



# Trustee Recruitment & Information Pack 2026



Adoption charity where children matter

[www.adoptionmatters.org.uk](http://www.adoptionmatters.org.uk)

Members of:



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## Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining Adoption Matters as a Trustee.

This is a meaningful opportunity to help shape the future of a charity that transforms the lives of children who cannot live with their birth families. For many of the children we support—often older, in sibling groups, or with complex needs - adoption can be life-changing.

Our role is to make that possible, and to ensure it lasts.

I joined Adoption Matters not just as a Trustee, but as someone whose own life has been shaped by adoption. I've seen first-hand the difference the right support, stability and care can make. As Chair, I'm committed to ensuring we continue to deliver that impact - sustainably, ambitiously, and with children at the heart of every decision.

We are now looking to strengthen our Board with individuals who bring fresh perspective, constructive challenge, and a shared commitment to improving outcomes for children and families.

If that resonates with you, we would be delighted to hear from you.

**Jamie Bennett**  
**Chair of Trustees**



## Why join the Board now?

Adoption Matters is at a pivotal moment.

We have grown significantly in recent years, including the launch of Foster Care Matters, our not-for-profit fostering service. At the same time, the wider children's services landscape is evolving rapidly - financial pressures, changing commissioning models, and increasing complexity of need all present both challenge and opportunity.

Our Board is focused on:

- Strengthening long-term financial sustainability
- Scaling high-quality support for children with complex needs
- Expanding our fostering and adoption services responsibly
- Navigating a shifting regulatory and commissioning environment
- Ensuring strong governance during a period of organisational change

This is an opportunity to join a Board engaged in real strategic decisions, where your contribution will have direct and lasting impact.

## About us

Adoption Matters is a children’s charity and one of the largest voluntary adoption agencies in the UK. We recruit, train and support individuals, couples and families looking to adopt and offer ongoing support and training. We also offer a support service for adopted adults and birth families, and a specialised therapy service.

In 2024, we launched our not-for-profit fostering agency, Foster Care Matters. As a non-profit provider, the service is committed to reinvesting resources to deliver high-quality support and ongoing training for foster parents. More recently in 2026, we acquired 1<sup>st</sup> Affinity Fostering Service in Wrexham, securing a not-for-profit future for the agency in Wales.

## Our Vision

Our vision is a world where all children grow up with the security and benefit of a safe and loving family home, enabling them to reach their full potential.

## Our Mission

Children are at the **HEART** of all we do and we seek to have a transformative impact on young lives; building trusting relationships and providing responsive, high-quality services underpinned by therapeutic support as standard.

## Our Values



### Honesty

We will treat everyone fairly, be professional, respectful, honest and transparent in all our communications and accountable for all our decisions.



### Empathy

In our organisation **everyone matters**. We seek to create a safe environment for individuals to express themselves openly, challenge kindly, seeking to learn and develop within a culture of respect and acceptance.



### Ambition

We are ambitious for our children’s futures and will ensure that we listen to children so that their voice is heard in plans being made about them and will advocate that their needs are met to support them to fulfil their potential.



### Respect

We will listen to and value the views and experiences of our children, families, staff and volunteers, ensuring equality of opportunity regardless of gender, race, religion, culture, heritage, age, disability or sexuality.



### Together

We will continually develop and improve our services together, through increasing engagement with our children, families, staff and external stakeholders, using their feedback to inform future developments.



## Governance

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 25th February 1982 and registered as a charity in 1955. The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

The Board approved a new set of Articles of Association on 20.09.2023 which also included provision for an associate non-voting membership of which our Presidents and Patrons are automatic members of this class.



**Jamie Bennett**  
Chair of the Board and Trustees

Jamie Bennett was appointed Chair of the Board in 2025, having served as a Trustee for six years.

Jamie has a background in senior commercial consulting, with experience supporting large organisations on strategy, stakeholder engagement, and complex decision-making. He brings a strong focus on governance, performance, and ensuring the organisation delivers meaningful, measurable impact for its beneficiaries.

He holds a degree in Politics and Sociology from the University of Warwick. Jamie was adopted through Adoption Matters and is therefore extremely passionate about the success of the charity.

There are six trustees who are all volunteers who come from a wide range of backgrounds, careers and experiences who are devoted to share their expertise, time and knowledge on various committees to help in ensuring Adoption Matters complies with the charity commission requirements and share innovative ideas and promotion of our services. They are also geographically spread to cover our service area.

### Members of the Board and Trustees



**Annesley Wright**

Annesley was Managing Director of two large manufacturing subsidiaries of International Companies for thirty years.

Now retired, Annesley currently holds many board positions in charities and not for profit organisations to assist with Compliance, Governance and Probity.



**Graham Alton**

Graham has over 25 years' experience in both executive and non-executive roles in the voluntary and community sector. For a majority of his career Graham has worked as Chief Executive of a Regional Children's Charity. In the past few years, Graham's energies have been spent on helping establish a not-for-profit fostering agency as the charity he leads repositions to more substantially focus on improving the lives of children who can't be taken care of by parents or other family members.



**Joe McArdle**

Joe is Registered Nurse who now works at the University of Chester following a 26 year career in the NHS. An adoptive parent of two girls for which he is eternally grateful to Adoption Matters.



**Lynn Pates**

Lynn has over 30 years' vast experience working in Financial Services, specialising in the not for profit sector.

