



maytree

Candidate Information Pack
Trustee recruitment
May 2025



Welcome letter

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee of Maytree.

Maytree is a very special charity, its Trustees all deeply committed to its unique mission as a sanctuary for the suicidal, one that involves risk and might not appeal to everyone.

Now is an exciting time for Maytree, recently reopened after two years of closure and possible liquidation. The period ahead will test its new team and leadership, set on revalidating its model, efficacy and reputation, and then planning its replication.

If you have a personal interest in suicide prevention, and in nurturing the governance and growth of a small charity we would be delighted to hear from you and explore further.

Warm Regards,

Michael & Judith

Acting Co-CEOs





About us

Our vision, mission and values

Maytree was set up to fill a gap in suicide prevention. Its focus is on those at immediate and acute risk, in a 'pre-suicidal' state, for whom support from helplines, GP, therapist or charitable organisation is not enough to contain them once the call or session ends. Further, someone in an extreme suicidal state is easily overwhelming for the supporter, arousing fear and often leading to handing responsibility to others, this accentuating the suicidal risk itself. This leaves a GAP, where there is no other option than turning to the emergency services. For A & E, with all its drama and often hostile reception, possible sectioning and a psychiatric ward is liable to increase dread, shame and regret at having revealed their suicidal intent.

Maytree addresses a critical gap in suicide prevention, focusing on those in acute, pre-suicidal states where traditional support fails. For individuals overwhelmed by suicidal intent, emergency services like A&E often exacerbate fear and shame, leaving them with few options to safely disclose their distress.

Maytree's vision is to fill the gap. Its model turns a high-risk crisis into one of lower risk, one that is manageable. And with proven good outcomes, often a transformative experience.

Everything we do is based on our values of trust, respect, openness, empathy, equity, non-judgement and inclusiveness.

Our impact

Maytree offers compassionate care and continuous containment in a collaborative community. A sanctuary for respite: calm, safe, warm, friendly, and nurturing. Non-medical, non-judgemental. A place and a time to talk. One that rekindles hope and self-esteem, new insights, restores identity, belonging, and relationship networks from the meltdown of crisis. One that builds the first steps to a return to the interpersonal world, an end to self-reinforcing isolation, that strengthens inner resources to cope with loss and endings.

The model offers a once-only stay of 4 nights in Maytree's family-like home in north London. A maximum of 4 "guests" at any one time. Each with their own bedroom, free to spend time



as they wish, resting or reflecting, or with others in the house (the spacious kitchen a favourite choice), be they volunteers, other guests or members of the leadership team. There is no set daily agenda. Deciding on a 1-1 session is agreed collaboratively, as is their length and content, guests gently encouraged to make use of them, to share and explore their distress and despair, their thoughts, feelings, worst fears, past trauma, their suicidal intent and its history, often one of previous attempts. With volunteers, when 1-1 the content can be looser, more varied, sometimes fairly similar to those with a leader though without the insight to give for feedback that uncovers, say, underlying repeat patterns in how relationships go wrong, the presence of a punitive super-ego, or inbuilt negative responses; and sometimes drawing out forgotten hobbies and interests, such as a shared passion for football, buried talents or sense of humour, all groundwork for restoring the desire to re-engage with life.

Typically, the guest's stay has three phases: first gaining trust in Maytree's style and values along with full opening up of their mental pain, and respite from their mental and physical collapse. Secondly, a deepening attachment to Maytree as whole, safely held by the continuity of containment, allowing in depth session content; and the resemblance to a healthy family, a community with an everchanging composition as volunteers, other guests, as well as team members come and go. Thirdly, preparing to leave, with all its fears, past unresolved loss, rejection or abandonment, always a time of very high risk. The aim is that the guest, with strengthened resources and revived hope, and armed with a letter that captures their story and the positive path that has emerged during their stay, can now survive a 'good enough' ending, essential for internalisation. There is no further contact.



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 Maytree, 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 a Maytree Trustee you'll be an ambassador for the organisation and its work.

