

militarywives Choirs®



Governance Trustee Information Pack

September 2025



Small charity, big impact, exciting future

We are the Military Wives Choirs. We connect over 1800 women in the military community and create a support network through the power of singing.

In 2023 we entered our second decade, marked by some big changes in the way we operate, establishing ourselves as an independent charity after being a former subsidiary of SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity. We continue to work closely with SSAFA in our shared aims of providing support to our Forces and their families. This new decade and status create enormous possibilities, and our new strategy sets out how we will leverage these and build a sustainable future.

To complete our Board, we're now looking for a Trustee with particular expertise in Governance and Risk.

This is a pivotal time to join a team of committed Trustees led by our Chair, Caroline Paxton, in support of our Chief Executive Wendy Human and a small operational team.

Our Values: The way we do things

Unspoken understanding: Our shared experiences of military life inform the way we look after one another

Ongoing support: We value time for ourselves and enjoy our time with each other

Musical inclusivity: It's not about being able to sing, it's about being there to sing

Wellbeing through singing: We create choirs that bond us together and allow us to share unique achievements and experiences

Diverse community: We welcome all women whose lives are currently impacted by their military connection



Changing lives through the power of singing

The Military Wives Choirs is a community of over 1800 women in 71 choirs across the UK and overseas. We come together to celebrate a love of singing and a communal understanding that comes from our members' shared experiences of the Armed Forces. We welcome all women who are connected to the military community - including wives, partners, widows, serving, reservist, veterans, mothers', daughters, sisters; our network supports each other and forms life-changing friendships that lead to new and uplifting experiences through singing. Through the experience of running choirs and be part of a choir committee we also build self confidence and skills that can help entry or re-entry into employment for those women who want to move in this direction.

Military life across the services has its challenges. Some families move regularly to a new posting, while for others deployments mean long periods of separation. With choirs across the UK and overseas, many of our members join a new choir when they are posted, enabling them to become part of a familiar community built upon the joy of singing.

Singing in a choir has been proven to increase wellbeing and improve mental and physical health and reduce social isolation. With no auditions and no pressure to perform, the Military Wives Choirs gives its members the opportunity to spend time with women that truly understand the challenges associated with military life.

Each of our choirs meets weekly and has a busy calendar of community events and performances. This activity is enhanced by exciting national-scale activity, including concert tours, albums, media appearances and larger projects. All of the charity's activity is supported and managed by the small central staff team. The charity works closely with its Artistic Director, currently Joanna Tomlinson, and a number of Ambassadors from the industry, including mezzo-soprano Laura Wright and renowned vocal coach Mark de Lisser.

[Find out more about us](#)

What we ask of our Trustees

We are looking for committed individuals who are passionate about what we do and who have the relevant skills, energy and acumen to work as part of the Board overseeing the work of the charity, ensuring it is financially stable, well-run and fulfilling its charitable obligations.

It's not critical that you have previous experience of being a Trustee, more important is the ability to think strategically and independently, act with integrity at all times, be inclusive and value the perspectives and ideas of others. You can find more details on the qualities and skills we're looking for on the next page.

You will need to attend four Board meetings a year. Three meetings are virtual, scheduled for Thursdays and run from 4-7.30pm and one in person on a Sturday in

London 10.30 am -3.30pm. Trustees are also required to attend a Board Awayday each year. This usually takes place in London in January.

As a small charity there will also a requirement to get involved in other activities. Examples include chairing sub-committees, attending events and performances, supporting fundraising activities including the acquisition and engagement of major donors and providing advice to the operational team.

This is a volunteer role without remuneration, but reasonable expenses will be paid.

What you can expect in return

This role offers the opportunity to be part of a small, professional charity making a big impact; delivering an inspiring and important service to a diverse group of women in the military community.

You'll get to work alongside a vibrant and committed team of staff, volunteers and beneficiaries, with the shared aim of embedding our mission of Sing, Share, Support.

You'll also get the opportunity to experience our music-making first hand; providing insight into the impact of our work on choir members. It's an incredibly rewarding experience.

Selection criteria and process

In selecting the best candidate for the role, we'll be looking at two areas of criteria:

- A. Essential Generic Criteria
- B. Essential Role-Specific Criteria

A. Essential Generic Criteria

This person will be:

- **Governance-aware** - understands the role, requirements, legal responsibilities and liabilities of being a trustee in a charity and carries out duties with integrity
- **Aligned with our cause & values** - passionate about the link between music and wellbeing and how it can benefit women whose lives are currently impacted by their military connection
- **Strategic** - sees the bigger picture and understands the implications of decisions from an organisational and stakeholder perspective
- **An independent thinker** - confident in using own judgement to understand issues and generate ideas. Willing to constructively speak own mind when appropriate
- **Values driven** - maintains confidentiality and works collaboratively and inclusively
- **Committed** - willing to regularly engage with the work of the Military Wives Choirs, including ad hoc events/activities over and above attending board meetings.

Desirable Generic Criteria

- Knowledge of the military community or current/former service experience
- Experience of the charity sector
- Experience of the arts industry

B. Essential Role-Specific Criteria

Provides ongoing expertise on charity governance and ensures risk management principles are adhered too. This role is responsible for oversight, review and development of all policies pertaining to the charity. The governance and risk Trustee is the Chair of the Governance Committee. Specific expertise in the following areas is required:

- Strong understanding of the current charity landscape, and ability to monitor changes within the third sector.
- Understanding of Charity Commission requirements
- Ability to measure and demonstrate compliance in policies and practice
- Sound knowledge of risk management
- Experience in advising on compliance/regulatory matter

How to apply

Please submit your CV along with a covering letter (maximum 2 sides A4) to Caroline Paxton, Chair of the Board of Trustees. Your application should be sent via our coordinator Kate Carmichael at kcarmichael@militarywiveschoirs.org.

Your letter should cover the following:

- The Trustee role/specialism you are applying for
- How you meet the essential criteria
- Why us?

If you'd like to find out more before applying, please contact Wendy Human, Chief Executive at whuman@militarywiveschoirs.org

The deadline for applications is 24 October 25. Interviews will take place online w/c 3 November 25.

Together we are stronger; why diversity & inclusion matters to us

We believe diverse organisations are happier and more successful than those who don't value difference. We are committed to building an inclusive culture that is open and welcoming and allows everyone to give their best. **We aim to recruit the person who is most suited to the role and welcome all applications.**



Final word...

We are looking for passionate, talented, forward thinking individuals to join us. Whilst our selection process will be based on the candidates who are able to most closely match our criteria, if you have something special to bring to the party but don't meet every requirement in full, please apply.