Lynn has a maths degree and is a chartered management accountant holding both the ACMA and CGMA credentials



**Yvonne Ball**

Yvonne has had a varied career which includes working with the police, the Home Office and most recently as a non-executive director on the Animal Health and Welfare Board for the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs.



**Anne Fleming**

Anne has over 30 years' experience as a Social Worker in Adoption and Children's Services. Prior to her early retirement, Anne was Head of Adoption Support Services at Adoption Matters.

Anne is committed to ensuring that organisations supporting vulnerable children operate with robust safeguarding practices, clear accountability and a culture that prioritises safety, nurturing, learning and continuous development.

## The role of a Trustee

### What you'll be contributing to

As a Trustee joining the Board at this time, you are likely to be involved in:

- Shaping our long-term strategy across adoption and fostering
- Strengthening financial resilience in a challenging funding environment
- Supporting the growth and positioning of Foster Care Matters
- Ensuring high-quality services for children with increasingly complex needs
- Enhancing our external profile, partnerships and influence

### Who we're looking for

We are seeking individuals who are committed to our mission and motivated to contribute at Board level. You do not need prior Trustee experience—we welcome first-time Trustees as well as those with existing Board experience.

#### **We are particularly interested in candidates with experience in:**

- Children's services, adoption, fostering or social care
- Finance, audit, or financial oversight
- Fundraising, income generation or business development
- Communications, marketing or public relations
- Working with or within local authorities or public sector systems
- Scaling organisations, transformation or organisational change
- Governance, legal or regulatory environments

We are especially keen to hear from individuals who bring **lived experience of adoption, fostering or care**.

### Skills and qualities

All Trustees should be able to demonstrate, and be keen to learn and advocate:

- Sound judgement and the ability to think strategically
- Confidence to provide constructive challenge and support
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Openness to different perspectives and collaborative working
- Integrity and a commitment to high standards of governance

### Term Commitment

The term of appointment will be three years initially with a review of performance for renewal for a further three years and again after this period for a maximum of nine years. In exceptional circumstances the term may go beyond this period.

### Remuneration and Expenses

This position is unremunerated; however, reasonable expenses will be covered.

## Recruitment Process

### How to apply

- Please complete the application form and apply with a detailed CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements together with a supporting statement (maximum two pages of A4) highlighting our suitability for the role and how you need the person specification.
- You should give the names, positions, organisations and telephone contact numbers of two referees, relevant to this role. References will only be taken once your express permission has been granted.

Send via email to: [recruitment@adoptionmatters.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@adoptionmatters.org.uk)

Via Post: Strictly Private and Confidential, Susy White, Chief Executive Officer, Adoption Matters, 14 Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1AE.

Please let us know if you will require any special provision as a result of any disability should you be called for interview.

### Queries

If you wish to have an informal discussion about the opportunity, have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, or need additional information please contact our Board of Trustees Chair: Jamie Bennett email: [jamie.bennett@adoptionmatters.org.uk](mailto:jamie.bennett@adoptionmatters.org.uk)

### Selection and Appointment

**Stage one** - Initial call with Chair

**Stage two** - Competency based interview with 2-3 trustees (either in person or online)

**Stage three** - Formal approval at Board meeting

### Training and Development

Before your shadowing period commences, you will have the opportunity to participate in a full trustee induction, and once appointed continue your development in line with our Trustee Recruitment, Induction and Development Policy.

### What we do with your data

In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018, the information provided on this form will be used as part of the recruitment and selection process and may be disclosed to those who need to see it.

It will also form the basis of the confidential personnel record of successful applicants.

In the case of unsuccessful applicants, the application form will be destroyed after 6 months, in line with our HR Privacy notice.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

At Adoption Matters, we are committed to fostering an environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered. Our ambition is to create a culture that embraces diversity, promotes equality, and ensures inclusion for all.

### Our Commitments:

**Equality:** We strive to provide equal opportunities for all employees, regardless of their background, identity, or personal circumstances. We are dedicated to eliminating discrimination and bias in all forms.

**Diversity:** We celebrate the diverse perspectives and experiences that each individual brings to our organisation. We believe that diversity drives innovation and strengthens our community.

**Inclusion:** We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome and supported. We actively work to remove barriers and ensure that all voices are heard and valued.

We are open to discussion of any adjustments or any flexible arrangements you may need at any stage of the process, and if you join us, we commit to supporting you to reach your full potential during employment. The only thing we assess within your application is how you have demonstrated your ability to meet essential job requirements.

Together, we can build a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive future.

### **Final note**

Joining the Board of Adoption Matters is an opportunity to make a meaningful difference to children and families—while contributing to the strategic direction of a growing and ambitious organisation.

**If you are motivated by purpose, and ready to contribute your skills at Board level, we would be very pleased to hear from you.**



Adoption charity where children matter



**Tel: 01244 390 938**

**Head office:** 14 Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1AE.

**Also offices in:** Blackburn, Warrington, Hale, & Leeds.

**Registered Charity No. 512892**

Also part of the Adoption Matters family: [www.fostercarematters.org.uk](http://www.fostercarematters.org.uk)  
[www.1st-affinity-fostering.co.uk](http://www.1st-affinity-fostering.co.uk)

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**“The quality of adoption support is a significant strength of the agency. Highly trained professionals offer high-quality services to families” - Ofsted, October 2025**

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