 Trustee Recruitment Pack 2022

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# Introduction

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee with Luton Law Centre.

Luton Law Centre was formed in 1989. We are a member of the Law Centres Network, and a [not-for](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Not-for-profit)-<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Not-for-profit> [profit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Not-for-profit) [legal practice,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legal_practice) a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. We are independent, and the work of the Centre is governed by an elected Board of Trustees.

The Law Centre movement has been active in the UK since the 1970s. As a movement, we specialise in the areas of civil law most relevant to disadvantaged communities and offer specialist legal advice, casework and representation in these areas of law. Our role is to assist people who cannot afford a lawyer and increase the delivery of legal aid and areas of law to the most vulnerable people. Although the extent and scope of legal aid has decreased in recent years, Luton Law Centre remains a key resource in our community.

As Luton’s specialist Legal Advice Agency, we give professional, confidential legal advice and assistance.

We offer four areas of law, Housing, Community Care, Immigration and Asylum and have 7 caseworkers with well over 75 years’ experience between them.

For each area of law, we offer a free advice line twice a week. Anyone can phone us at these times to get immediate and free legal advice about housing issues, getting the right care and support at home, or about immigration.

We offer detailed casework and representation for clients who are eligible for legal aid in housing, community care, immigration and asylum.

We provide the Duty Scheme in the County Court for people who do not already have a solicitor and face losing their home through county court possession proceedings.

We are actively seeking committed and enthusiastic candidates to go through our Trustee Election Process and look forward to your application.

Fiona Carfrae

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Luton Law Centre

# About Luton Law Centre

### What We Believe

We believe that Luton Law Centre is a valuable local resource and that society is stronger when everyone has access to justice, regardless of their means.

We use our legal expertise to stand up for the rights of disadvantaged people.

### Our Objectives

The Objects of the Charity are

1. To relieve poor persons resident or working in a designated area by providing such persons with legal advice, assistance, representations and services which they could not otherwise obtain because of lack of means.
2. to advance the education of qualifying persons in relation to the law and legal issues and to make the law known and accessible to them.
3. to advance any charitable purposes beneficial to the qualifying persons and their community.

### What We Do

We focus on providing legal services to people who may be marginalised in society, or who are experiencing discrimination. Our clients are from a wide variety of ethnic minority community groups. Most of our clients are disadvantaged. Our aim is to discover the underlying cause of problems and take a holistic approach to solving those problems for both the client and the community.

We can’t solve all the problems through legal work, so we maintain a high level of awareness of the services available in the area and refer our clients to those services where appropriate for other specialist support.

We are staffed by 7 solicitors and caseworkers (4 FT, 3 PT), two admin staff (1 FT,1 PT) and a Centre Director (FT). The areas of Law that we cover are:

* Housing
* Community Care
* Immigration
* Asylum

We offer a free advice line in each area twice a week, and provide detailed casework and representation for clients.

In 2019-20 we dealt with 1209 enquiries and 354 cases across these areas of law.

Luton Law Centre is funded by grants, Legal Aid contracts, and charitable donations.

# Background to the Role

Our Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for Luton Law Centre. It acts collectively and effectively in its interests by giving strategic direction and determining our mission and vision.

It makes decisions required for Luton Law Centre’s control and management. It ensures compliance, good governance and adequate financial resources for our services, and protects our assets and property. It also ensures the organisation manages risks carefully, acts as a responsible employer and upholds the principles of diversity and equality.

The Board of Trustees currently comprises of up to 12 members. At present we have 5 members. The Board currently has a high skill base in Team Working, Chairing, Communication and Listening Skills, Strategic and Creative Thinking and an additional skills base in Human Resources, Negotiation, IT Company Law and Charity Law among others.

The Board is now actively seeking new candidates to elect as Trustees with skills in:

* Finance
* Fundraising
* Charity Trading
* Business Development
* Contract Management

You can find a complete list of the skills that the Board requires on Page 6.

