

# Trustee candidate information pack 2026



**helpforce**

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# Welcome from our Chair



Thank you for your interest in joining Helpforce as a Trustee or Associate Trustee. As the nation's only charity focussed on harnessing the power of volunteering to improve healthcare, we have established a formidable reputation for delivering impact at scale and improving the lives of patients, staff, and volunteers themselves.

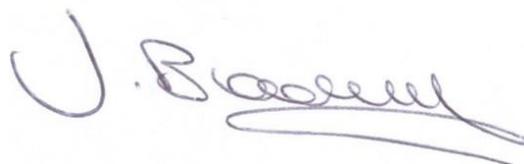
We partner with over 100 NHS and VCSE organisations – working to understand the challenges they face before developing expert volunteering programmes that provide sustainable solutions. Not only do we co-design evidence-based initiatives, but we also help organisations to embed them and thoroughly evaluate results to establish levels of effectiveness.

During a period in which healthcare services have continued to weather immense pressures, alongside an overhauling of NHS structures in England, the consistent contribution of dedicated volunteers to the nation's health and wellbeing has been of critical importance.

By providing unrivalled volunteering knowledge, data, and analysis to our partners - including some of the nation's biggest NHS trusts - Helpforce has consistently 'punched above its weight'. A standout achievement concerns our Back To Health programme which was established in 2022 to help people across the UK 'live well', 'wait well', 'get well', and 'recover well' through the support of volunteers. In February 2025 we hit the incredible milestone of reaching one million people and, in recognition, we were awarded a GSK Impact Award – a highly sought-after accolade for healthcare charities.

We've also seen continued growth in our innovative Volunteer to Career (VtC) programme, which empowers people to transition from volunteer roles to frontline healthcare careers or training. To date, VtC has helped hundreds of people secure fulfilling roles including healthcare assistants, midwives, assistant physiotherapists, and mental health support workers.

For the longest time, volunteering was overlooked by healthcare leaders and considered a 'nice to have'. But since its formation nine years ago, Helpforce has dispelled that view as a strategic error. We've proven that the voluntary and community sectors hold a wealth of potential to contribute to the operational and strategic objectives of healthcare organisations. I warmly welcome your interest in joining our dynamic Board.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Blacklay', with a horizontal line underneath.

# About Helpforce

Helpforce is the only UK charity solely focussed on advancing high-impact volunteering across healthcare.

The nation's healthcare systems face many challenges, with staff under immense pressure. Volunteers are already part of the solution - and they could play an even bigger role.

With NHS and community partners, we have built unrivalled experience and evidence of the contribution volunteering makes to the wellbeing of patients, staff and volunteers themselves.

We bring specialist knowledge and tools to alliances, working with organisations to establish and evaluate volunteering solutions that get to the heart of their challenges.

We have established that 87% of healthcare staff feel volunteers improve the quality of service they can provide; while 82% of people supported through volunteer-led healthcare report reduced anxiety.

Our Vision... is for a nation where volunteering is integral to healthcare at its very best

Our Mission... is to transform volunteering across healthcare, delivering measurable benefits for patients, professionals and communities

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*“Tens of thousands of volunteers currently support our precious NHS - we want to optimise and grow this incredible pool of talent. But there's also an enormous opportunity to unlock the capacity and capability of the 6.5m people who volunteer in local communities.”*

Amerjit Chohan, Helpforce CEO



# Trustee and Associate Trustee roles

## Trustees

Helpforce is constituted as a charitable company limited by guarantee, so Trustees have the same responsibilities and liabilities as a Board of Directors of any Limited Company.

This year, we are seeking to appoint new Trustees who can bring a broad range of skills, experience, and perspectives to our Board. We welcome applications from individuals with diverse professional backgrounds and lived experiences, and are particularly keen to hear from candidates with backgrounds in: volunteer leadership; the VCSE and/or healthcare sectors; NHS clinical practice; and public affairs.

