

Trustees Recruitment Pack



Registered as a Charitable
Organisation in England and Wales
Charity Number: 1116388
IAA Reference: N201100018
Justice First
133 Norton Road
Stockton On Tees
TS18 2BG

Message from the Chair



As Justice First celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, I find myself reflecting on what a privilege it has been to be part of this remarkable organisation and to serve as Chair for the past 17 years.

What began as a small group determined to stand alongside those seeking safety and justice on Teesside has grown into a trusted source of advice, advocacy, and hope for refugees and people seeking asylum.

We began in a small office setting with one passionate and committed caseworker and have evolved into our present team of five trained and experienced staff members who provide a superb service to our clients. Over two decades, we've witnessed lives rebuilt, families reunited, and countless individuals find their voice and place in our community.

For me personally, Justice First has always been about people – our clients, fellow trustees, our dedicated staff and volunteers, and so many supporters in the wider community who continue to stand with us. Their resilience and compassion have been constant reminders of why this work matters so much.

The need for justice, dignity, and fairness remains as great as ever. This is an exciting time to join our Trustee Board and to guide Justice First through the next years with so many opportunities for development and so much potential for an organisation that will continue to meet that need with the same commitment and heart that has defined us for twenty years.

Barbara Hungin

Chair of Trustees

About Justice First

Justice First is a charity dedicated to supporting people seeking asylum, refugees and irregular migrants in the Tees Valley and wider North East region. Established in 2006, we are celebrating our 20th anniversary this year—a milestone that reflects two decades of commitment, compassion, and life-changing impact.

We are the only charity in the North East exclusively offering legal advice and support to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. Our work fills a critical gap, providing guidance and assistance to over 1,500 clients annually who would otherwise face the complex legal immigration system alone.



Our Mission & Vision

Our vision is of a society — and a Northeast — built on welcome, acceptance, and dignity, where people seeking asylum, refugees and other migrants have the specialist support they need to rebuild their lives.

We walk alongside individuals throughout their entire journey - from first claim through to settlement - offering specialist legal guidance, practical assistance, and a safe and trusting environment where every person's story is heard. We support people at every stage of the asylum process, including those considering a claim, those whose claims have been refused, and those moving between asylum and immigration routes. Alongside legal advice, we provide practical support, creating the stable foundation from which people can access healthcare, employment, and education, and begin to rebuild their lives.

WELCOME

ACCEPTANCE

DIGNITY

What Makes Us Distinctive

Justice First is unique in the region. We are the only charity providing this specialised legal advice and support to people seeking asylum in the North East. We do this work exceptionally well, achieving long-lasting, life-changing impact for vulnerable migrants and their families. Through our support, we provide a platform for people to reach their fullest potential and rebuild their lives in safety and dignity.

Our Impact

The work that we do changes lives.

- Over **1,500** clients access our services annually
- **56%** success rate - our clients achieve grants of status after entering our service
- **5** full-time staff members and **8** trustees, often described as 'punching above our weight'
- Geographic reach extending across **Teesside, Durham and Newcastle**



Scan QR Code to watch our short film



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"Your strong support, your constant words of peace, encouragement and calmness helped in more ways to keep my children and I going through this journey, more than you can ever imagine."



Strategic Context and Opportunities

Key priorities for our Trustee Board

Our new Trustees will help us navigate both challenges and opportunities as Justice First moves into its third decade:

Growth and Development

Over the past 20 years, we have made significant strides in growing our team, expanding our reach, and broadening the areas of immigration law we cover. Our new Trustees alongside the existing Board will support the organisation as we consolidate this growth and plan strategically for the future.

Increasing Demand

Demand for our services continues to rise. Client numbers have reached 1,500, and the complexity of cases is increasing. The Trustee Board will help ensure we have the capacity, resources, and governance structures to meet this need sustainably.

Challenging Policy Environment

New and divisive immigration policies create additional challenges for the people we serve. Our Trustee Board helps the organisation remain resilient, responsive, and focused on our mission in this difficult landscape.

Financial Sustainability

The funding landscape for charities remains challenging. We are exploring new strategies for sustainable income, including learning from organisations offering low-cost immigration advice or progressing to Level 3 IAA registration to access legal aid.

Board Renewal

We recognise the need for fresh perspectives and expertise on our Board. Our Trustee Board will develop and implement a process of Board renewal, with a particular focus on recruiting Trustees with lived experience of the asylum system. This will strengthen our governance and ensure our strategic decisions are informed by those closest to our mission.

Supporting Our Team

Our small but exceptional team works under significant pressure to serve our clients. Trustees will work with senior management to ensure staff feel valued, supported, and motivated as the organisation grows.



The Role: Trustee

This is an exciting time to join the Trustee Board at Justice First. As we celebrate **20 years of impact** and look ahead to the next chapter, we are looking to add two new Trustees to our Board to help support our dedicated team through a period of growth and change.

As a Trustee at Justice First, you will play a vital role in helping us continue to support refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK, empowering them to rebuild their lives in safety here in the North East.

This is an opportunity to use your professional skills, leadership, and charity experience to make a meaningful difference to the lives of people who have been forced to flee their homes, communities, and livelihoods.

Governance and the Board

Justice First currently has a Board of eight Trustees, including the Chair and Treasurer.

We are looking to appoint two new Trustees, to join our Board. While we are not seeking sector-specific experience, a very genuine interest in helping refugees create happy, safe and productive lives here is an essential.