New Trustees will join a Board with energy and expertise in many areas, that works with and supports the Centre Director to achieve the sustainability and growth needed to meet the legal needs of the most disadvantaged in the area.

### Time Commitment

Board meetings take place six times a year for all Trustees. We also have specialised Committees that meet between three and four times a year, sometimes by email. These Committees comprise of Trustees with the specialised skills for that area.

Location

Board meetings are normally held in the early evening at Luton Law Centre and/or remotely.

### Remuneration

The role of the Trustee is voluntary, however, reasonable and agreed out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

### Term

The term of office for a Trustee is a maximum of three years, before they are required to retire. Retiring Trustees who have not been in office for nine consecutive years may be reappointed.

# Law Centre Trustee - Purpose and Role

To work with the other Trustees to form an effective, accountable, governing body which provides leadership for Luton Law Centre’s activities and performance. The Board of Trustees is responsible for maintaining a strategic overview of the organisation.

Responsibilities

**These include:**

* ensuring that our work is conducted within the framework of the Memorandum and Articles of Association
* ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation including: employment, company, charity and health and safety law
* shaping policy and strategic objectives
* monitoring and evaluating performance
* ensuring that our assets and finances are properly managed and accounted for
* ensuring accountability to members, users and funders

**Trustees are expected to:**

* prepare for and attend trustee meetings regularly
* understand and be fully committed to the aims and principles of the organisation
* challenge all incidents that contravene the organisation's equality and diversity policy
* take a share of the trustee board's work by offering to work on a sub-committee
* support all decisions once they have been agreed by the trustees
* respect the confidentiality of trustee matters and discussions

**Trustees’ joint responsibilities are to:**

* accept legal responsibility for the organisation’s staff and volunteers
* act as employers for the organisation’s staff
* decide overall policy for the organisation
* be satisfied that within the constraints of resources, we are meeting the organisation’s aims
* take a long-term view of how the work of the organisation should develop
* try to ensure that funding for the organisation continues
* ensure that all trustee responsibilities delegated to staff are carried out

**Our model of governance is to ensure that:**

* all trustees bring the necessary skills and competence to fulfil the role required of them
* elected trustees are representative of the communities we serve, so that the direction and development of the Law Centre is responsive to local need, and
* trustees provide:
* stewardship, taking a balanced measure of risk
* accountability, through monitoring progress and supporting staff on delegated authorities
* strategic direction, in consultation with staff, partner agencies and other stakeholders
* trustees maintain two-way communication with staff. Staff need to feel involved and confident that the Law Centre is effectively governed and to feel valued and supported.

Person Specification

You must be over 18.

### Knowledge and Experience

* A clear understanding of the role of a trustee and corporate Board member or willingness to learn
* Broad knowledge of management and governance issues
* An understanding of the work of the voluntary and community sector (helpful)
* An understanding of legal aid (helpful)

### Skills

* A strategic thinker
* A sharp mind who exercises good judgement
* An effective communicator
* Pro-active, willing to offer constructive challenge and support judgements
* A team player who respects different views and is able to work with Board colleagues and the Centre Director and Senior Solicitor
* An ability to build strong relationships and champion Luton Law Centre

### Personal Qualities

* Demonstrates drive and determination
* Brings the commitment necessary to devote sufficient time, preparation and effort required to meet the responsibilities of being a trustee
* Demonstrates integrity, honesty and flexibility
* Demonstrates active listening skills and is open to the views of others
* Shows commitment to inclusion and diversity

### Skills Required Across the Board

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  **Knowledge and Understanding**   | **Skills and Abilities**   |
| Change management  | Business Development  |
| Charity Law  | Chairing  |
| Charity trading  | Communication skills  |
| Communication, marketing, publicity, PR  | Consensus building  |
| Company Law  | Developing strategic plans  |
| Contract management  | Effective Listening  |
| Contracts of employment and employment law  | Evaluation and priority setting  |
| Current government policy and thinking  | Facilitating  |
| Equal opportunities and diversity legislation  | Lobbying and campaigning  |
| Financial procedures and systems  | Negotiation  |
| Funding and fundraising  | Networking skills  |
| Health and safety legislation  | Numeracy and literacy  |
| Human resources  | Participative methods  |
| IT  | Representation and advocacy  |
| Monitoring and evaluation  | Strategic / creative thinking  |
| Organisational policy and procedures  | Team working  |
| Quality assurance  |   |

#

# How to Apply

You can apply to be elected as a Trustee using the following forms. The Trustees are elected to the Board by the Board.

