

## Birth Companions

## Treasurer role description

***This is a voluntary role***

**About Birth Companions**

Birth Companions is a charity that supports women experiencing multiple disadvantage during the perinatal period in the community in London and the South East, and in prisons across the country.

Our work aims to improve the lives of mothers and babies by:

* improving the mental health and wellbeing of pregnant women and new mothers
* enabling new mothers to give their babies the best possible start in life
* empowering women to fulfil their potential through engagement
* driving improvements in the local and national policy and practice that impacts on mothers and their babies.

By working towards these aims, we hope that all women who face disadvantage and inequality during this crucial point in their lives will have the support they need to give their baby the best possible start, and to fulfil their own potential, whatever their circumstances.

Birth Companions’ values have shaped the organisation’s approach from the outset and are still as important to us as ever. We are a women’s organisation built on feminist principles, delivering woman-to-woman support. Choice, empowerment and protecting women’s rights have always been central to the way we work. Through the work of our staff and trained volunteers, we offer practical and emotional support before, during and after birth. We work in a woman-centred way that is trauma-informed, flexible and non-judgemental, basing our support on what a woman tells us she needs.

Work across our frontline services shows us what matters to women, and where things can and should be better in the care they receive from others. Based on these insights, we commission academic and peer-led research and direct the attention of local and national policy-makers, commissioners and service providers to what needs to change, and how. Everyone at Birth Companions plays a role in this. Communication and collaboration between our frontline practitioners, policy and engagement staff and the women in our Lived Experience Team means we are able to identify and monitor issues and themes and draw on learning in order to feed them into conversations with senior stakeholders across maternity, criminal justice, social services and immigration. In this way we ensure our policy and influencing work is rooted in the day-to-day experiences of women and what will make most difference to them and their babies.

**Role purpose**

**The overall role of the treasurer is to support the Board of Trustees to:**

* Maintain an overview of the organisation's affairs
* Ensure its financial viability
* Ensure that proper financial records and procedures are maintained.
* Ensure the organisation operates within the legal and financial guidelines set out in current legislation

### **Responsibilities of all Trustees**

### **Statutory Duties:**

* Ensure that Birth Companions complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
* Ensure Birth Companions applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects.
* Contribute actively to the board of trustees role in giving firm strategic direction, agreeing policy, defining goals, and setting and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
* Safeguard the good name and values of Birth Companions.
* Support the effective and efficient administration of Birth Companions.
* Ensure the financial stability of Birth Companions.
* Protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.

**Additional expectations for all trustees:**

Each trustee is expected to use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This involves:

* Scrutinising board papers
* Leading discussions
* Focusing on key issues
* Providing guidance on new initiatives
* Other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

### **Duties of the treasurer**

### **With the support of the Director and Finance Manager, the Treasurer is responsible for:**

### Overseeing and presenting budgets, accounts and financial statements for the approval of the Board

* Ensuring that the financial resources of the organisation meet its present and future needs
* Ensuring that the charity has an appropriate reserves policy
* The preparation and presentation of financial reports to the board
* Ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place
* Advising on the financial implications of the organisation's strategic plans
* Ensuring that the charity has an appropriate investment policy
* Ensuring that the accounts are prepared and disclosed in the form required by funders and the relevant statutory bodies, e.g. The charity commission and/or the registrar of companies
* If external scrutiny of accounts is required, ensuring that the accounts are scrutinised in the manner required (independent examination or audit) and that any recommendations are implemented
* Keeping the board informed about its financial duties and responsibilities
* Contributing to the fundraising strategy of the organisation
* Making a formal presentation of the accounts at the annual general meeting and drawing attention to important points in a coherent and accessible way
* Sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.
* Chair the finance sub committee.

## Time commitment required

## Trustees are expected to attend regular Board meetings in central/north London every quarter

## The Treasurer will also need to attend our quarterly finance subcommittee meeting – usually online via Zoom

## Attendance at other meetings on an ad hoc basis may also be necessary including our annul AGM which is an in-person event in London

## As well as the meeting attendance, we anticipate that the treasurer role will also require 1-2 hours per week, plus preparation time of approximately 4-5 hours before quarterly meetings such as reviewing documents and preparing papers.

## Treasurer person specification

This post is open to female applicants only as this is deemed a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR) for this role under Schedule 9, Paragraph 1 of the Equality Act 2010.

## Essential

* Relevant financial qualifications and/or experience
* Demonstrable experience of charity finance, fundraising and pension schemes
* Skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences
* Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
* Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to be effective
* Commitment to maintaining and modelling the organisation’s approach to Equal Opportunities
* Commitment to the work and vision of Birth Companions and willingness to carry out the policies and procedures of Birth Companions and to work to agreed guidelines and codes of conduct.
* Ability to work effectively as a member of the trustee board and develop strong working relationships with the staff team.
* Willingness to be available to staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.
* Strategic vision
* Good, independent judgement
* Preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the board.

**Desirable**

* Experience of working/volunteering in the women’s sector
* Understanding of the issues facing individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage
* Understanding of the issues facing women involved with the criminal justice system/social services system/immigration system (all or any)
* Previous relevant experience of trustee board.