



Trustee Recruitment

Welcome from our Board

Thank you for your interest in the role of Trustee at Women's Counselling and Therapy Service. Trustees play a critical part in our specialist Charity and following our recent joining with Inspire North, we are now in a position to further expand our Board to ensure the continued work of WCTS.

We are looking for women with a passion for mental health or living in / working with communities experiencing deprivation. We are particularly interested in hearing from women with a legal or charity management background, alongside those with experience in the counselling and therapy field especially of long term work as practitioners and or clients.

It is the passion and experience of our trustees that help drive our strategic direction and ensure we are in a position to continue to provide these essential services to the Women and Girls of Leeds.

This is a critical time for beneficiaries as we understand more about the impacts of the cost of living crisis and increasing social challenges.

So, you will be joining us as we start to deliver the future direction and impact of the charity. We very much hope that you will be able to join the Board in this journey.

Yours sincerely,
WCTS Board of Trustees

Welcome from our CEO, Ruth Kettle

Thank you for your interest in finding out more about trustee opportunities at WCTS.

Our Board is vital to the work of our organisation. You'd be joining us at an exciting time, however not without challenges as we continue to grow. Our income comes from a variety of sources including Local Authority, NHS, Grants and Fundraising.

We are committed to developing a diverse Board that represents the communities we serve and encourage applicants from all backgrounds. Being a trustee is an important and rewarding role, if you would like an informal chat please do get in touch.



We would very much like to hear from you.

Ruth



About WCTS

Our charitable objectives are to:

-  Provide advice and guidance, counselling and psychotherapeutic services including self-help support for women and girls of all ages
-  Advance the education of the public and of psychotherapists and mental health workers in particular, in the causes, effects, treatment and reduction of psychological / mental health problems in women and girls.

We operate mainly in the Leeds area, and particularly in areas suffering from economic deprivation working with women 16+ experiencing multiple disadvantage.

Our aims are to support marginalised and vulnerable women recover from the impacts of negative life experiences and improve their life chances by: reducing their levels of psychological distress/mental health problems; improving their levels of self-esteem and confidence; increasing their resilience; empowering them with skills for dealing with problems or tackling difficult situations, relationships and, for some, mothering.

We offer access to trauma specialised long-term i.e. up to two years, psychotherapeutic services that take account of both gender and wider power structures in society, and the potential impact of severe and/or long-term adversity on development, capacity to form and sustain healthy relationships and resilience.

Mission: We support disadvantaged and marginalised women and girls recover from experiences of abuse, violence, neglect, trauma and mental ill health

Vision: All women and girls enjoy good mental health and flourish

VALUES



Empowerment

We listen, encourage, and uplift women and girls to recognise their strengths and believe in their potential. We model confidence, celebrate progress, and support each person in taking steps toward the future they choose.



Compassion

We create safe, supportive spaces by showing empathy, kindness, and respect. We respond to challenges with understanding and help each other grow through care and connection.