We are interested in candidates who can support the strategic leadership and governance of Helpforce, and who are committed to our mission and values. Key contributions could include:

- Providing strategic insight and constructive challenge to support the charity's growth and impact
- Using knowledge, skills and networks to help us achieve our mission
- Championing diversity, inclusion and accessible approaches
- Acting as ambassadors, promoting the charity's work and values to a wide audience
- Supporting the development of our organisation, staff and volunteers

Above all, we seek individuals with a passion for volunteering and community impact.

## Associate Trustees

For the first time, we are introducing an Associate Trustee (AT) role. ATs are non-voting roles, focussed on bringing specific expertise to Board discussions without the same legal liabilities as Trustees.

We would welcome applications from individuals passionate about the charity's mission, and those who have direct experience of healthcare volunteering. Prior experience at Board level is welcome but not required..

ATs will be mentored by Trustees, with the role acting as a pipeline for future trusteeship.

## Inclusivity

We are committed to improving the diversity of our Board, including ethnicity, socio-economic background, and connections to underserved communities. We welcome applicants with experience of the healthcare landscape in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as England. If you are passionate about advancing the impact of healthcare volunteering and believe you can help shape the future of Helpforce, we would love to hear from you.

## Trustees' responsibilities

- Ensuring that the charity complies with its constitution, charity law and any other relevant legislation or regulations, works to fulfil its charitable objectives and applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its mission.
- Contributing actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and evaluating performance.
- Safeguarding the good name and values of the charity.
- Ensuring the financial stability of the charity, as well as its effective management and administration.
- Ensuring the proper investment of the charity's funds.
- Employing and being responsible for the organisation's staff.
- Using specific knowledge or experience to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions.
- Attending Board meetings and appropriate sub – committees; reading papers in advance.
- Monitoring key performance indicators on a regular basis and holding the Chief Executive accountable for outcomes;
- Promoting the charity among their own contacts.



## Associate Trustees' responsibilities

- Contributing to the strategic planning and governance of the charity.
- Attending Board and committee meetings, receiving papers for review.
- Participating in Board discussions and providing recommendations, without voting .
- Engaging with stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, and partners, to understand their needs and perspectives.
- Undergoing appropriate training.
- Receiving regular mentoring support from Trustees.
- Advocating for the charity and amplifying its reach through contacts.



## Additional information

For detailed information on the charity, including how we are funded, please refer to our [2024/25 Annual Report & Accounts](#).

Information on our staff team and existing Board of Trustees can be found [here](#).

### Term of Office

Trustees: Three years. Renewable twice, for up to a maximum of nine years, subject to the Chair's recommendation.

Associate Trustees: One year, renewable twice up to a maximum of three years.

### Time Commitment

On average, around one day per month, with some flexibility. Meetings are held quarterly in London, usually face-to-face, with a virtual option for those unable to attend in person.

### Conflict of Interest

All candidates will be asked to disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, and these will be discussed with the candidate to establish whether and what action is needed to avoid a conflict or the perception of a conflict.

### Terms of Appointment

An offer of appointment will be made once all candidates have been interviewed and will be subject to satisfactory completion of eligibility checks, including reference checks. If you are offered an appointment, you will receive a detailed summary of your main terms and conditions.

### Location

Our HQ address is New Wing, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 1LA

### Remuneration

Trustee and Associated Trustee roles are unremunerated, though reasonable travel expenses are claimable.

# How to apply

We welcome a CV and a 2 page (maximum) covering letter describing your motivation for applying and relevant experience . Please clearly indicate which role you are applying for and send to [HR@helpforce.community](mailto:HR@helpforce.community)

Accessibility is incredibly important to us. If you would like any accessibility amendments or support throughout the application and interview stage, please don't hesitate to let us know. No question or request is too big or too small. We want this process to be comfortable and enjoyable and a chance for you to bring your best self to the process.

## Schedule

Closing date for applications: March 20

Shortlisted candidates will have an opportunity to meet with the Chief Executive Officer and existing Trustees.

Thank you for your interest.



