Could you help shape Elizabeth House?

We're looking for local people to join our Board of Trustees.

Who are we?

The Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust (HVBT) was founded by local residents as a Charity in September 1993 to save and operate Elizabeth House, a grassroot, multi-purpose Community Centre.

Through our community-based approach - acting as a community 'anchor' – we build trust and bring people together so that we can connect residents to practical support and opportunities. Our vision is for everyone in the local community around Elizabeth House to have a better quality of life through accessing key services and activities.

The Charity is dedicated to providing a safe and open space, as well as inclusive and flexible services for the community. We aim to have a meaningful and positive influence on the local community. Our priority is to respond to the needs of the local community, especially people with high needs or who are underserved.

Elizabeth House provides a range of services open to all and a place for local people to use, as well as a space and support for other organisations to deliver their services and activities.

Being a Trustee of the Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust

The Charity and the Community Centre are run through the Board of Trustees. Trustees play a key role in making sure HVBT and Elizabeth House achieve their purpose and priorities, as well as complying with all the relevant laws and regulations.

Trustees oversee the overall management of the Charity. They ensure that our work and goals are in line with our mission and vision. Trustees support the executive team, but also challenge the team so the organisation continue to adapt and thrive.

Trustees have a **collective responsibility**. They always act as a group and not as individuals.

You can read more about the role of Trustees on the Charity Commission's website:
Charity trustee: what's involved (CC3a) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The Trustee's commitment to the Charity will include attending bi-monthly board meetings and the annual community event (late September or early October). It is also expected that trustees will visit the centre to meet staff and volunteers, build their understanding of what we do, and provide support to the Executive Director. At times, the trustees may need to be actively involved in new initiatives, special events, to lead discussions on key issues or provide guidance in new areas.

Trustees are expected to give around 4 to 8 hours per month, through face-to-face meetings, visits and active support in specific projects (e.g. events, recruitment, strategy, research, support).

A trustee is a volunteer, but the charity can pay reasonable travel expenses.

Trustees are appointed for a maximum of two three-year terms. Renewal of terms is not a given and will be led by organisational needs. We also want to make sure that not all trustees retire at the same

time, so we welcome new applications on a rolling basis to make sure the Board has at least seven trustees at all times.

Who are we looking for?

Trustees should all be from the local community, living in Islington, Hackney or Haringey.

While it is important that some Trustees have certain relevant professional expertise, not all Trustees need to have a particular professional experience to be valuable. Commitment to the local community, ability to bring a fresh perspective, and 'lived experience' of the types of challenges faced by users of the Community Centre are as important. **We especially welcome people who know first-hand what it's like to face poverty, have experienced food insecurity, isolation or raising children on their own.**

When considering applications for new Trustees, as well as looking at how your experience, skills and knowledge can support Elizabeth House, we are also looking for qualities which we ask from all of our trustees such as:

- A commitment to the vision, mission and values of HVBT;
- An ability to meet the time requirements;
- Integrity and good judgement;
- An ability to think creatively and work collaboratively;
- A willingness to speak your mind and respect other's opinions;
- An understanding of the legal duties and responsibilities of trustees (we can facilitate training on this);
- A desire to make a difference in your local community.

HVBT recruits on a rolling basis and may prioritise candidates with particular types of experience, knowledge and skills for an effective and diverse board of trustees. We welcome applications from candidates with 'lived experience' of the types of challenges faced by users of the Community Centre, such as poverty, food insecurity, social isolation, single parenthood and adverse childhood or youth experiences.

Why join us?

Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust has been running services and activities at Elizabeth House for over 30 years, and we are looking for trustees to join our dynamic team. With local government services being reduced or cut, Elizabeth House is well-placed to fill the gaps that have been left.

We would love to hear from you if you share our passion for bringing positive change and making a difference in the local community. Give back, develop your experience/skills and local network.

If you are interested in becoming a trustee, contact Nathalie the CEO at director@elizabeth-house.org.uk to organise a visit and meeting to find out more. If you know Elizabeth House well, please send a brief expression of interest to introduce yourself and give a little information on what you would bring to the role, as well as what motivated you to apply. You may wish to attach your CV.

If your application is considered suitable, we will get in touch to organise an interview with a panel including other trustees. Appointment is subject to approval by HVBT's trustees. Recommended trustees will be invited to attend a board meeting before they are appointed.

You can find more information about us on our website www.elizabeth-house.org.uk.

Updated September 2026