Trustee duties

Maytree is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The Board are the Trustees of the charity and the Directors of the company. 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 a Maytree Board member, you will have an opportunity to have a real impact on our work supporting the revival of hope and resilience in our guests through respite, time and space for reflection and compassionate and nurturing care.

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 Maytree, 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 Maytree, 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.



Recruiting a Trustee

Maytree closed its doors in March 2023 following management and governance issues. Founder Michael Knight, who had previously stepped away, returned to take over the operations alongside a group of trustees appointed by him and his wife Judith.

Maytree re-opened in April 2025 with a new board of trustees, who have appointed an operations team, defined the model and service matrix, and overseen the renovation of the house. The husband-wife pair, serving as co-chief executives, are preparing to transition out of their roles. In addition to recruiting a new Chief Executive Officer and Chair, adding a trustee with some financial experience is important for maintaining the charity's short-term stability and guiding its strategic direction.

Key Information

Location:	Finsbury Park, London
Time commitment:	4 board meetings per year taking place in person. The trustee to be appointed will be expected to oversee and counsel the work of the (part-time) finance office, in touch typically twice a month and more often if appropriate (eg audit and preparation of Annual Accounts) as well as fulfilling trustee duties (such as reading in advance of meetings), and attending special events whether with staff and volunteers or other stakeholders. Time commitment: typically 2 days a month.
Remuneration:	Unpaid, expenses covered in line with policy



Main Purpose of the Role

The Trustees meet quarterly, individual trustees' contributing in varying aspects of its mission according to their areas of interest. All Trustees should be committed to, and be an ambassador for Maytree's vision and mission and special place in suicide prevention; and ideally have contacts and suggestions in relation to external constituencies and sources of funding.

The role can be summarised as: to participate fully as a member of Board of Directors of the Company and as a Trustee of the Charity alongside all others under the Chair's leadership, in ensuring responsible and effective Corporate Governance:

- Compliance with Company's Act and Charity Commission responsibilities.
- Developing and agreeing strategy and plans as put forward by CEO/Chair.
- The appointment and accountability/performance/remuneration of executive leadership.
- Overseeing and ensuring that appropriate policies are in place for management of all aspects of risk.
- Chair a Board Sub-Committee on Finance to approve Accounts and liaise with the auditors as appropriate.
- Oversee that financial controls and systems are fit for purpose, advise on presentation to Trustees of annual Accounts and ensure that timely and appropriate budgets, forecasts, management and financial accounts are provided to Trustees.
- Accepting nomination as a signature on the charity's bank mandates.
- Overseeing/advising on banking arrangements and best deployment of cash reserves
- Monitor cash reserves and ensure they are properly managed and placed where they can get the best possible return.



Person specification

- Experience with financial reporting, whether in a private or charity sector context. You do not have to be a chartered accountant.
- Comfortable leading meetings about finance issues.
- Able to think strategically and innovatively about the future direction of Maytree.
- Passionately committed to mental health provision and suicide prevention.
- Fully committed to the charity's 'no blame' culture, approaching problem solving in a supportive, constructive and transparent way.
- Fully committed to Maytree's values: trust, respect, openness, empathy, equity, non-judgement and inclusiveness.



How to apply?

[Eastside People](#) is supporting [Maytree](#) in the recruitment for this role. Please click [here](#) to apply by submitting your CV and a cover letter.

Please use the cover letter (max 2 pages) as an opportunity to add to the information you have shared in your CV and ensure that you cover the following:

- What motivates you to want to be a trustee for Maytree.
- How your background and experience aligns with their requirements.

If you would like a call to discuss the role in more detail, please contact John Sanger (johns@eastsidepeople.org, 07522 163938) to arrange a convenient time. Having a call of this kind will not influence the success of your application.

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

The closing date for applications is **Monday 23rd June** and our candidate assessment schedule is as follows:

- EP screening interviews and informal conversations carried out through the recruitment process with final interviews taking place by **Friday 4th July**.
- Formal interviews with the Maytree board in the **week commencing 7th July**.

Eastside People is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity and works with our clients to ensure that we recruit inclusively, seeking to address the underrepresentation of some groups of people in leadership teams. We warmly welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates.



Eastside People



Eastside
People

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