



**forget
me
not
children's
hospice**

Directors Information Pack

We're looking for:

**Directors and Independent Advisors
for our trading subsidiary, FMNT Trading Ltd**



A MESSAGE FROM JEREMY CROSS, CHAIR OF THE TRUSTEES

Thank you for your interest in supporting Forget Me Not Children's Hospice through our trading subsidiary FMNT Trading Ltd.

We have reached a critical point in the development of our organisation and need to grow our trading board so that it can help guide our future as we implement our new commercial and trading strategies in support of the main charity and its objective to diversify and grow its income. The role of the board is to offer guidance, support and strategic direction to the commercial and trading management teams who will implement the strategy.

As a hospice, we have experienced rapid growth in the last 12 years, moving from an organisation that generated just over £500,000 a year employing less than a dozen people to one that employs over 130 people, with 350 volunteers, and needs to generate more than £5.5 million a year. The contribution from trading has been critical to this growth. We have achieved a vast amount but this has really only allowed us to scratch the surface. There is so much more to do and so many opportunities to drive things forward even further.

It's an exciting organisation to work with and we are looking for directors and independent advisors with particular experience in retail, charity trading, property and estates management, commercial or property law to join our trading board. Our directors and independent advisors are volunteers and as a volunteer you get the satisfaction and benefit of knowing you helped shape significant support and improvement for many families, children living with life-shortening conditions, families who experience a child's sudden death and families who become aware that their pregnancy is very complex and may result in a stillbirth.

We began supporting children and families through our hospice at home service in 2011 and, soon after, opened the doors to our new purpose-built children's hospice, Russell House, in Huddersfield. In 2021, we celebrated 10 years of providing high quality services from our hospice to families right across West Yorkshire.

We have supported nearly 1,000 families since opening our hospice, this includes families caring for a child with a life-shortening condition and bereaved families. But we have so much more to do. We know that in the areas we serve (Kirklees, Calderdale, Wakefield, Leeds and Bradford) there are more than 4,000 children living with life shortening conditions and the numbers are growing.

We are looking for directors and independent advisors who have the experience and skills to help provide strategic challenge and direction to our trading venture as we embark on this next exciting phase.

I am incredibly proud of this organisation, the senior leadership team and all the staff and volunteers who work exceptionally hard to deliver Forget Me Not's vision; *To deliver pioneering care and support through pregnancy, childhood and loss whenever families need us, whatever their future holds.* As a trading company director or independent advisor, you too will become quickly engaged with our work and I'm certain become as inspired and as proud.

Jeremy Cross, Chair of Trustees on behalf of all of our Trustees

OUR STORY

Forget Me Not Children's Hospice cares for children who have conditions which will significantly shorten their lives. Our children's needs are complex and there are more than 400 conditions that we assist with managing to ensure that they live as full and happy lives as possible. Around 60% of the families that use our services come from ethnic minority communities, all have complex needs and their parents are carers and often siblings are young carers.

Our support can start in a perinatal clinic following a 16 week scan or on a neonatal ward, with a new mum who knows that she will give birth to a baby that may only live for just a few hours or days; through to caring for children who may live into their teenage years or even early twenties. However, all the children we care for have conditions which will severely shorten their lives.

For most of our children, our hospice is a second home; they love coming and the care team is an extension of their family. It's a lively space where we provide a wide range of creative therapies for children and their brothers and sisters; planned respite to give mums and dads a break; sibling activities so brothers and sisters get some time and attention; crisis care to be there when families most need us; end of life care, bereavement care and many other forms of support. We are privileged to be able to help families make the most of every minute they have with their child, and to create some really special memories to hold onto long after their child has gone. We work hard to break down barriers to increase access to services, but there is more to do as numbers are growing, specifically in some communities that are particularly disadvantaged.

Beyond the hospice, a great deal of our care is provided in families' own homes through our hospice at home service, which provides planned respite and other care on a weekly basis tailored to suit a family's needs, and more recently, some of our support has been delivered online. We also provide in reach services to hospitals where our specific expertise is shared to support the child and their family when they need it most.

