

Chair of Trustees Recruitment Information Pack

Charity number: 313007

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Welcome letter from the Chair

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for your interest in the Chair of Trustees role at Buttle UK.

We believe that Buttle UK is a special organisation, both because of the direct difference we make in the lives of vulnerable children and young people by providing vital items and activities and because of the people and culture of the charity itself. The need for versatile and speedy support for children and families remains critical and we strive to ensure that the grants remain flexible to the needs of a changing landscape. Delivering and improving these grants ensures we continue to help families and young people immediately.

But, after a process of reflection and the creation of our new strategy, we no longer think it is enough just to continue our intervention in this way. We believe that we should also work to change the very system that is often dragging more into poverty, especially during and after a period of crisis in their lives. As part of our work, we will use our expertise and insight to better understand and explore who our priority grantees are and why – and how they have ended up where they are now. We will also explore and test what other grant options there are that would have a deeper impact for these priority groups.

We are also extremely proud of the culture of the organisation and of our people, who are resourceful, experienced and empathetic and who are so vital to everything that the charity does. We will continue to support them and to employ new staff to help us in building and improving the organisation and drive the delivery of our strategy.

These factors combine to mean that, this year, we aim to support 5,500 children and young people with a grants budget of over £5.5m. We aim to continue with this level of support to ensure we are helping children and young people in the toughest of times.

As I reach the end of my 9 year tenure at Buttle UK, we are looking for a new Chair of Trustees to guide the work of the charity, alongside our CEO and Senior Management Team. We set out some criteria further in this pack but I want to stress that we are keen to speak to interested candidates with a range of skills, with prior Chair experience not necessary (although some charity Board experience strongly preferred).

I hope you would like to play a part with us in supporting children and young people in crisis and continuing to build on Buttle's success and we look forward to hearing from you.

Peter Orlov

Chair of Trustees, Buttle UK

Background information

About Buttle UK

Founded in 1953, Buttle UK is a charity dedicated to supporting children and young people across the UK who face crisis situations, financial hardship, and multiple social challenges. Our mission is to enhance emotional, educational, and social outcomes through targeted interventions, primarily through our Chances for Children grants.

We support children and young people living in severe poverty, often on incomes under £18,000 a year. Many face challenges such as domestic abuse, mental health issues, estrangement, or neglect. Our grants, up to £2,400, are tailored to each individual's needs. This can be as simple as a new school uniform to help them settle in school; support for family or play therapy; or membership of a club or activity so that they can explore something they enjoy, socialise and have opportunities to make friends. We can also help with items like beds, toys, clothes or even a TV. Our grants help children to live a life that feels a little more like other children's. For those experiencing particularly disruptive home environments, we also provide grants enabling access to boarding school placements. These initiatives are designed to create safe, nurturing environments and foster wellbeing-promoting activities, ultimately empowering children and young people to thrive academically, emotionally, and socially.

You can read more about the impact of our work [here](#).



Our context as we step into our next strategy

We have recently completed our 'Working Together for Children and Young People', 2020-25 strategy and will reach our goal of supporting over 25,000 children and young people by the end of this period. Child poverty continues to increase in the UK, and unless this figure turns around sharply, we will see greater need for the simple items and activities we provide, yet all of us would agree are essential for children.

We currently provide direct support to alleviate the impact of poverty and crisis, but we are not tackling the underlying issues that drive poverty. Our own report, 'Growing up in Poverty' (2024) highlights that the situation our Chances for Children grants aim to support is getting tougher in an incredibly challenging environment and that we are facing a 'poverty emergency'. Knowing what we know, we believe that we cannot continue to only intervene in this way without working to change a broken system that is dragging more into poverty, particularly the most vulnerable that are also facing significant crises in their lives.



Our work in co-production with the communities we support

It has been our goal to embed the concept of co-production into our culture and work, so we can harness the power of those with direct experience of the issues we seek to address. To support this, we have developed two key groups:

- A Youth Advisory Panel of young people aged 16-25 who have experienced crises and financial hardship.
- An Advisory Network consisting of professionals and families with learned and lived experiences of the issues Buttle UK is trying to tackle.

Our Strategy

By moving beyond a reactive approach and leveraging its unique assets, Buttle UK aims to create lasting, systemic change, ensuring that poverty and crisis do not define a child's future. This strategy positions us not just as a grant-maker but as a changemaker, committed to ensuring that no child's future is determined by poverty and crisis.

Our 2025-30 strategy has three key objectives towards our aim to ensure that poverty and crisis does not define a child's future:

1. Deliver impactful grants
2. Amplify our voice for change
3. Harness the power of our resources

You can read about our 2025-30 strategy in more detail [here](#).



