

Co-Opted Trustee and Audit & Assurance Committee Chair

Candidate Briefing Pack

February 2026



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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining the Rethink Mental Illness Board as a co-opted trustee and Chair of the Audit and Assurance Committee.



Rethink Mental Illness exists to support people severely affected by mental illness, as well as their carers and families, to lead fulfilling lives. We deliver more than 90 services across England, including accommodation, advocacy, crisis support, community services, and employment support. Alongside this, we provide expert advice and peer-led initiatives that reach thousands more.

Alongside our frontline delivery, we play a critical role in shaping the mental health landscape through evidence-based policy, campaigning, and strategic partnerships. Our work influences national conversations, drives legislative change, and helps ensure mental health remains high on the public agenda.

Joining Rethink Mental Illness means being part of a values-led organisation that combines operational excellence with a clear social mission. We value innovation, accountability, and collaboration, and we are committed to continuous improvement as we grow our impact and strengthen the mental health system for everyone. Each year our work continues to grow in reach, complexity, and ambition.

As trustees, our responsibility is to ensure that Rethink remains resilient, forward-looking, and ambitious. Looking ahead, our commitment to our Communities that Care strategy remains unwavering. Our priorities include scaling our Health Navigator model, expanding local alliances in delivering neighbourhood health, growing our employment and housing support models, supporting the implementation of the Mental Health Act 2025, and championing lived experience led research, all grounded in evidence and shaped by the voices of those we serve.

This role is a key member of the Board, encompassing the full duties of trusteeship alongside providing effective leadership and direction to the Audit and Assurance Committee.

We are seeking someone with strong experience in corporate governance, accounting, internal controls, and risk management, who can build effective working relationships across the Board, executive team, and audit partners.

If you are excited by the opportunity to Chair our Audit and Assurance Committee and to contribute to a collaborative and committed Board of Trustees, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Kathryn Tyson
Chair of Trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathryn Tyson'.

About us

Who we are and what we do

We are Rethink Mental Illness. No matter how bad things are, we can help people severely affected by mental illness improve their lives.

As a leading charity provider of mental health services in England, we're on a mission to bring about meaningful change: to our health and social care system, to the way society views mental illness, and to people's lives across the country.

People affected by mental illness are at the heart of everything we do.

Their insight shapes our advice, information, and over 200 groups and services – from housing to employment, carer support to legal advice. Their passion and courage drives our campaigns to change the law and tackle discrimination. And the rich diversity of their experience helps us make sure that our services are accessible to everyone – whatever their background or identity.

We know people severely affected by mental illness can have a good quality of life. With your support, we will make that possible.

Find out more about what we do [here](#).

Our Mission and Vision

Our mission is to deliver a better life for people severely affected by mental illness.

Our vision is equality, rights, fair treatment, and the maximum quality of life for all those severely affected by mental illness.

Our Values

We work tirelessly to support people who are severely affected by mental illness, using our expertise to provide practical, personal care. We believe that equity is essential in a world where discrimination and disadvantage exist, and we are committed to acting with openness and transparency in all our work with beneficiaries, supporters, partners, and the public. People severely affected by mental illness are at the heart of everything we do, and we are passionate about leading the way toward hope, justice, and a better quality of life for all. You can read more about our values [here](#).

Our Principles

Our principles are rooted in co-production and involvement, with people who have lived experience of severe mental illness at the heart of everything we do, shaping our services, campaigns, and strategy. We are committed to equity and inclusion, working to become a truly anti-racist organisation. Through collaboration and partnership, we build strong relationships that enable us to deliver more for people living with severe mental illness, guided by generous leadership that shares knowledge and supports others' expertise. We measure our impact by the difference we make for people severely affected by mental illness and adapt our approach to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Equality and diversity

We believe that embracing difference through inclusiveness gives us a deeper understanding of the world and the diverse needs of the people we support, strengthening our services, campaigns and decision-making. We are committed to ensuring that all voices are heard and valued, and to being representative in our workforce and governance, including our Board. As an employer, we strive to be a fully inclusive organisation, drawing on the lived experiences and expertise of our staff to shape and enrich our work. We warmly welcome applications from people of all ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, socio-economic backgrounds, religions, ages and from disabled people, and we actively encourage participation from groups that are underrepresented. You can read more about our EDI Strategy [here](#).

Strategy 2023 - 2028

Working together to build Communities that Care

The **Communities that Care** model is the cornerstone of our strategy. It means working in open and transparent partnership with a range of people and organisations, so everyone severely affected by mental illness has a good quality of life and feels part of a community that cares. A full PDF version of the strategy is available for [download here](#).

Annual report and accounts

To learn more about our work in 2024/25, including our activities and financial performance, please read our Annual Report and Accounts. A full PDF version is available for [download here](#).

Our impact at a glance

Overall feedback (across all services) in a survey of over 1,200 service users:

- **84%** said our services improved their quality of life.
- **93%** would recommend our services, higher than NHS averages.
- Average rating: **4.62 out of 5 stars**.

In 2024/25 we supported 24,569 people directly through our 143 services.

