



Hello!

I'm Bernice, Co-Founder of WAVE and mother to Jess, who has Downs Syndrome.

Thank you for taking the time to find out more about our current vacancy for a Co-Chair.

It may help you to understand the motivation for the work that we do.

Jess was among the first cohort of students with learning disabilities to go through mainstream school in the 1990's (not an easy journey) and to emerge with the hope of being actively involved in wider community life.

The reality was, and still is, that many young people with learning disabilities reach a 'cliff edge' following full-time education, with few genuinely inclusive opportunities available for social interaction beyond immediate family.

For the past 16 years WAVE has been encouraging and enabling more mixed-ability social opportunities - working initially with churches (inspired by the Christian faith of those of us who first came together with a passion to change the root cause of our children's social isolation and exclusion) - but now branching out to encompass those of all faiths or none.

We have seen participation in WAVE Church, Pop-Up Cafes and mixed-ability community events change negative attitudes and experience around learning disability. Our WithNotFor ethos is beginning to impact the way in which people with and without learning disabilities interact and work together in churches and in their communities.

WAVE for Change became a registered charity in 2020 (yes – we started a charity that encourages mixing during lockdown!) in response to the growing interest of others wanting to learn from and replicate what we do. As with most small charities, we relied on the time, talent and commitment of friends and family to become established. We now have a great staff team and knowledgeable board of Trustees who are carrying that passion forward.

I can honestly say that being part of the team, shaping and growing the work of WAVE, has been the most exciting, humbling, fun, challenging and rewarding experience of my life – it has unexpectedly changed me for the better too.

If you are searching for a worthwhile cause to donate your precious spare time to, and you have the desire, skills and experience to help take the work of WAVE to the next level – we really look forward to hearing from you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bernice", written in a cursive style.

Background Information



We want WAVE to reflect the diversity of society and welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds and experiences who share our commitment to inclusion.

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the upcoming Co-Chair role at WAVE for Change.

WAVE stands for We're All Valued Equally, and it began with a small group of parents who understood first-hand the challenges, frustration, and disappointment of trying to include a child or young adult with a learning disability in mainstream schools, churches, and community life.



WAVE Little Ilford members



LIVING WITH Exhibition at Alexandra Palace



WAVEmaker Forum #5 participants

Our co-founders set out to change this—creating local initiatives that filled the gaps in inclusive provision. They built places where people WITH and WITHOUT learning disabilities mix as equals, doing things ‘WithNotFor’ each other.

At WAVE, we’re passionate about creating genuinely inclusive communities where people with and without learning disabilities are equally valued. We don’t see ourselves as a ‘service provider’—we want to inspire and support others to make inclusion a reality. Our WAVE in a Box resource offers practical tools and proven approaches to help communities run truly inclusive groups and events.

Research shows that taking part in mixed-ability activities helps change attitudes. It reduces fear, anxiety, and lack of confidence around people we might see as different. In turn, this makes social exclusion and isolation less likely.

WAVE has its roots in Christian faith, but our core ethos is inclusion. We welcome and work with people of all faiths or none. Since becoming a registered charity in 2021, we’ve supported twelve communities across the UK to launch inclusive initiatives—creating over 900 mixed-ability connections each month. And we’re just getting started!

Our award-winning work has been featured in books, on BBC Radio 4’s Woman’s Hour, and on Songs of Praise.

The values that shape what we do



In faith & love: rooted in belief that we are all valued equally by God. We value and respect our staff, team members, partner organisations and participants - in the way we talk, listen to and treat them



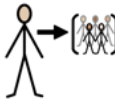
Simply: we try to keep everything as short and simple as possible – using visual prompts - so that it is easy for people of all abilities to understand and join in



Having fun: we want people to enjoy being part of WAVE, whether as a participant in activities and events, or as a staff/team member



Creatively: we welcome new ideas. Creative activities (music; art; craft; food; spoken word; drama etc.) help us encourage people with and without LD to comfortably mix, and learn from each other



Inclusively: we are working to improve understanding and interactions between people both with and without learning disabilities. People come as equally valued and active members of our teams and activities (not as volunteers or service users).