We do things differently

Many aspects of our service are unique even amongst children's hospices. Here are just a few examples of how we do things differently:

- We are a nurse and therapy led service
- We use volunteers to help our care team support our families
- We work in partnership with local NHS trusts and provide support on wards
- We have developed a model that specifically supports perinatal and neonatal work and antenatal support
- We have developed a specialist service to support families whose child dies suddenly and unexpectedly and work directly with West Yorkshire Police
- Our hospice at home service includes respite breaks as well as critical and end of life care
- We employ a South Asian support worker and an Eastern European support worker who both help to improve access to the hospice by breaking down known barriers in the communities we serve. We also have an Asian community engagement officer who helps to build wider links into targeted communities too.

What do we need to do next?

There are currently over 4,000 children that need our support in West Yorkshire therefore, while we provide vital support to our current children and families, the demand for our services continues to grow and we will continue to reach out to these families. We have seen significant growth in our perinatal services, specifically in supporting the mental health needs of families who experience traumatic pregnancies and stillborn births. This work is very innovative and we would like to find ways in which we can help to replicate what we do in a broader arena.

We have taken the time to understand much more about the needs of our donors and are continually finding ways to engage them in our work. This year well over 90% of our funding will come from the local population and to ensure this comes in, we have to be able to open up the hospice and actively promote what we do whilst preserving the dignity and privacy of the families that we support.

Our trading estate is integral to increasing our opportunities to raise income and raise awareness across West Yorkshire. We currently have 14 shops across the area and an online trading team. We employ over 50 staff including shops managers, assistant managers, shop assistants and drivers and benefit from time donated by over 300 volunteers. Last year, these hours amounted to £473K if we had paid people at national minimum wage rates. We turned over £1.8m last year, from which a total profit of £467K was gifted to the charity for its vital work.

Why we do what we do

Poppy's story

Diagnosed with ventriculomegaly, a condition where the brain ventricles are enlarged due to the build-up of fluid, before she was born, Poppy was not expected to survive the pregnancy. But Poppy is a very determined little girl, mum Laura says. "I could feel her kicking, her kicks were so strong they took my breath away at times."

Poppy was born by caesarean section in 2018. But the outlook wasn't good, so the family took a brave decision. "When she was born, we made her an organ donor straight away because if we were going to lose her, she could give other kids a life. We thought, if we can do that then it's not been a waste of her struggle, her fight."

It was at this point that they were introduced to Forget Me Not. "As soon as I heard the word 'hospice', my mind went straight to loads of beds filled with people who are poorly. So I was like, I'm not sure if I want to go there. But when I came here I just felt so relaxed, it had such a calm feeling. It's strange but, knowing we had the support from Forget Me Not, just put the thought in my mind – 'do you know what, we can do this'."

Now 5 years old, Poppy has continued to fight. She had a shunt fitted at just two days old – this drains fluid out of her brain and into her stomach. She has epilepsy, hypermobility and global development delay. She has to be watched constantly in case of a seizure or her shunt failing. "And that could happen anytime - which is terrifying. I can't rest. The only time I rest is when she comes for respite at Russell House. Because she's surrounded by people who know exactly how to deal with her, they've seen everything. And that's a massive weight off my mind. And I can finally sleep."



OUR CURRENT TRADING COMPANY DIRECTORS

The board currently consists of 5 directors with backgrounds in property law, legal, business and marketing and communications.

Opportunities

FMNT Trading Ltd is looking to appoint directors and independent advisors for the trading company. This trading company is 100% owned by the charity and gifts its profits to the charity to enable the work of the hospice in West Yorkshire. We would particularly welcome people with the following experience and connections:

- Charity retail
- Mainstream retail – operations
- Mainstream retail – finance, buying and other commercial experience
- Logistics
- Property estate management
- Commercial
- Start up and business growth and development
- Organisational development

Joining us as a director / independent advisor

Directors and independent advisors fulfil their roles on a voluntary basis. Our directors and independent advisors will normally be expected to serve for at least one term of three years, but will serve no more than two such terms.

The Board of Trustees is the governing body of Forget Me Not Children's Hospice and is responsible for providing strategic direction with the chief executive and the senior leadership team as well as providing oversight to ensure the charity operates properly and effectively. FMNT Trading Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of Forget Me Not Children's Hospice and gifts all of its profits to the hospice to fund the work with local children and families living with life-shortening conditions. If successful, you will be appointed as a director or independent advisor of the trading company FMNT Trading Ltd.