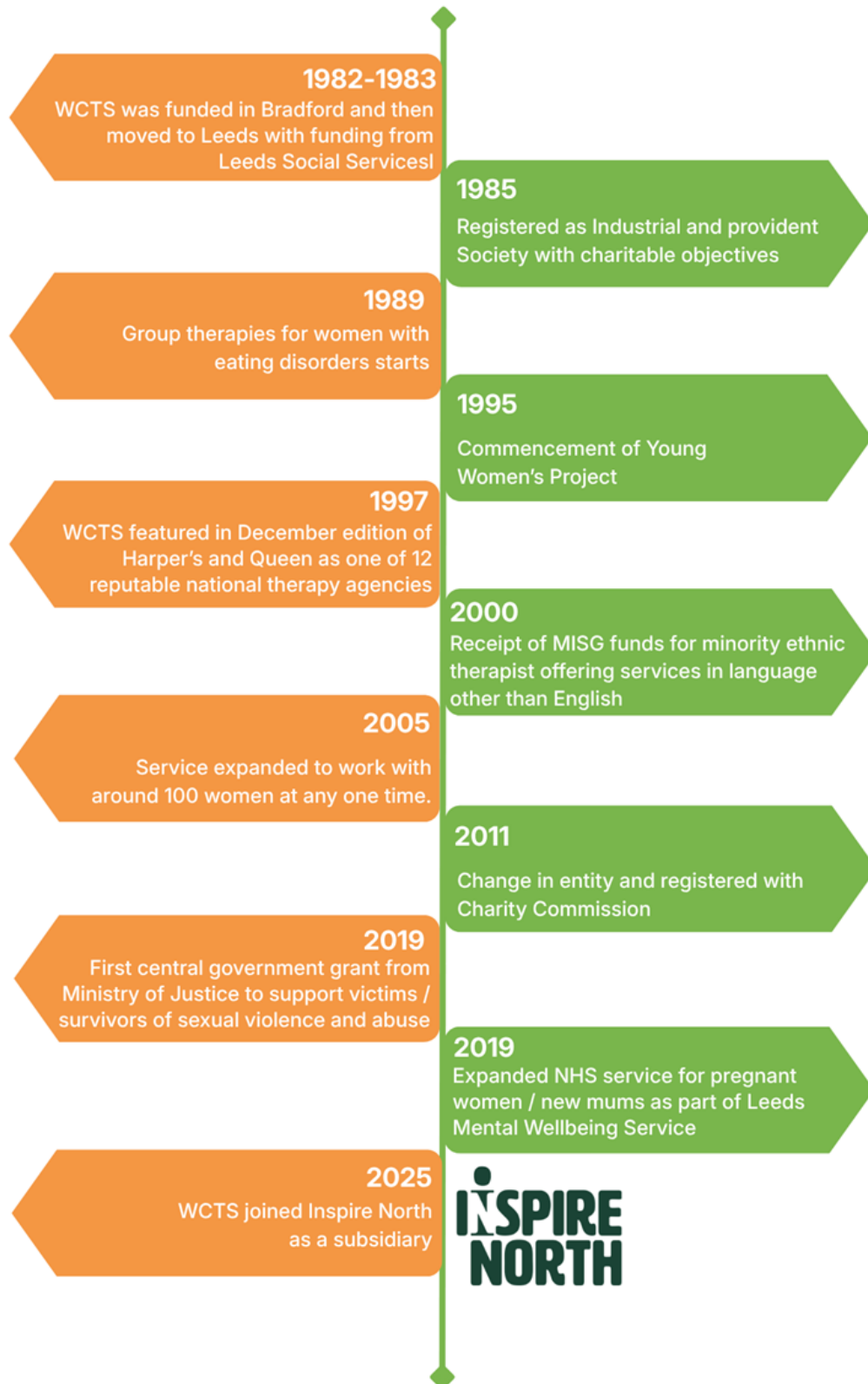
Inclusion

We welcome everyone with openness and respect. We seek out diverse perspectives, ensure all voices are heard, and work together to build a community where everyone feels they belong.



Women's Counselling
and Therapy Service

HISTORY OF WCTS



A more detailed history can be found on our website: [40 years and going strong! - Women's Counselling and Therapy Service \(WCTS\)](#)

Structure and Function of the Board

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of Women's Counselling and Therapy Services (WCTS), developing the organisation's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing document, legal and regulatory guidelines. Ensuring the Charity is solvent, well-run and of good reputation.

The board provides oversight, direction, support and constructive challenge to the organisation, in particular, the Senior Leadership Team.

Board Members are appointed for an initial 3-year term. Trustees can stand for re-election for further terms of 3-years, for a total of 9 years (in line with Charity Code of Governance best practice).

The Board Meetings are held quarterly, with an informal trustee session, also held quarterly. The meetings are usually held on Wednesday evening starting at 5:30pm and last approximately 2 hours.

The meetings are attended by the CEO, Director of Operations, CFO and Head of Service. Other attendees may also include other members of Inspire North's SLT, the Strategic Governance Lead and WCTS employees.

WCTS recognises the benefit of listening to our clients and we would encourage applications from ex-service users to sit on our board.

WCTS is a subsidiary of Inspire North, this means that minutes of WCTS Board Meetings are shared at Inspire North Board and updates are given as appropriate. However, the approval of WCTS business is made by WCTS Board of Trustees.

Inspire North is the sole member of WCTS.

There is a clear Collaboration Agreement that sets out the agreement of authority and responsibility between Inspire North and WCTS.

Trustee Time Commitment

In total, trustees are expected to commit 4-5 hours a month. This includes:

- Formal Board Meetings - quarterly on a Wednesday 5:30pm - 7:30pm (either in person or online)
- Informal Board Sessions - quarterly on a Wednesday 5:30pm - 7:30pm (in person)
- Annual trustee appraisal (1.5 hours)
- Reading board papers prior to meetings (sent out electronically 1 week in advance)
- Annual Board Away Day (1 full day - in person)
- Mandatory board training (via our online training platform)



On occasion we may need to call an extraordinary board meeting but these will usually be called with plenty of notice and can be attended online.

The Role of a Trustee

Trustees are responsible for setting the strategic direction and ensuring the effective governance of WCTS. They ensure the organisation makes the best use of its resources to meet its vision and objects. They also ensure that accountability to key stakeholders is effective and robust.

Key Responsibilities

- Ensure that WCTS complies with its governing document and pursues its charitable objects (Articles of Association)
- Ensure WCTS uses its resources exclusively in pursuit of its objects
- Safeguard the good name and values of WCTS
- Ensure financial stability of WCTS
- To respect confidentiality especially when information / decisions could be commercially sensitive, or of a personal nature
- Understand the importance of risk management within WCTS
- Ensure WCTS' long term future
- Actively contribute to the Board's role in giving strategic direction, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- To represent WCTS' best interests, not your employer or another organisation
- Take on additional duties, where required.