Safely: we follow health and safety rules; have policies in place to protect the vulnerable among us; take good care of our resources (people and the money that people invest in us).

The Brief

We are now seeking an exceptional leader to join our WAVE team as Co-Chair of Trustees. Someone who believes in the benefits and power of people with and without learning disabilities working together to improve inclusion in their communities.

We are well aware of the reduction in volunteering motivation and time post-covid and have designed this role to be a flexible commitment of 8-12 hours per month. You will be working in partnership with an established Co-Chair to ensure the effective governance of WAVE for Change and management of our CEO. You may be a current Board member looking to move into your first 'Chair' role or an experienced Chair looking for a less demanding Co-Chair position.

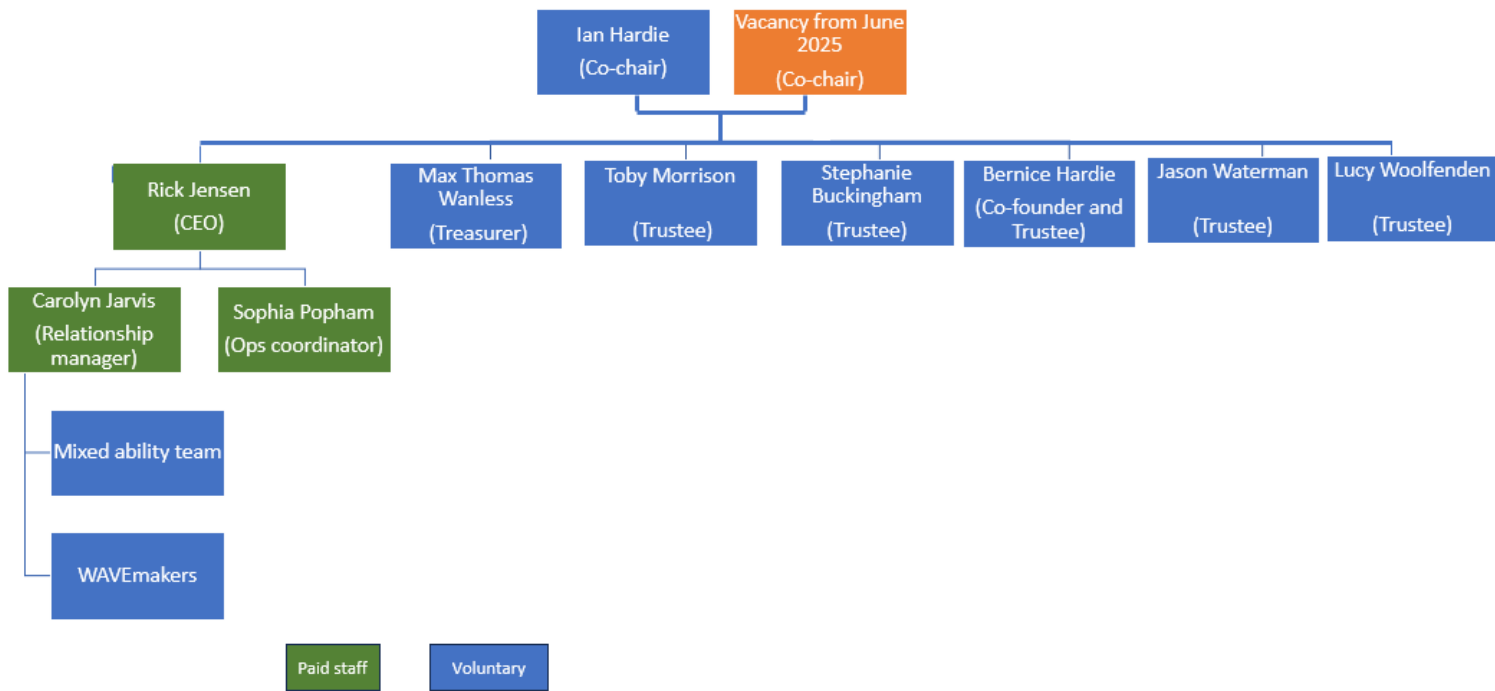


You will be joining a diverse Board of Trustees, serving as stewards of WAVE for Change’s resources, with ultimate responsibility for strategy, operations, adherence to regulation and financial management. We hope to have a Trustee with learning disabilities join the Board in the near future.

The Board of Trustees have three quarterly meetings a year (lasting 2-2.5hours) and one ‘Away Day’ meet (usually on a Saturday) in North London (2025 dates - May 29th 7.30pm; September 6th Away Day; November 20th – 7.30pm). Board members serve a three-year term and are eligible for re-appointment for one additional term.

The Structure

WAVE for Change





Co-Chair responsibilities

The Co-Chairs work in partnership to lead the Board of Trustees and provide clear line management of the CEO. They are jointly responsible for the following key areas:

Strategy and Governance

- Ensure that the Board operates effectively in the shaping and approval of the strategy proposed by the Chief Executive, to achieve the charity's mission and objectives
- Safeguarding the interests of our beneficiaries and stakeholders
- Ensuring high standards of governance (compliance with charitable legislation and reporting requirements) and risk management
- Regular appraisal and review of Board performance (including managing retirements and resignations of Trustees)
- Ensuring that the Board is as diverse as possible and provides the range of knowledge, skills and experience necessary to deliver WAVE's aims.

Finance

- Ensuring sound financial management in partnership with the Treasurer, as well as Trustee review and approval of the annual budget