As one of our new Trustees, you will join a committed and experienced Board, providing effective leadership and ensuring the charity is well governed in support of its vision, mission, and values.

Trustees work together collectively as a Board and make decisions through formal Board meetings. Once a decision has been agreed collectively, all Trustees are expected to support it. The role of a Trustee is to provide strong governance, contribute at a strategic level, oversee the organisation, and hold it to account. Trustees are responsible for shaping the organisation's mission and direction, while helping to ensure its ongoing success and sustainability.

Role Description

As a Trustee, you will work with fellow Board members to provide strategic leadership, ensuring Justice First remains well governed, financially sustainable, and true to its mission and values.

Key responsibilities include:

- Contributing to the development of Justice First's vision, strategy, and priorities.
- Approving and monitoring organisational plans, policies, and performance.
- Providing oversight of the charity's finances, including budgets and annual accounts.
- Ensuring effective governance, legal compliance, and risk management.
- Supporting and constructively challenging the senior leadership team.
- Keeping informed about developments affecting the charity and the wider sector.
- Contributing to regular reviews of Board effectiveness and governance.
- Attending and actively participating in Board meetings.
- Acting with integrity, independence, and in the best interests of Justice First.
- Promoting the charity through your skills, experience, networks, and advocacy.



Person Specification

We are looking for people who share our commitment to Justice First's mission and values. We welcome applications from individuals with skills, knowledge, or experience in one of the following areas:

Legal (specifically Employment Law): To strengthen our governance and organisational support, we are seeking an experienced legal professional with expertise in employment law. The role will involve acting as a strategic adviser to the Board, providing insight on employment-related matters, supporting the development of effective people practices, offering guidance on relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and constructively reviewing policies, processes, and key organisational decisions.

HR/Organisational Development: To strengthen our people governance, we are seeking an experienced HR or organisational development professional. The role will involve acting as a strategic adviser to the Board, providing insight into organisational development, people strategy, and culture, supporting the development of effective people practices, and offering guidance on leading and developing mixed teams of staff and volunteers as the organisation continues to grow and evolve.

We're looking for Trustees who can bring sound judgement, strategic thinking, and a commitment to Justice First's mission.

You'll ideally have:

- An understanding of the responsibilities of charity trustees and a willingness to fulfil them.
- Strategic thinking and the ability to make balanced, independent decisions.
- Strong communication and collaborative working skills.
- A commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Enthusiasm for Justice First's values and the people we support.
- A commitment to the Nolan Principles of Public Life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership.

Additional Involvement

As a small charity, Trustees occasionally contribute beyond formal Board meetings. This may include:

- Reviewing Board papers and preparing for meetings.
- Leading or contributing to discussions on key issues.
- Providing advice or specialist expertise.
- Supporting new initiatives and strategic projects.
- Acting as an ambassador for Justice First.

Why Join our Board?

This is an exciting opportunity to help shape the future of a growing and ambitious charity supporting refugees and people seeking asylum.

As a Trustee you will play an important role in helping Justice First continue to provide life-changing support to people rebuilding their lives in the North East. The role offers the opportunity to:

- Make a meaningful difference by using your skills and experience for social impact.
- Help shape the strategic direction of a respected and growing charity.
- Develop your knowledge of charity governance, leadership, and financial oversight.
- Work alongside a committed and passionate Board and staff team dedicated to justice and inclusion.



Terms of Office and Time Commitment

Terms Of Office

Trustees are appointed for a three year term which is extendable. These are voluntary positions, but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Time Commitment: *Estimated at 3-4 hours a month*

- Attending Board meetings of which occur every 6 weeks and last for 2 hours. Currently meetings are of an evening (starting at 5.30pm) during the week. These are hybrid (with a preference for in-person attendance).
- Attending AGM and annual review meetings.
- Trustees should also allocate time to read and respond to emails related to their duties.
- Providing additional support at key times, such as during recruitment processes, audits, or significant organisational decisions.

Equity, Diversity And Inclusion

At Justice First, we believe that a diverse Board brings broader perspectives, stronger decision-making, and better outcomes for the people and communities we serve. We warmly welcome applications from people of all backgrounds and experiences.

We particularly encourage applications from people with lived experience of the asylum system, as well as those from communities that are underrepresented in charity governance. We recognise that lived, professional, and voluntary experience can all bring valuable insight to our work.

We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected, and able to contribute fully. While Trustees are appointed to act in the best interests of the charity rather than represent specific groups, we strive to ensure our Board reflects the diversity of the communities we support. Justice First is committed to equality of opportunity and does not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or victimisation in any form.

We want our recruitment process to be as accessible as possible. If you require any reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment or selection process, please let us know and we will work with you to support your participation.

How to Apply

Reach Volunteering are supporting Justice First with their Board recruitment.

Applications should be made via TrusteeWorks in the first instance. To apply, please send a CV with a covering letter stating why you wish to join the organisation and how your skills and experience would add value to our Board. Please add anything else that you think is relevant to your application.

If you would like to talk to one of the TrusteeWorks team or the Chair of the Trustee Board at Justice First before you apply, please contact the TrusteeWorks team to arrange it.

Please send applications and enquiries to:

trusteeworks@reachskills.org.uk

Applications will be accepted until **5pm on Friday the 4th of September.**



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