The Essential Trustee, published by the Charity Commission gives a good overall view of the responsibilities of being a trustee of a Charity:

[The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do \(CC3\) - GOV.UK](#)

Diversity & Inclusion

To feel like you truly belong, you must be heard, valued, and included. This is why we are committed to being a diverse and inclusive organisation. We want all colleagues, clients and volunteers, from any ethnicity, sexuality, ability, age, or experience to feel like they can bring their whole self when engaging with our organisation. We wish to establish an ethos and culture that promotes inclusion, respect and dignity and has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination.

We know that different ideas, perspectives, and backgrounds create a stronger and more creative working environment, which in turns makes for the best experience possible for our clients.

Diversity and Inclusion needs to be something that everyone has a stake in, and we continue to inspire people to work with us through allyship, network membership, strategy, training and understanding. Inclusion isn't just about being 'right' but is our individual and organisational key to growth.



Trustee Role Description

Trustees are responsible for setting the strategic direction and ensuring the effective Governance of WCTS. They ensure the organisation makes the best use of its resources to meet its vision and charitable objects. They also ensure that accountability to key stakeholders is effective and robust.

We are seeking women keen to play an active role in the Board. Everyone experiences mental health challenges at times: everyone's view on what WCTS offers into Leeds communities is valid and important.

All applicants should be able to demonstrate the following:

- Alignment of WCTS Visions & Values
- Strong sense of integrity and professionalism
- Ability to understand and accept the duties and liabilities of being a trustee
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the role
- An active commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Ability to collaborate effectively within a team and to challenge constructively
- Able to see the bigger picture and seek to understand challenging and complex issues
- Able to bring impartiality and objectivity to decision-making
- Able to listen, make reasoned contributions and a willingness to speak their mind
- Experience of working with others towards common goals and shared objectives
- IT Literate

Desirable Experience

Clinical Experience: We are specifically looking for applicants that have experience working in a clinical setting. You will have a strong clinical background with professional experience in mental health services, preferably as a Therapist. You will be able to provide clinical insight that ensures we meet the highest standards whilst remaining financially sustainable.

Familiarity with healthcare regulations and compliance requirements is a must; knowledge of BACP and their Ethical Framework is desirable.

Ex-Service User: We truly believe the voice of the client is pertinent to make decisions about the future of the organisation. Have you been a client of WCTS and would like to give back then we would love to hear from you.

You do not have to have any previous experience as a trustee, we can provide support and training. The main thing is your values, passion, commitment and willingness to learn to become an active member of our WCTS Board.



What WCTS offers in return

You will be joining an active, positive, skilled board: WCTS has strong commitment and contribution from its trustees, and staff work closely to support good governance. WCTS will offer full support to its new trustees in the form of induction, an existing trustee 'buddy' and other development, reflection and learning opportunities.

If this is your first role as a trustee, this is a great opportunity to understand the need for clear oversight and strategic direction, of a charity and working as a collective board to ensure good governance.

All trustee roles are unpaid; however we will pay reasonable travel expenses and there is a clear policy available on this. This does include covering the cost of childcare or caring responsibilities to enable you to attend Board.

If you have any questions about what can be claimed please contact the Strategic Governance Lead, Helen Isabella Ferguson on helen.ferguson@inspirenorth.co.uk.

WCTS has insurance to cover our activities including Trustee Indemnity insurance.



Trustee Eligibility and Checks

Some people are disqualified by law from acting as a Trustee, including:

- Anyone who has an unspent conviction for an offence involving deception or dishonesty, specified money laundering, terrorism or bribery
- Anyone who has an undischarged bankrupt or individual voluntary agreement (IVA)
- Anyone who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity by the Courts or Charity Commission for misconduct or mismanagement

The full list can be found here: [Automatic disqualification guidance for charities - GOV.UK](#)

Although convictions, bankruptcies or similar matters may be considered 'spent' there is no time limit for considering serious misconduct or responsibility for failure in a previous role.

Please note successful candidates will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check prior to formal appointment as a Trustee. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prohibit appointment, but will necessitate a risk assessment to be carried out to determine suitability.

Rigorous checks will be carried out to ensure that all persons applying to become a Trustee are eligible. These checks will include obtaining two references (one from a current employer and one from an individual who has known the applicant for over two years and is not a relative). If the potential trustee is retired, one reference should come from someone who has known them on a professional level.

Interested? Then apply now by filling out our Trustee Application Form.

If you want to have an informal chat about the role, our Strategic Governance Lead can arrange this for you. Please email helen.ferguson@inspirenorth.co.uk