Advocacy and networking

- Advice and assistance in raising and maintaining the charity's profile
- Using personal and professional networks to help access potential donors and supporters including corporates, trusts and foundations

Board Meetings

- Lead on all aspects of meeting management.
- Encouraging discussion at Board meetings, summarising key points and ensuring decisions are made and implemented.

Support and guidance

- Directly line manage the CEO



Person Specification

Alongside the qualities required of a Trustee, the Co-Chair will bring the following:

Personal Qualities

- A passion for WAVE's '*all valued equally*' ethos and '*with not for*' approach. Ideally, you will have personal or professional experience of learning disabilities or a strong understanding of the impact of social exclusion.
- Ability to commit time to conduct the role well, including travel and attending occasional charity events.
- Strong interpersonal and relationship-building skills, with the ability to engage with people of all abilities and act as an ambassador for WAVE.
- Strong networking skills that can actively support and advance the charity's mission.
- A collaborative approach, fostering a supportive and effective team environment.
- An appreciation of the charity's Christian roots

Experience

- A proven track record of senior strategic leadership, with confidence in chairing meetings and events.
- Experience in charity governance and/or working with a Board of Trustees/Governors.
- Confidence in external representation, stakeholder engagement, and delivering presentations.

Knowledge and skills

- Strong leadership skills, with the ability to bring people together and inspire teams.
- Financial management knowledge, including an understanding of charity finance.
- A solid grasp of charity governance and regulatory responsibilities.

How to apply

To apply, **email Carla Barnett at carla@barnettandassociates.co.uk** with your CV (include your LinkedIn URL) and a covering letter (max. two pages) explaining your motivation and how you meet the knowledge and experience requirements.

Closing date for applications is April 22nd



You will be informed of the outcome of your application by May 2nd

Preliminary interview with our Co-Founder and HR Lead will be held virtually (either during office hours or evening hours for maximum convenience) w/c 5th or 12th May 2025.

Shortlisted candidates will then meet with the other Co-Chair and have a final informal on-line meet with Trustees by 29th May 2025.

Confirmation of appointment by w/c 2nd June 2025.