# Appendix

# Our priorities for the future

Across the UK, healthcare services are under intense strain. Most of us will have witnessed hospital corridors full of patients on trolleys. Sadly, many will also have experienced unthinkable waits for ambulances to attend the homes of loved ones in need. And for those unable to work or enjoy basic daily pleasures because they are stuck on long waiting lists for surgery, life can seem bleak.

Add in the fact that we have an increasingly ageing population, an obesity crisis, a poor track record of diagnosing cancer early, and persistent NHS workforce issues – it's perhaps unsurprising that some commentators feel the problems are insurmountable.

Helpforce takes a different view. With bold leadership, innovation, strategic investment, and the collective determination of everyone involved in delivering services, we believe that healthcare can get back to being its best - with volunteering playing an integral role.

Helpforce has proven solutions to some of the biggest challenges facing healthcare. Through incredible partnerships, our evidence-based programmes have been tested at scale – and shown to work.

We would never suggest that volunteering is an answer to all of the problems, yet it has a significant contribution to make. To maximise that contribution, we must find ways

to reach every NHS Trust, ambulance service, hospice, and local community enterprise with our trusted expertise. We will build towards this by:

- Assembling scalable coalition models with the NHS, voluntary and community sector, and private enterprise - pooling funding and resources
- Relentlessly demonstrating value proposition, with robust ROI measurement baked-in to every project
- Strengthening our brand and gaining recognition as the UK's leading organisation for healthcare volunteering – magnifying influence with health leaders
- Aligning our strategy with the NHS 10 Year Health Plan, trailblazing 'shift to community' success
- Forging strong alliances with respected organisations, gaining endorsement to help extend our reach

Earlier this year we launched a landmark report – 'Reimagining Healthcare Volunteering'.

The document sets out a vision for 'Volunteering 2.0', built on four pillars: **Integration, Innovation, Inclusion and Impact** - embedding volunteers in core operations, reshaping roles to address system challenges, reflecting our communities, and measuring what matters.

Click [here](#) to download a copy.



## Examples of our work

# Delivering Impact - Getting well

One way that volunteers can have a positive impact on healthcare services and patients is by offering support to people while they are recovering in hospital.

Often, being hospitalised can be a challenging experience for people of all ages – physically, mentally and emotionally. Spending time away from loved ones can leave people feeling isolated and lonely – despite the best efforts of hard-working NHS staff. When patients feel down, it can impede recovery times. This adds to the pressures facing already stretched frontline clinical staff, impacting their workload and bed availability.

Helpforce has designed multiple volunteer-led programmes that meet these challenges by supporting people in getting well – including assisting vulnerable adults to eat and drink, providing companionship, encouraging people to improve their mobility through gentle bedside exercises and providing transport to outpatient appointments.

### Case study



In the North East, a group of unassuming men and women start up their cars – week in, week out – to make a truly remarkable contribution to their local community.

The Volunteer Drivers' Service, operated by North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, helps people who are discharged from hospital to get home swiftly and safely, as well as providing transportation to and from outpatient appointments. They even collect and deliver orthotics equipment to people's homes – such as splints and braces.

Having been involved in developing

the service over several years, Helpforce recently applied its evaluation expertise to assess the ongoing impact of the initiative.

We were able to calculate that the service is enabling the Trust to avoid outsourced transport costs of over £80,000 per year, with 98% of patients reporting that it helped them feel less anxious – demonstrating an outstanding impact on wellbeing in addition to practical support.



# 98%

of patients reporting that the service helped them feel less anxious



*"What stands out with Helpforce's Insight and Impact team is their genuine commitment to our work and their eagerness to help us improve"*

Paul Wharton, Head of Volunteering North Tees NHS Foundation Trust

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*"We cherish our involvement in volunteer driving services nationwide. They show that you don't have to be a doctor or nurse to assist people in getting well."*

Kate Crossan, Helpforce Senior Data & Impact Analyst

## Examples of our work

# Delivering Impact - Recovering well

When patients are discharged from hospital and return to their homes after surgery or treatment, they are often vulnerable - especially those who live alone. Susceptibility to falls is a major issue, with incidents not only causing suffering and distress to those affected, but hospital readmissions placing a major strain on over-stretched ambulance services, A&E departments and wards. Falls cost the NHS around £2.3 billion per year and studies

have indicated that a tailored exercise programme can decrease falls by 54%.

