-2 hours per week).</p> <p>Monthly visits to at least one of the Houses talking to residents, staff and volunteers.</p> <p>Trustees with the capacity to do so also have the opportunity to support occasional projects working with the DBO and the wider leadership team.</p>
<b>Duration</b>	Trustees serve as long as they feel able to make a contribution.
<b>Remuneration</b>	Unpaid; expenses covered in line with policy

## General responsibilities of the Resident Support Trustee role

- Provide advice and guidance to the Chair and trustees regarding all matters relating to resident care and welfare

- Provide thought leadership on, and analysis of, opportunities for increased resident welfare and the overall provision of support
- Co-chair the Residents and Volunteers Group with fellow Trustee, Andrew Hoy
- Liaise with the Services Committee to monitor all policy implementation and delivery standards
- Make regular informal visits to our five houses to get to know residents and to support the House Managers
- Attend coffee mornings and any social activities in the houses to see residents and meet volunteers
- Attend occasional lunches in the houses

## Person Specification

The person specification sets out the qualities, skills and experience needed to fill the Resident Support Trustee role. All Trustees need certain qualities such as integrity and commitment. However, not every Trustee will have the full range of skills and experience ideally required by the Board.

### All Abbeyfield Southern Oak Trustees will have:

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- Experience of organisational management
- A commitment to being an effective and responsible advocate for the organisation
- An understanding of the importance of effective governance of voluntary sector organisations, including the respective roles and responsibilities of the Chair, the Board and the executive
- An understanding of the social and political environment within which Abbeyfield Southern Oaks operates
- The ability to think strategically and understand the importance of the organisation's role
- An understanding of the demands, and operational challenges, inherent in Abbeyfield Southern Oaks' role as a housing provider for older people in the community
- An understanding of the financial and funding environment in which charitable organisations operate



- The ability to work effectively as a team member and demonstrate a willingness to learn and develop

The Residential Care Trustee will bring the following qualities, skills and experience:

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#### **Essential**

- Good experience of working with older people **or**
- Personal and practical experience of being a carer for an older person
- A good listener with empathy for the challenges experienced by older people
- Compassionate and caring with the ability and interest in building relationships and engaging with the older people as well as the range of staff members involved in providing care to the residents

#### **Desirable**

- Experience of older people's services in the statutory or voluntary sectors



*“I met so many lovely people; the residents were always welcoming and told me amazing stories about their lives.”*

**Raina, Volunteer**

## How to apply?

[Eastside People](#) is supporting Abbeyfield Southern Oaks in the recruitment of these roles. [Please click here](#) to apply by submitting your CV and a cover letter, which should indicate why you are interested in applying for the particular role and how you meet the selection criteria. If you would like a call to discuss the role in more detail, please email Lucinda Shaw, [lucinda@eastsidepeople.org](mailto:lucinda@eastsidepeople.org) to arrange a convenient time. Having a call of this kind will not influence the success or otherwise of your application.

**The closing date for applications is Monday 27 January.** Shortlisting interviews will take place shortly after and shortlisted candidates will have an interview with Abbeyfield Southern Oaks during the week beginning 3 February.

We want you to have every opportunity to demonstrate your skills, ability and potential; please contact us if you require any assistance or adjustment so that we can help with making the application process work for you.

Abbeyfield Southern Oaks is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity to ensure that we reflect the full breadth of the people we aim to support. We work within an increasingly diverse area, and it is important that the Board is representative of the communities that we serve. We would particularly welcome applications from women and people from an ethnic minority background who are currently under-represented on the Board and warmly welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates.





# Eastside People

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