Trustees, directors and independent advisors together provide Forget Me Not Children's Hospice and FMNT Trading Ltd with vital skills, expertise, experience and commitment essential to the effective management and future development of the charity via the trading venture. No one director is expected to have all the skills; we seek a board that as a whole has the right combination of skills, experience and knowledge. The board acts collectively in its work.

Trading Company Directors have key responsibilities for FMNT Trading Ltd. They are in law the guardians of its purpose and are expected to direct the strategy (working with staff); they have financial oversight, are responsible for resources and are expected to ensure the organisation stays within the law. Trading company directors do not have any liabilities for the charity unless they are also a trustee of the charity.

Each trading company director must be able to:

- Devote the necessary time and effort, including both preparation and attendance of board meetings
- Demonstrate strategic vision and be able to provide direction to the trading team
- Understand and assess risks while ensuring a commercial approach
- Provide an independent and objective view
- Think creatively and continually look at ways of driving FMNT Trading Ltd forward in a commercial way
- Be willing to speak their mind and provide constructive challenge to other members of the board
- Understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of directorship
- Be able to work effectively as a member of a team and to maintain good working relations.

Directors are supported within the committee structure by independent advisors (up to 2) who can be assigned to the trading company based on their professional expertise and experiences.

Who can become a director / independent advisor for our trading board?

Over a million adults of all ages, social backgrounds and walks of life become trustees, directors or independent advisors of voluntary organisations and their subsidiaries. Some people are disqualified by law from acting as charity trustees or directors of charitable companies, including anyone described in Section 72 (1) of the Charities Act 1993. Broadly that covers:

- Anyone who has been convicted of an offence including deception or dishonesty, unless the conviction is spent
- Anyone who is an undischarged bankrupt or is the subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or bankruptcy restriction undertaking
- Anyone who has made a composition or arrangement with or granted a trust deed for his or her creditors and has not been discharged in respect of it
- Anyone who has previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by the court of the Charity Commissioners
- Anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or is the subject of a disqualification undertaking
- Any offer of appointment as a director or independent advisor is also dependent on a satisfactory DBS check and references.

What commitment do I need to provide as a director or independent advisor of FMNT Trading Ltd?

Directors and independent advisors carry out their role and responsibilities by working closely with the other members of the board, and the company's trading team. Involvement can vary from person to person but the minimum requirements are as follows:

- Regular attendance and contribution to board meetings which are normally held four times a year
- All meetings are currently held in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire
- Providing support and mentorship as required to members of the trading team

- Making visits to the trading estate, engaging with staff and volunteers within our shops
- Occasionally representing the charity at external events
- To act in as an ambassador of the charity by seeking out opportunities to generate support and facilitate the growth of the charity overall.

What are the liabilities of directorship / independent advisors?

Directors are ultimately responsible for everything the trading company does and how it does it. They must ensure all activities and actions are within and accountable to the law. Independent advisors will help to inform this work, but do not have any legal liabilities.

Directors have a duty to act in good faith. Directors and independent advisors must avoid conflicts with any personal interests, and should declare those that do arise. They may not profit from their role, although appropriate expenses can be reimbursed.

Instances of directors being found liable for the misconduct of charities are rare in the UK. However, it is important directors understand what their potential liabilities are. Directors can be held personally liable for:

- Breach of trust – for example spending money inappropriately, or engaging in non-permitted political activity
- Breach of fiduciary and statutory duties – for example using assets to procure benefit for the directors
- Fraudulent trading – incurring a debt knowing it cannot be repaid
- Acting as a company director when disqualified
- Failure to comply with statutory requirements, e.g. health and safety, HMRC, financial services.

The establishment of FMNT Trading Ltd as a company limited by guarantee protects director's liability to £10 each, provided they have acted in good faith. Independent advisors do not have any liabilities.

I'm interested, what do I do now?

For a confidential conversation about either of the roles, please call Gareth Pierce, Chief Executive on 07391 011359. If you wish to apply, please send a CV and covering letter setting out how your skills and experience relate to the role you are applying for. Please tell us clearly whether you are applying for a director role or an independent advisor role and then email all the information to gareth.pierce@forgetmenotchild.co.uk Interviews will be arranged on an individual basis as and when applications are received.