In addition our Rethink Advice and Information Service supported:

- **3,953** individual clients
- And dealt with **4,391** enquiries

Wider Reach

- Our wider local advice helplines supported **53,880** clients
- Our website received more than **3 million** visits
- More than **830,000** followed our social media channels
- We were mentioned in the media more than **4,500** times

You can find out more about how we measure our impact [here](#).

The Role

Being a trustee at Rethink Mental Illness

The Board of Rethink Mental Illness, charity number 271028, comprises the Chair, eight Regional Trustees and up to seven co-opted Trustees. Regional Trustees are experts by experience (people severely affected by mental illness, carers and relatives); Regional Trustees are also members of the Council of Rethink and the Regional Forums. Co-opted Trustees are appointed for their specific skills as required.

Time Commitment:

The Board meets five times a year. One meeting takes the form of Awaydays, held over two days, often at Warwick University. The other meetings are normally held at the Charity's Head Office in Vauxhall, London, SE1 and last from 11.00 am until about 4.00 pm. Between formal Board meetings we hold monthly Board Briefings online to update Trustees on matters of interest and to share information that does not require a formal Board decision.

Audit and Assurance Committee meetings are held 4 times a year, online, with one meeting in person.

Responsibilities of the Audit & Assurance Committee Chair

This committee role sits alongside, and does not replace, the wider responsibilities and duties of charity trusteeship. **You can find full details here.**

Leadership and Direction

- Chair all meetings of the committee
- Provide effective leadership and direction to the committee
- Have a clear understanding of the committee's duties and responsibilities
- Be able to commit the time necessary and have the requisite business, financial, communication and leadership skills
- Have an excellent working knowledge of corporate governance, accounting practices, internal control functions and risk management frameworks
- Able to champion open and frank discussion whilst maintaining the appropriate discipline and ensuring the meeting completes its agenda. Be prepared to ask the tough (and potentially unwelcome) questions and remain tenacious where necessary
- Ensure all members understand their responsibilities and feel able to raise issues they believe are important
- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with the Charity's Chair of Trustees, Vice-chairs, Treasurer, Chief Executive and executive team, External Audit partner and Internal Audit lead.
- Plan the work of the committee – in conjunction with the Charity's executive, agree the draft of the committee's rolling forward plan and the agenda in advance of each meeting
- At the conclusion of each meeting, review the meeting seeking feedback from both members and attendees.

Governance

- Ensure the committee maintains its independence and avoids taking on any responsibilities beyond its core responsibilities and which could impact that independence
- Act as the Charity's Whistleblowing Champion (as detailed in the Whistleblowing Policy) ensuring the committee regularly reviews the effectiveness and operation of the policy
- Oversight of the Charity's external and internal audit arrangements by leading on the appointment and review of those providers.
- Ensure the committee holds at least annual private sessions with the Charity's CFO, External Audit partner, Internal Audit lead and the Treasurer (an ex-officio member of AAC).
- Promote and participate in the regular formal self-assessment of the operation of the committee against the appropriate professional standards
- Ensure the work of the committee and all key issues are communicated to the Board.

Development of the Committee

- Work with the Honorary Officers Committee to ensure the committee has and maintains an appropriate balance of skills and experience within its membership
- Meet at least annually with each committee member to review their involvement in the committee's work, seek feedback on the operation of the committee, address any performance issues and identify any training needs
- Create and maintain the correct culture within the committee to ensure the appropriate level of positive questioning and challenge
- Ensure the provision of appropriate induction and training support to meet any development needs of both new and existing members of the committee.

Person Specification

- Good awareness of the mental health sector and the wider challenges facing charities supporting people with severe mental illness.
- Financially literate, with qualified accountant status desirable, and experience of overseeing financial reporting, risk management, internal controls and audit.
- Strong understanding of charity governance, with experience of working in the charity or not-for-profit sector desirable.
- Analytical and constructive, with the confidence to provide appropriate challenge while supporting collaborative, values-led decision-making.
- Able to balance commercial awareness and financial sustainability with a clear commitment to the Charity's purpose and values, bringing a perspective beyond profit alone.

We warmly welcome applications from people of all ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, socio-economic backgrounds, religions, ages and from disabled people, and we actively encourage participation from groups that are underrepresented.

How to apply

If you are interested in this fantastic opportunity please provide the following with your application:

- An up to date CV with the details of two referees (we will not contact them without your prior permission).
- A supporting statement which demonstrates how you meet the criteria in the person specification and addresses your motivations for applying.

All applications will be handled by our recruitment partner, Trustees Unlimited. Please send your application to: applications@trustees-unlimited.co.uk

If you would like an informal discussion about the role, please contact Melissa Baxter at Trustees Unlimited on melissa.baxter@trustees-unlimited.co.uk / 07789 985 229

Closing date for applications: Monday 16th March 2026

Interviews with Rethink Mental Illness (in person in London): Thursday 9th April 2026



Rethink Mental Illness

We are the charity for people severely affected by mental illness, no matter what they're going through.

For further information on Rethink Mental Illness
Phone: **0121 522 7007**
Email: info@rethink.org

rethink.org