We ask you to fill out an application form so that the current Trustees have sufficient information to understand how you can contribute as member of the Board. The goal is to have a diverse and creative Board, with a wide range of skills.

We encourage prospective Trustees to arrange to meet or telephone the Centre Director or Chair. We will arrange for you to visit the Law Centre if you would like to before making your application. We will give you as much information as we can so you can get a clear picture of whether you can make a commitment to the Law Centre for the following three years, and understand how to highlight the skills and experience you will bring.

We may ask to meet you after you have made your application.

You should refer to the documentation in filling out the application form, particularly the person specification and the skills that the Board is actively seeking.

### Application Forms

The forms required are:

1. Application Form
2. Trustee Eligibility Declaration
3. Trustee Monitoring Form
4. Trustee Declaration Form (you do not need to complete this unless elected. It is a requirement when elected)

#### Ways to Complete the Forms

1. You can fill the form directly in this pdf using the free Adobe Acrobat Fill & Sign Tool. You can find instructions at <https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/fill-and-sign.html#fill_your_PDF_form>
2. Alternatively, you can download a Word Version of the required forms at <http://www.lutonlawcentre.org.uk/trustee-recruitment/>or request the forms from the office on 01582 482000
3. You can also download or request the forms and fill in by hand.

Send Your Application.

Please send your completed forms (1, 2 & 3) to: pgilson@lutonlawcentre.org.uk at any time.

Please do not hesitate to call with any questions you may have. You may speak to the Centre Director on 01582 482000 or request a call back from our Chair, Fiona Carfrae.

# Application Form for Election as Trustee

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A**  | **Personal Details**  |  |
| Name  |   |  |
| Address  |   |  |
|  | Postcode  |   |
| Email  |   |  |
| Daytime telephone  |   | Evening telephone  |   |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **B**  |  | **Employment Details – please give brief details of your last employment (up to 5)**  |
| From  | To  | Title  | Employer  |
|   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **C (about 250 words)**  | **Interest and Motivation: please tell us why you are interested in being a Trustee of Luton Law Centre**  |
|   |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **D (about 250 words)**  | **Knowledge and Experience: Memberships, Board positions, Qualifications or other relevant experience as per Person Specification**  |
|   |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **E (about 250 words)**  | **Personal Qualities – please give concrete examples of how you demonstrate the personal qualities of a Trustee as per Person Specification**  |
|   |  |
| **F**  | **Skills – please list up to five key skills (see page 6) that you can bring to the Board, indicate levels, and how you anticipate using them as a Trustee of Luton Law Centre.**  |
| Skill  | Level (see key below)  | How will you use this skill as a Trustee of Luton Law Centre?  |
| 1.  |   |   |
| 2.  |   |   |
| 3.  |   |   |
| 4.  |   |   |
| 5.  |   |   |

Levels Key:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Have some knowledge  | = 1  |
| Good current hands-on experience  | = 2  |
| Expert in this area  | = 3  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **F**  | **What other experience or skills do you feel you offer and how?**  |
|   |  |
| **G**  | **What areas of work do you have a particular interest in and/or would like to become more involved in**  |
|   |  |
|  I confirm that the information on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge  | Signature  |

