



Candidate Information Pack

Chair of Trustees



In this candidate information pack you will find further information on our search for a Chair of Trustees, together with details on the application process with Moon Charity Practice.

Contents

Welcome from the outgoing Chair of Trustees & CEO	3
About Hammersmith United Charities.....	4
Our goals.....	4
What we do	4
Our resources	4
Our challenges	5
Role Description	6
Person Specification.....	9
How to apply.....	10
Appendix A.....	11





Welcome from the outgoing Chair of Trustees & CEO

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of Trustees at Hammersmith United Charities (HUC).

It has been an honour to serve as Chair of an organisation with such a long history and deep roots in our community. HUC has been part of Hammersmith's story for over 400 years, evolving to meet the changing needs of local people while remaining steadfast in its mission to tackle inequality and foster a stronger, more connected community.

The Chair's role is pivotal in steering our strategic direction and supporting the Board and executive team to deliver lasting impact. It is also deeply rewarding, offering the opportunity to work alongside talented and passionate colleagues, residents, and community partners who share a commitment to making a difference.

We are looking for an exceptional individual who shares our values and aspirations for Hammersmith. If you have the vision, leadership skills, and a genuine connection to our mission, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Best wishes



Vivienne Lukey

Outgoing Chair of Trustees



About Hammersmith United Charities

Our goals

Hammersmith United Charities supports people living in the northern wards of Hammersmith and Fulham. Hammersmith is a diverse and thriving community, rich with cultural and sporting assets and home to global businesses, a world-renowned university and a wide range of impressive schools. It is also characterised by very high inequality with pockets of extreme deprivation and housing costs far out of the reach of many.

We believe in a Hammersmith where everyone feels valued, supported, and empowered—a community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. We work toward a community that is more equal and connected, where older residents in our Almshouses live happy, healthy and independent lives in homes they are proud to call their own and local people are inspired and supported to lead positive change in their neighbourhood.

What we do

Everything we do is rooted in our long-term commitment to the people of Hammersmith, our work focuses on three areas:

Almshouses: We provide welcoming, safe and affordable homes for local older people who need them most. More than just housing, our Almshouses are vibrant communities where our team is available in person to help residents live independently with access to services tailored to their needs. We create opportunities for residents to connect with their community and enjoy meaningful, sociable activities and collaborate with others to promote wellbeing and a good quality of life. Our award-winning gardens are a beautiful space for everyone to gather, stay active, and enjoy nature and gardening.

Grant Making: We provide flexible funding to local groups who share our strong connection to our community and who are working to address inequality experienced by those most in need. We focus on groups where a small grant makes a big difference and go beyond funding to offer practical support to help these organisations grow stronger and more resilient. We encourage collaboration and networking through events and open communication, and through actively listening to local voices we shape our work to reflect the true needs and aspirations of our community.

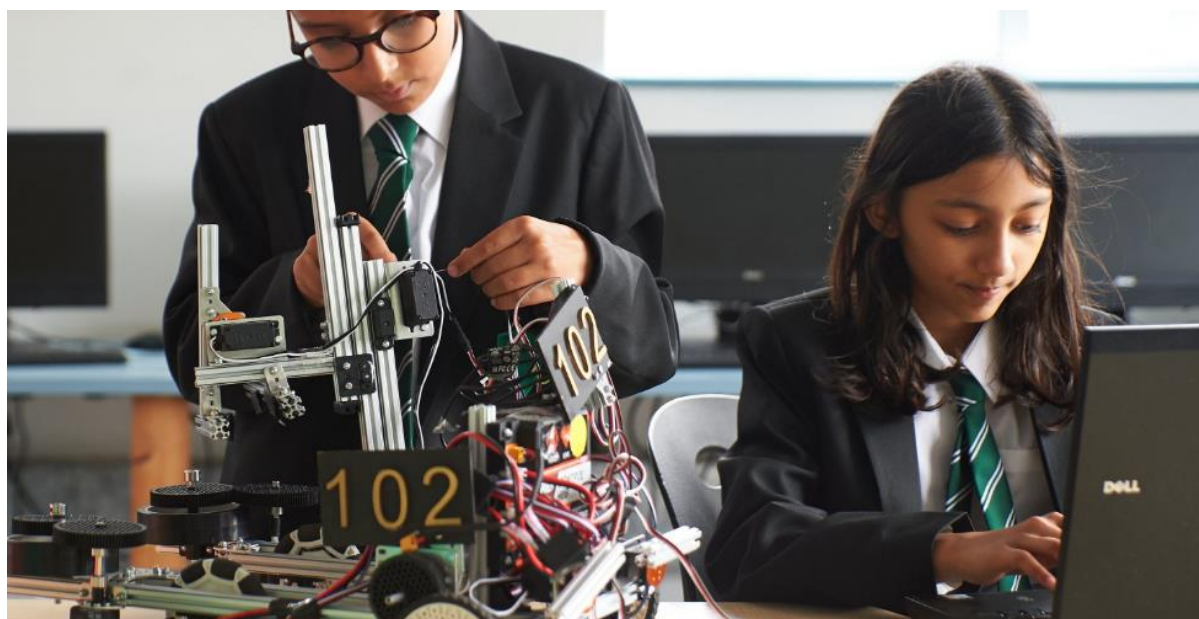
Community Action: We bring people and organisations together and foster partnerships that tackle local challenges. Using newsletters, events, and social media, we amplify community voices, highlight key issues, and celebrate local achievements.

Our resources

Hammersmith United Charities has income of £1.8m and net assets of £34m made up of almshouse properties investment properties and investment funds. We have a dedicated staff team of 12, most of whom are part time. Our most recent accounts can be found on the [Charity Commission website](#).

Our challenges

The Charity is financially and operationally stable with a simple mission and a straightforward approach. However, we operate in an increasingly challenging and complex environment. The cost of providing a high-quality service to our almshouse residents has risen dramatically in recent years and housing regulation is constantly changing bringing a disproportionate burden on small providers. The cost of decarbonising our buildings is likely to be significant.



Our local community is supported by a vibrant and impactful voluntary sector who constantly impress us with their ability to respond to changing need with limited resources. They face a surge in demand, shrinking funding and a statutory sector which is in retreat. Many of our smaller partners would not survive without Hammersmith United Charities funding. In 2029 we launched H&F Giving, an independent fundraising charity supported by HUC, with the aim of filling the gap between local need and what HUC is able to fund.

More information about Hammersmith United Charities and our work can be found on our website <https://hamunitedcharities.org.uk/>



Role Description

- Title:** Chair of Trustees
- Time commitment:** Approximately 1-2 days per month.
We hold 4 Board meetings a year which last for approximately 2 hours plus an annual strategic planning/board development meeting. Meetings are usually held at 5.30 with the option of joining remotely.
- Location:** Hammersmith/Remote
- Remuneration:** Voluntary, with reasonable out of pocket expenses reimbursed
- Term of Office:** Four-year term with the potential for a further two x four years
- Reporting to:**

The vacancy has arisen because the outgoing Chair, Vivienne Lukey is coming towards the end of her term of office. The period of office begins later in 2025, we plan to have a 'Chair Designate' handover period involving the current and incoming Chair between the point of selection and formally taking up the role.

Who we are looking for

The successful candidate will understand why inequality matters and the vital role that Almshouses and community organisations play in addressing it.

They will care about our residents, our community and our staff and be excited at the prospect of leading a Charity making a positive difference in Hammersmith. We are looking for an experienced board leader with a solid understanding of our work and who is able to draw on their experience and networks to support us in delivering our mission.

If you have the time to commit to us, the skills to lead us effectively and a passion for our community then we want to hear from you!





Duties and Responsibilities of the Chair

The Chair will lead the Board of Trustees that meets four times per year in person. The main sub-committees Finance and Investment, Housing and Property, and Grants and Community also meet four times per year. The Governance and HR Committee, which the Chair is usually a member of meets on a more ad-hoc basis as and when required.

The duties include:

Leadership

- Chair Board meetings, promote an inclusive culture and encourage all Trustees to draw on their skills and insights to make an effective contribution to good decision making
- Ensure the Board and Committees give clear direction and support to the staff team
- Work closely with and provide support to the Chief Executive Officer and Clerk to the Trustees
- Ensure that the Trustees have the appropriate blend of skills, lived experience and diversity of voice to achieve the Charity's goals, addressing any gaps through training, development or recruitment
- Oversee the evaluation of Board performance and ensure effective succession planning

Values and Reputation

- Safeguard Hammersmith United Charities reputation, values and culture making sure that we not only protect our legacy but build on it

Representation and Advocacy

- Be a visible and approachable leader, building strong relationships with our residents, grants holders and community
- Represent the Charity to strategic stakeholders and help the Charity build partnerships in support of our mission

Strategy and impact

- Drive the development of the charity's long-term strategy, ensuring it remains relevant to community needs
- Ensure the charity regularly evaluates its impact and uses this information to improve its work
- Use feedback from our residents and community to shape the Charity's priorities and direction

Compliance and risk management

- Identify and address strategic risks and opportunities to safeguard the charity's future
- Ensure the Board fulfils its fiscal duties and is financially sound in the long term
- Ensure the Charity is compliant with charity law, housing regulation and other relevant legislation or best practice
- Provide calm and decisive leadership during crises and ensure the charity is equipped to respond effectively to emergencies

More information about the responsibilities of Trustees and the Chair of Trustees can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved>



Person Specification

Skills and Experience

- A track record of strategic leadership and achievement within organisations of at least a comparable scale and complexity of Hammersmith United Charities
- Experience of working with a not for profit organisation in an executive, non-executive or volunteer role
- Experience of working effectively with a Board with an ability to make the most of the skillsets around the table
- Proven ability to lead collaboratively in a non-executive role and foster strong relationships with CEO, staff and other board members
- Experience of risk management and crisis leadership and the ability to navigate challenges effectively
- Strong understanding of charity governance, regulatory compliance. Existing knowledge or willingness to learn housing regulations.
- Financial oversight experience, including managing budgets, assessing financial risks, and ensuring long-term sustainability
- An active and relevant network with an ability to represent the Charity with strategic stakeholders
- A clear understanding of the role of local charities like Hammersmith United Charities in the community

Personal Attributes

- Demonstrable empathy for people experiencing inequality and a genuine passion for our mission to support those in need through housing and grant making
- An inclusive, engaging, open approach to leadership, fostering collaboration within and without the Charity
- A commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion at all levels of the Charity
- Capacity to commit time to fulfil the duties of the role well, including away days, events and time to get to know residents and grant holders
- Kind, resilient and able to remain calm and decisive under pressure
- A knowledge of, or connection to Hammersmith





Recruitment Process

How to apply

Moon Charity Practice has been appointed as chosen Search Partner to Hammersmith United Charities and will manage the recruitment process.

NB: ALL DIRECT APPLICATIONS WILL BE FORWARDED TO MOON CHARITY PRACTICE

To apply, please send a copy of your latest CV together with your answers to the work sample questions in Appendix A. The purpose of these questions is to give candidates and early indication of what the role may involve and give them the best opportunity to consider their response.

We can arrange an informal conversation with the Chair of the Nominations Panel (who is the Deputy Chair) and/or Chief Executive prior to applying if you would find that helpful.

To ensure fairness to all Candidates, any decision to shortlist you for initial telephone screening will be based solely on the information that you supply on your CV and your answers to the work sample questions.

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SENT BY EMAIL TO: RECRUIT@MOONEXECSEARCH.COM

FAO: SANDY HINKS, HEAD OF CHARITY PRACTICE, QUOTING REF: MC2553

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS 16 MARCH 2025

We reserve the right to close this vacancy early if we receive sufficient applications for the roles. Therefore, if you are interested, please submit your application as early as possible.

Preliminary interviews will be with Moon Charity Practice virtually. We anticipate that only one round of panel interviews will be required but Hammersmith United Charities may invite candidates back for a second round, depending on the candidate pool. Hammersmith United Charities is committed to including residents in decisions which impact them and so the selection process will include a visit to the Almshouses to meet staff and residents.

Hammersmith United Charities has retained Moon Charity Practice to manage this campaign and are therefore unable to accept CVs from third party agencies. All CVs and expression of interest received will be forwarded directly to Moon Charity Practice for consideration.

Moon Charity Practice and Hammersmith United Charities are equal opportunities employers and welcome applications from all areas of society and recognises the strength in diversity.

Applications are welcome from all suitably qualified candidates regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability or age, and maternity, marital or civil partner status. We particularly encourage applications from under-represented groups.

On behalf of Hammersmith United Charities, Moon Charity Practice would like to thank you for your initial interest in their Chair of Trustee role.

Hammersmith United Charities Registered Charity No: 205856



Appendix A

WORK SAMPLE QUESTIONS

(To be submitted with CV and covering letter)

1. Passion for our mission

Question: What motivates you to contribute your time and skills to a charity like Hammersmith United Charities?

2. Strategic Leadership

Scenario: The Housing and Property Committee have suggested that the Almshouses should be upgraded to radically reduce carbon emissions. This can only be done by significantly reducing the endowment and cancelling the grants programme

Question: What steps would you take to evaluate the merit of this proposal and how would you involve the Board, staff, and external stakeholders in the decision-making process?

3. Governance and Board Effectiveness

Scenario: You notice that not all Trustees are equally engaged during Board meetings, and some are hesitant to share their views. This is impacting the quality of discussions and decision-making.

Question: How would you address this issue to ensure all Trustees are actively contributing and that the Board operates as an effective and cohesive team?

4. Values and Culture

Scenario: Hammersmith United Charities has a long-standing history in the community, but new Trustees and staff bring fresh perspectives that sometimes challenge the charity's traditional ways of working.

Question:

How would you balance respecting the charity's legacy while fostering a culture of innovation and inclusivity?

5. Risks and crisis management

Scenario: You are contacted by a well-regarded community group providing dance activities for people with disabilities. Their application for a grant has been turned down. They threaten to contact journalists and report Hammersmith United Charities to the Charity Commission for a breach of the Equality Act.

Question: As Chair, how would you work with the Board and CEO to manage this crisis, mitigate its impact, and maintain the charity's reputation and services?

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