Our Vision

Poverty and crisis does not define a child's future

Our Mission

The maintenance, education and advancement in life of children and young people who through poverty and family circumstances are in need of, and will benefit significantly from, Buttle UK's support.

Our Values

Child-focused. We put children and young people first in the decisions we take. They are the focus of all our efforts and energy.

Empathetic. Empathy and compassion are central to our work with children, young people and families. We act with respect for all people, communities and cultures, and value this in our wider team as well as our grant-making.

Responsive. We are responsive to the needs of children and young people, with a focus on providing swift decisions. We listen and adapt so that we can do better in all aspects of our work and deliver more for those we support.

Collaborative. We collaborate in order to create chances for children and young people that are significantly disadvantaged by crisis and poverty. It is only through working in partnership that we can be truly successful.

Accountable. We are accountable to children, young people, and all those with whom we work. By recognising and acting on this accountability, we will most effectively and appropriately serve the communities for which we exist and deliver the best possible service to meet their needs.



Chair of Trustees role description

Overview

Buttle UK aims to ensure ‘the maintenance, education and advancement in life of children and young people who through poverty and family circumstances are in need of, and will benefit significantly from, Buttle UK’s support’. These aims are consistent with the guidance on public benefit provided by the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Trustees consider the ‘public benefit requirement’ and must be confident that all activities undertaken demonstrate this requirement.

The role of the Board of Trustees is to provide strategic oversight, guidance and support to further Buttle UK’s charitable objectives. The Chair will hold the Board and Executive Team to account for the Charity’s mission and vision, providing inclusive leadership to the Board of Trustees, ensuring that each Trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity. The Chair will also support, and, where appropriate, challenge the Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team and ensure that the Board functions as a unit and works closely with the Executive of the charity to achieve agreed objectives. This will involve informal and formal contact to allow both the Chief Executive and the Chair to raise matters with each other as appropriate. Some of the issues for discussion will need to remain confidential and/or personal. The Chair is an ex-officio member of all Trustee committees but is not expected to attend all of these meetings.

The prime task of the Chair is to ensure that the Board fulfils its responsibilities in governing Buttle UK, to manage the boundary between governance and management and, in collaboration with Trustee colleagues, to ensure that Buttle UK operates in a manner that enables it to fulfil its objectives as effectively and efficiently as possible. The Chair’s term of office will be three years and no longer than two terms. In exceptional circumstances a further year or two could be agreed, e.g. if a change coincided with that of the CEO departure.

The Chair should work closely with the Deputy Chair on strategy and governance as well as briefing them on day to day matters so that if the Chair is unavailable for any reason, the Deputy Chair can take over.

Main Duties

Strategic Leadership

- Provide leadership to the charity and its Board, ensuring that the Charity has maximum impact for children and young people.
- Ensure that the Board operates within its charitable objectives and lead the Board in the setting of the overall strategy.
- Ensure that the Board:
 - Functions effectively and efficiently,
 - Oversees the management of Buttle UK's income and expenditure alongside the Finance and Investment Committee,
 - Reviews major risks and opportunities regularly, taking advantage of opportunities and managing/mitigating the risks,
 - Takes professional advice when necessary.
- Act as an ambassador, working alongside the CEO, representing Buttle UK when appropriate.
- Act as a spokesperson for the organisation when appropriate.

Governance

- Chair meetings of the Board and work closely with the Chief Executive to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of Trustees.
- Facilitate and encourage discussion at Board meetings and ensure that the appropriate decisions are collectively made and implemented.
- Give guidance to the Board on what is for decision by the Board and what is for information.
- Ensure clear delegation to and reports from Sub-Committees.

- Develop the knowledge and capability of the Board of Trustees.

- Take such decisions between meetings of the Board, as the Board may have delegated and monitor that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.
- Appraise the performance of the Trustees and the Board on an annual basis.
- Ensure that the Board of Trustees incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the charity effectively, and which also reflects the wider population.
- Ensure that effective procedures exist to identify and appoint successors for officers of the Board.
- Act as signatory for legal documents, cheques and other payment orders for amounts in excess of the delegated powers of staff.

Relationship with the Chief Executive

- Establish and build a strong, effective and constructive working relationship with the Chief Executive, ensuring they are held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives.
- Support and maintain appropriate contact with the Chief Executive, and to ensure appropriate, and effective support and appraisal mechanisms are in place.
- Ensure that the Chief Executive has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.
- Lead matters concerning the appointment and remuneration and dismissal of a Chief Executive (and be involved in similar processes in relation to the Senior Management Team).
- The above list is indicative only and not exhaustive. The Chair will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with the role.

Person Specification

When selecting the Chair, the following criteria, in addition to those for Trustees, will be taken into account:

Leadership: Ability to facilitate a good dynamic within the Board to allow for challenging but supportive and unifying debates that reach consensus. Ensures agendas are focused on strategy and the needs of children and young people.

Strategic Acumen: Ability to help the CEO, the executive and Board members to evaluate strategic options, demonstrating strong analytical skills, balanced with a practical approach to governance.

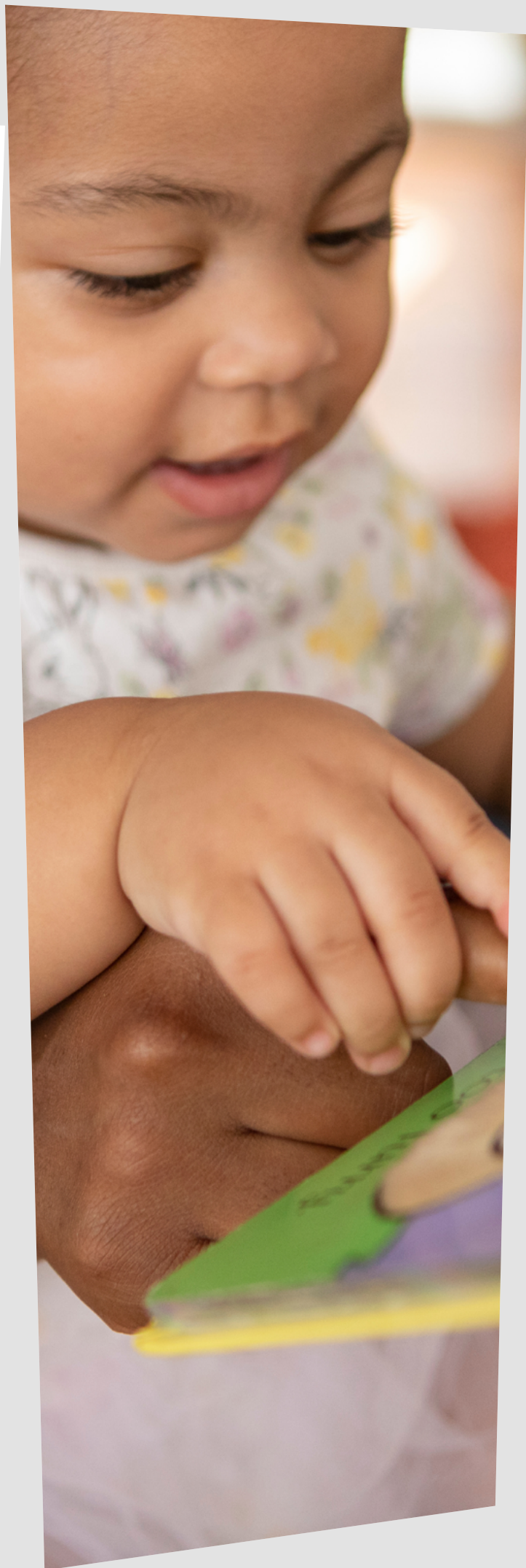
Mentor: Ability to empower the CEO and be reflective, challenging but supportive as appropriate.

Influencer and Collaborator: Ability to communicate clearly, with diplomacy and sensitivity to influence a wide range of stakeholders.

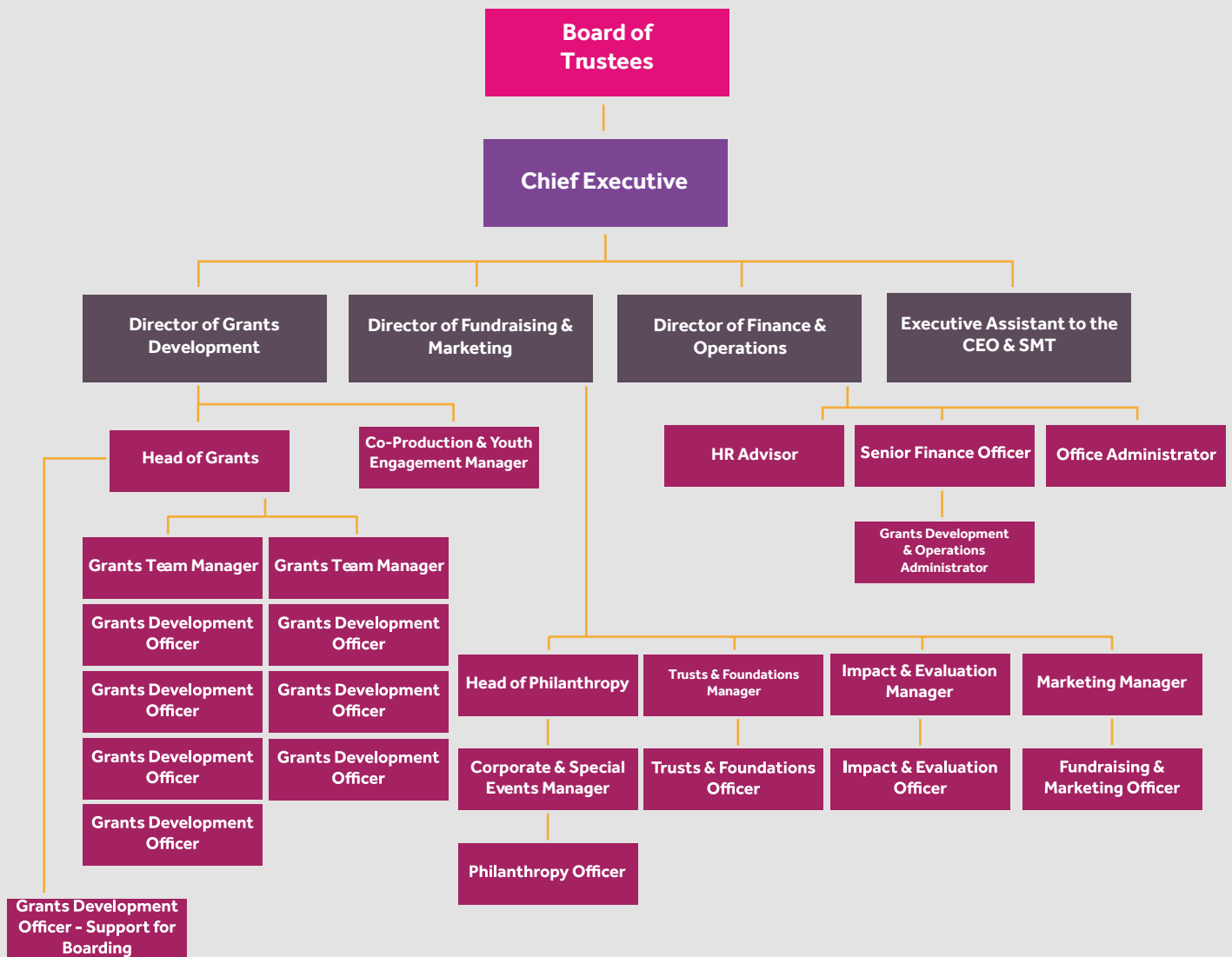
Knowledge: An interest and experience in charities and other non-executive Boards.

Experience: Previous experience of governance roles, including at least some experience on a charity Board.

Time Commitment: Should be prepared to devote two to three days a month (on top of Board meetings).



Organisational structure



Buttle UK Theory of Change

TO PROMOTE

Improved social & emotional wellbeing & increased capacity to engage in education.

TO ENSURE

Home

Children & young people are growing up in a safe & nurturing place that meets their learning and development needs

Wider Community

Children & young people access activities that promote wellbeing and learning and build support networks

TO PROVIDE

The items & activities that we expect all children to have & the extra resources that can help to overcome crisis & unlock opportunities.

BY FUNDING

Chances for Children

Individually tailored grants that invest in children & young people's present & future lives.

WE SUPPORT

Children & young people living in poverty & crisis.

Increasing Life Chance



Bev's story

Bev has had a difficult life. Becoming a grandmother was a turning point for her; she realised then that she had never been a proper parent to her own children. Bev had worked really hard to turn her life around and was mortified to see her daughter making similar mistakes to her.

On Christmas Day she was forced to take her grandchildren in to live with her full-time. With three distressed children to look after, Bev was unable to stay in work. Her fridge-freezer was old, it leaked and caused the children to become ill. The youngest grandchild's bed had to be thrown away because it was infested with bed bugs.

In addition to a fridge-freezer, a Chances for Children grant funded a new bed and new bedding and towels for all the children.

Critically we also funded after school activities for all the children; gymnastics for the youngest, football sessions for the middle child and boxing lessons for the eldest grandson. This intervention has helped to give structure to the children's lives, ensuring they don't head down the same troubled path that Bev and her daughter had taken.



Information on our governance & commitment for the role

Trustee Officers

Buttle UK has a Chair, and a Deputy Chair as its officers.

Trustee Board

Our Articles of Association allow for a Trustee Board to consist of not fewer than eight Trustees and no more than 20. It is felt that a Board of 11-13 Trustees meets the needs of the Charity at the present time and we currently have 12 Trustees. The Board is responsible for the governance of Buttle UK and meets four times a year.

Committees

The Trustee Board uses Committees to advise on certain aspects of Buttle UK's operations. These committees are chaired by selected Trustees and the Chair joins at their discretion. Each of these committees additionally meets four times a year.

- Governance & Workplace Committee
- Finance & Investment Committee
- Grants Committee

Board Meeting Dates for 2025/26

Thursday 26th June 2025

Thursday 25th September 2025

Wednesday 3rd December and Thursday 4th December 2025

Thursday 26th March 2026

Our commitment to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion.

We pride ourselves on being an inclusive organisation and welcome applications from all applicants, regardless of race, sex or gender, sexuality, socio-economic background or any other minority or protected characteristic.

To support anyone looking to apply for our Trustee positions we commit to:

- Paying for childcare for the hours in and around the interview process.
- Paying for your travel costs to the office and back for interviews if these are held in person.
- Holding interviews online if easier for candidates' circumstances.
- Making any reasonable adjustments to support your needs in the application and interview process.

Read more about our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion across our organisation [here](#) and we have shared more information of the diversity of our Board on the same page.



Chair of Trustees - Time Commitment

Board and Committee meetings are held in Oval, in London. We appreciate the benefits of meeting in-person as a Board throughout the year and strive for Board meetings to be in person where possible (but understand this may be difficult at times so meetings can also be joined online when required).

Chair of the Board and Trustees are appointed for an initial three-year term with the opportunity to extend for a further three-year period. The time commitment for our Chair includes meeting with the CEO for an hour every fortnight, Chairing four Board meetings a year plus an away day and attending any relevant committee meetings. The Chair also typically attends a number of sub-committee meetings. Overall, the successful candidate should be prepared to devote two to three days a month (on top of Board meetings). Board meetings are generally during the working day and last for approximately three hours.

Our Trustees are not remunerated however, travel expenses or payment for childcare, directly incurred in the role, will be arranged in advance or reimbursed.

Our Specific Focus in this Chair Recruitment Process

We are keen to speak to interested candidates with a range of skills. Whilst experience in the areas below is not a necessity for this specific role, we will particularly be looking to recruit Trustees to the Board with the following experience over the next 18 months:

- Legal and governance
- Advocacy/campaigning/influencing
- Frontline work supporting children and young people
- Grant-making



Buttle UK background reading, listening & viewing

For further information about our grant programmes and wider work please access on our website:

READ:

[The history of Buttle UK](#)

[Our 2025-2030 strategy](#)

[Our latest Impact Report](#)

[Our latest Boarding Report](#)

[Growing up in Poverty Report](#)

[The stories of those that have benefitted from Chances for Children grants](#)

WATCH:

[A video explaining our Chances for Children grants](#)

[What is poverty?](#)



How to apply

To apply, send your CV and a statement of interest (please keep the statement to one side of A4) to recruitment@buttleuk.org by midday on 4th June 2025. Please also complete [this](#) anonymous EDI monitoring survey.

We want to meet the aims and commitments set out in our Equity, Diversity & Inclusion strategy and policy. This includes not discriminating under the Equality Act 2010, building an accurate picture of the make-up of our workforce, and those who apply to work at Buttle UK. We need your help to collate this information by completing the anonymous form, which cannot be traced back to an individual. The information given by candidates will be solely used for the purpose of reviewing and improving the recruitment process.

If you have any questions, or would like to arrange an informal conversation with our CEO Joseph Howes, or outgoing Chair, Peter Orlov, please contact Clare Piechota, Executive Assistant: clarep@buttleuk.org

Recruitment Timetable

Activity	Date		
Closing date for applications	Midday 4th June 2025	Opportunity to attend our next Board Meetings as an observer, if successful	25th September 2025 and 3rd and 4th December 2025
Shortlisting completed by	11th June 2025	First Board Meeting as Chair	March 2026
Interviews	26th June 2025		

The appointment will be made subject to satisfactory references.

Application check list

All applications should be submitted by **midday** on **Wednesday 4th June 2025**

- ☐ I've attached my **CV** - with up to date contact details and employment history
- ☐ I've attached a **statement of interest** addressing the job description and person specification above - 1 side of A4
- ☐ I've completed the anonymous [EDI monitoring survey](#)



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