#  Trustee Eligibility Declaration

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  **Section 1**  | **Personal Details**  |  |
| Name  |   |  |
| Address  |   |  |
|  | Postcode  |   |
| Email  |   |  |
| Daytime telephone  |   | Evening telephone  |   |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 2**  | **Charity Details**  |
| Charity name  | Luton Law Centre  |
| Registration number  | 1039998  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Section 3 Declaration**  |
|  **I declare that:** * I am willing to act as a trustee of the organisation named above
* I understand the organisation’s purposes (objects) and rules set out in its governing document • I am not prevented from acting as a trustee because I: o have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception
	+ am currently declared bankrupt (or subject to bankruptcy restrictions or an interim order) o have an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) to pay off debts with creditors o am disqualified from being a company director
	+ am subject to an order made under section 429(2) of the Insolvency Act 1986
	+ have previously been removed as a trustee by the Charity Commission, the Scottish charity regulator or the High Court due to misconduct or mismanagement
	+ have been removed from management or control of any body under section 34(5)(e) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (or earlier legislation)

 **I also declare that:** * the information I provide to the Charity Commission is true, complete and correct
* I understand that it is an offence under section 60(1)(b) of the Charities Act 2011 to knowingly or recklessly provide false or misleading information
* the organisation’s funds are held (or will be held) in its name in a bank or building society account in England or Wales
* I will comply with my responsibilities as a trustee – these are set out in the Charity Commission guidance ‘The essential trustee (CC3)’
* (if applicable) the primary address and residency details I provide in a charity registration application are correct and I will notify the Charity Commission if they change

**Personal Benefit** * If the organisation pays or will pay any trustee for being a trustee OR any Trustee or person connected to them for providing goods and services, I declare that this will:
* Be in the organisation’s best interests
* Be lawful and authorised
* Help the organisation carry out its purpose (or be a necessary by-product of it carrying out its purposes)
 |
| Signature  |   | Date  |   |

# Trustee Monitoring Form

When we advertise for Trustees, we like to be able to monitor and check that we are attracting a wide variety of applicants. It is helpful to us if you can complete and return this form, together with your application.

This monitoring form is detached from your application as soon as we receive it, and none of the information contained in it is used for any selection or election purposes.

1. Are you: Female  Male  Prefer not to say 

1. How do you describe your ethnic origins:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| White British  |   | Mixed  – White/Black Caribbean  |   | Asian  - Indian  |   |
| White Irish  |   |  - White/Black African  |   |  - Pakistani  |   |
| White Other  |   |  - White/Asian  |   |  - Bangladeshi  |   |
| Black Caribbean  |   |  - mixed other  |   |  - Asian Other  |   |
| Black African  |   | Chinese  |   |   |   |
| Black Other  |   | Other  |   | Prefer not to say  |   |

1. Are you aged under 25  25 – 40  40 – 60  over 60 

1. Do you have a disability?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Not considered disabled  |   | Cognitive impairment  |   |
| Physical impairment  |   | Long-standing illness or condition  |   |
| Sensory impairment  |   | Other  |   |
| Mental Health Condition  |   | Prefer not to say  |   |
| Learning disability/difficulty  |   |   |   |

# Trustee Declaration of Interests

I declare that I am a trustee of Luton Law Centre and set out below my interests.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  Category  | Please give details of the interest and whether it applies to yourself or, where appropriate, a member of your immediate family, connected persons or some other close personal connection  |
| Current employment and any previous employment in which you continue to have a financial interest.  |   |
| Appointments (voluntary or otherwise) e.g. trusteeships, directorships, local authority membership, tribunals etc.  |   |
| Membership of any professional bodies, special interest groups or mutual support organisations.  |   |
| Investments in unlisted companies, partnerships and other forms of business, major shareholdings and beneficial interests.  |   |
| Gifts or hospitality offered to you by external bodies and whether this was declined or accepted in the last twelve months.  |   |
| Do you use, or care for a user of the organisation’s services?  |   |
| Any contractual relationship with the charity or its subsidiary.  |   |
| Any other conflicts that are not covered by the above.  |   |

To the best of my knowledge, the above information is complete and correct. I undertake to update as necessary the information provided, and to review the accuracy of the information on an annual basis.

Name:

Signed:

Date: