



# Little Village Trustee Recruitment 2022



# Welcome

**Our dream is one of thriving communities where families share their pre-loved kit and every child under five has the start in life they deserve.**

Are you passionate about tackling child poverty and motivated by Little Village's values of Love, Solidarity, Thriving and Sustainability? Do you believe in our model of bringing families together to help each other? Would you enjoy working in an environment of a small, ambitious and young organisation?

If so, you could be the person we're looking for to help support Little Village on the next stage of our journey. We're ambitious to expand our work with families in London and to further build our work as a 'force for change' to tackle child poverty. To help achieve that, we're looking for a new Trustee to join our board in 2022.

As our organisation continues to grow at pace, we are looking for someone with frontline experience of successfully scaling an organisation or charity. Someone with knowledge of the infrastructure and processes required to enable that growth, while maximising efficiencies and minimising risk.

We don't need you to have any previous experience of a board role. We are looking for someone who really cares about the work we do and is able to contribute to the work of the board. We are committed to supporting you to develop new skills in your role as our Trustee, for you to take beyond your time with us.

If joining the Little Village family sounds interesting, we are very much looking forward to hearing from you.

**Olivia Gillan-Bower**

*Chair of the Board of Trustees*

## About Little Village

Little Village is like a food bank, but for clothes, toys and equipment for babies and children up to the age of 5. We accept donations of excellent-condition, pre-loved items, which are passed on to families who need support. The items are a gift, given with love, from one family to another.

We operate out of five main centres in London and are powered by an incredible group of committed volunteers. We've grown to be one of the largest 'baby banks' in the UK, supporting over 17,000 children since we launched in 2016 – including 6,463 children in 2021 alone. More information about what we do is on our [website](#).

Although we call ourselves a 'baby bank', we provide so much more than just high-quality kit to families – at the core of what we do is a desire to build connections across communities, and to create opportunities for people to thrive.

We're committed to alleviating child poverty and we strongly believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life. Our 'force for change' work, tackling child poverty, is a central part of what we do – we focus on changing unhelpful and damaging attitudes and beliefs as well as campaigning for policy change.



# Our vision, mission and values

Our vision - thriving communities where families share their pre-loved kit and every child under five has the start in life they deserve.

Our mission –

- To ensure families on low incomes with children under five have the support and essentials they need
- To work together with parents to fix the systems that trap families in poverty
- To inspire families to both choose and share pre-loved children's clothes and kit



## Solidarity

We bring people together across economic and social divides, united in a shared belief that every parent deserves to give their kids the best possible start in life.



## Love

Everything we pass on to families is a gift, not a handout. We see love as an action – an act of donating precious baby kit, of volunteering valuable time and of offering solidarity during tough times.



## Sustainability

We achieve our mission whilst treading lightly on the planet, joining forces with other parts of the circular economy to reduce waste and promote re-use.



## Thriving

This means having a sense of agency, belonging, and hope. And these are the qualities we focus on in how we work as well as what we do.

## Amy's story

Amy first visited Little Village in 2018, when her baby, "R" was 3 months old. "I'd left home with my baby and one bag. It was a violent and chaotic environment and it wasn't safe for me or R." With the help of a social worker, Amy escaped and found herself living in a refuge in a new area, with no support, friends or family, and absolutely nothing for her baby. "My refuge worker told me about Little Village. I was embarrassed to ask for help but I soon realised there was no need to feel ashamed. They gave me absolutely everything: a pram, clothes, bottles, nappies."

As well as providing all the baby gear, Amy found the emotional help and friendly environment a source of support. "The day I came to Little Village was the first time anyone had ever made me a cup of tea. It makes me emotional now to think about it."

Amy came back to Little Village when R was 6 months old, returning the items he'd outgrown and collecting the next size up, and offering to volunteer. And she's been back every week since, and now runs our creche to enable other parents to volunteer with us. "I've made friends here and Little Village now feels like a home to me."

“

**The day I came to Little Village was the first time anyone had ever made me a cup of tea. It makes me emotional now to think about it.**





# What Trustees Do

Trustees, along with our families, volunteers and staff, are one of the four key groups of people who make up Little Village.

We need your life experience, knowledge and skills to ensure that we continue to be relevant and fulfil our purpose.

As a Trustee you will be part of the Little Village team that:

- Sets our direction and purpose
- Connects us to our communities
- Supports our staff who manage and run the charity
- Promotes and always acts in the best interest of our charity

## What we're looking for

When recruiting new Trustees to our board, we look for people who are:

- Collaborative and flexible
- Able to represent and speak for Little Village
- Able to offer constructive challenge and think creatively
- Committed and responsible
- Passionate about our cause and our values

We always aim for our Trustee board to have a mix of skills and backgrounds and we currently have a specific skills gap on our board. We are looking for someone with experience of scaling a charity or organisation engaged in frontline activity, including the development and management of the infrastructure (e.g. technology and systems) and processes required to enable that growth while maximising efficiencies and minimising risk.

We would particularly value experience of:

- Overseeing/commissioning major technology infrastructure investment
- Growing and refining frontline operations across a dispersed model

- Building a volunteer experience that supports the organisation's operational needs and provides personal growth and development for those volunteering

We want our board to reflect the communities we work in and to have a range of different voices within it. We know that diverse groups of people make better decisions. We also know that we will be stronger and more relevant as a board that reflects the diversity of our Little Village family. That's why we are particularly keen to receive applications from under-represented groups including: people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people with lived experience of poverty either personally or through family, experience of the care system, non-graduates and first-in-family graduates.

## Time commitment

Our board meets four times a year, typically in central London (although remotely for the past two years), for about three hours, as well as holding an annual strategy away day in June/July.

Trustees often also sit on a sub-committee or sub-group such as Finance, or they offer additional support and advice when needed – this could be by supporting on fundraising or recruitment or by advising on the tone and content of our communications to make sure they are accessible.

It's really important to us that Trustees are fully engaged in the work that Little Village does and that they regularly interact with families, volunteers and staff members. Our Trustees all commit to doing four volunteering sessions a year at one of our sites. Our volunteering sessions take place in the day or during the evening, and attendees are welcome to bring their children.

# Joining Our Board

We are keen to work with Trustees to run our meetings in ways, at times and at places that are as accessible as possible. We're always happy to pay travel and childcare expenses to enable Trustees to attend. We are also willing to compensate trustees for loss of earnings during the time they spend at Trustee board or sub-committee meetings.

Trustees are normally appointed for three years. This term is sometimes then extended for a further three years to a maximum term of six years.

## Our Other Trustees

Our other Trustees come from a range of backgrounds in the charity, public and private sectors. Some have previous experience of being charity Trustees, some are newer to board membership. You can read about them [here](#).

## Support for Trustees

We start by working with you to identify how to fulfil your potential as our Trustee. This could include:

- a) support for you to grow into your role, for example taking part in training on governance or accounting or meeting with you in advance to talk through papers
- b) development for us to become more inclusive e.g. in terms of how or when we run our meetings
- c) identifying the best ways in which to work together, for example using WhatsApp to flag when a decision has been requested via email, or holding certain meetings virtually

We will provide all new Trustees with a comprehensive induction which introduces them to the work that Little Village does and enables them to meet staff and volunteers. We will also provide continuing support for Trustees. Every new Trustee is partnered with a 'Board Buddy', another Trustee who's happy to be on hand for advice and support.

We want all our Trustees to contribute to the work we do, but we hope in return that their engagement with Little Village is a development opportunity for them too.

Our Chair conducts an annual review with each Trustee to ensure that they are supported in their role, able to make a full contribution at meetings and that they have been able to use their position as a Trustee to help with their own development. We are also committed to reviewing our board culture and inclusivity annually.

## Want to find out more before putting in an application?

If you'd like an informal and private chat about being a Little Village Trustee, and what it might involve, we would encourage you to get in touch. To organise a chat with either our CEO, Sophie Livingstone, or our Chair, Olivia Gillan-Bower, please contact Vikki at [Victoria@littlevillagehq.org](mailto:Victoria@littlevillagehq.org).



# Applying to become a Little Village Trustee

If you'd like to apply to be a Little Village Trustee, please submit answers to the following questions. You can write your answers in this [online application form](#) or record them as a voice note or video. You can also include a copy of your CV if you'd like to. Please illustrate your responses with examples or evidence from your own life experiences – these could be from your working, volunteering, community or personal life.

- Why are you interested in joining Little Village specifically? (300 words or 3 minutes)
- How do you relate to our values – solidarity, love, sustainability and thriving? (300 words or 3 minutes)
- What knowledge, skills and experience have you gained in your life that you would bring to our Board? (500 words or 5 minutes)
- How would you make a difference to Little Village? (200 words or 2 minutes)

We will also invite you to complete an anonymous [equal opportunities form](#). The information contained in this questionnaire will be treated as confidential and will be used for monitoring purposes only. The information won't be seen by any person involved in the selection process for the Trustee role but will enable us to monitor how we are doing against our diversity and inclusion commitments.

These forms should be submitted online by **9am on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April**.

## Recruitment Timetable

We're aiming to keep to the timetable outlined below so that we can have new Trustees on board by mid 2022. Interviews will be conducted remotely via Zoom or MS Teams. If you need additional support with this then please do let us know what you need and where we can help to make this accessible.

### Informal conversations:

Weeks of 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> March and 4<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> April

### Application deadline:

9am on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April

### First interviews:

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May

Candidates will meet a panel comprising of Olivia Gillan-Bower (our Chair), Helen Murphy (Trustee), Clare Hill (our Head of People) and Rebecca Wilson (our Head of Programmes).

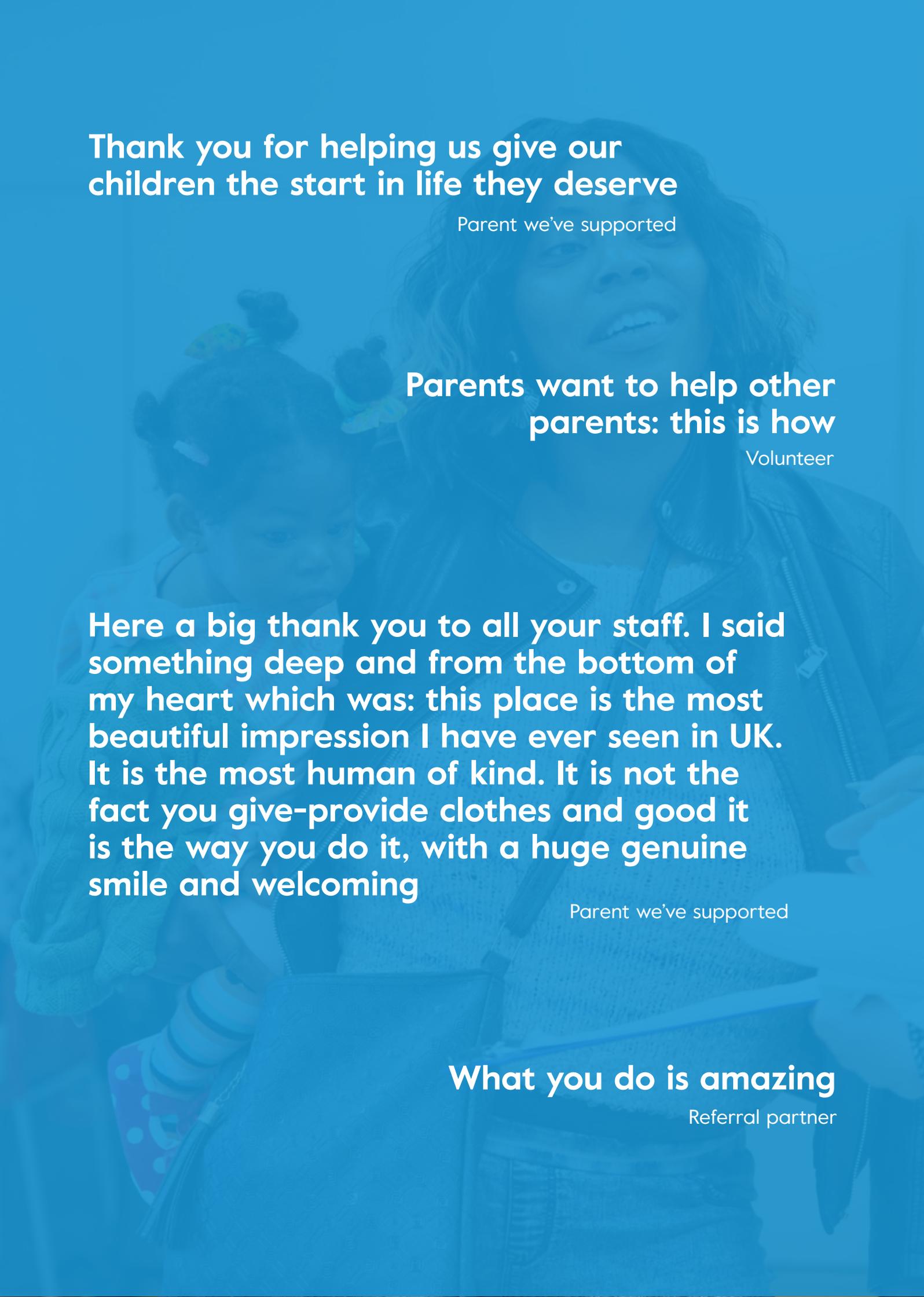
### Second interviews:

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May

Candidates will meet a panel comprising of Olivia Gillan-Bower (our Chair), Sophie Livingstone (our CEO), Marcia Holmes (Trustee), and Emily Compston (our Head of Operations).

### Board meeting and strategy day:

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June



**Thank you for helping us give our  
children the start in life they deserve**

Parent we've supported

**Parents want to help other  
parents: this is how**

Volunteer

**Here a big thank you to all your staff. I said  
something deep and from the bottom of  
my heart which was: this place is the most  
beautiful impression I have ever seen in UK.  
It is the most human of kind. It is not the  
fact you give-provide clothes and good it  
is the way you do it, with a huge genuine  
smile and welcoming**

Parent we've supported

**What you do is amazing**

Referral partner

# Appendix - Trustee role description

## Main duties of a Little Village Trustee

- Ensure that Little Village is carrying out its purpose for the public benefit. Understand its purpose, its objectives, be able to explain them, and ensure they are adhered to
- Ensure that Little Village is complying with its governing document, legal obligations and statutory and accounting reporting requirements
- Be able to demonstrate that Little Village is well run and effective
- Act in Little Village's best interests. Contribute to setting the strategy and ensuring targets and performance are measured
- Manage Little Village's resources responsibly (including its assets, finances, reputation and values)
- Act with reasonable care and skill. Apply your skills and experience to offer challenge and advice

## Key commitments of a Little Village Trustee

- Prepare for, attend and actively participate in Board meetings
- Join any relevant Board sub-committees
- Attend volunteering sessions
- Use networks to champion and promote Little Village
- Support staff members to improve operations by bringing specialist skills and knowledge
- Be aware of and abstain from any conflict of interest