Even for those who don't suffer falls, deconditioning is a significant problem that can affect overall recovery and inhibit an individual's chance of regaining their independence. Working with NHS Trusts across the country, Helpforce has designed targeted volunteer-led programmes that help people to recover well.

Falls cost the NHS around **£2.3 billion per year** and studies have indicated that a tailored exercise programme can decrease falls by

# 54%

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*“Helping patients to recover well is an area where we’re having tremendous impact, with Helpforce designed programmes active across multiple health and community organisations. The positive effect on staff delivering care cannot be overstated.”*

Maeve Hully, Helpforce Director of Volunteering

### Case study

Kingston and Richmond NHS Foundation Trust in London extended its gold-standard Falls Prevention initiative this year. Dedicated volunteers receive specialist training in how to support patients with post-hospital rehabilitation exercises.

On their first visit to an individual's home, the volunteer is accompanied by a qualified physiotherapist who carefully explains and demonstrates the prescribed exercises, taking time to build confidence and familiarity with the movements. Then, over the course of a two-month period, the volunteer

visits the patient on a weekly basis to help them to undertake their exercises, providing encouragement and motivation – as well as a friendly face and someone to enjoy a cuppa with.

Gradually, patients gain strength and confidence, and many find that they can return to activities that bring independence and happiness – whether it's getting on a bus to go grocery shopping or visiting grandchildren.

The project resulted in a 32% increase in patients' 'confidence to cope' scores and over 93% of staff felt volunteers improved care quality.



Jackie Harris received falls prevention support after returning home from a hospital stay. “The exercises aren't difficult. It was about getting my legs and hips strong. I got encouragement from my excellent volunteer.”



*“Helpforce’s expertise has supported us to design a highly-effective, volunteer-led falls prevention service that meets the needs of our local community. We’re proud of the impact it has had on patients, staff, and our incredible volunteers.”*

Jo Farrar, Chief Executive, Kingston and Richmond NHS Foundation Trust

## Advocates for our work



**Sir Jim Mackey, CEO of NHS England:** “Helpforce is the unrivalled guardian of what volunteering excellence looks like in modern healthcare, ensuring services are safe, sustainable, and high impact. Let’s give the charity the platform and backing to influence, advise, and unlock vital investment – so that NHS staff, patients, and communities can realise volunteering’s true value.”



**Professor Clare Cable, CEO of the Burdett Trust for Nursing:** “Expertly designed volunteering programmes have a hugely positive impact on the NHS workforce in terms of freeing up staff to focus on the vital clinical interventions that they are trained to perform. The scale of Helpforce’s work has been hugely impressive.”



**Sarah Woolnough, CEO of the King’s Fund:** “At a time when the NHS is severely stretched, tackling long-standing and chronic workforce shortages, Helpforce is doing excellent, innovative work to support volunteers to explore opportunities for an NHS career.”



**Daniel Elkeles, former CEO of NHS Providers:** “Tens of thousands of highly motivated volunteers gift their time and talents to NHS trusts nationwide and Helpforce’s evidence shows that they make a significant contribution – not only improving the experiences of patients, but also in terms of enhancing the working lives of the health professionals they support.”



**2x Olympic gold medallist Dame Kelly Holmes:** “Volunteers are integral to the NHS and Helpforce is ensuring the advancement and the quality of volunteering in the healthcare system is second to none. I know from my mother working with the NHS that volunteers are so important to all of the support that is required.”



**Singer/songwriter and actress Beverley Knight:** “As someone who has a third of her family who work for the NHS, I know the value of the tens of thousands of volunteers who help to bolster the work of the health service. I thank Helpforce for its work and I am in the charity’s corner.”