

## Candidate Brief



The Fishermen's Mission

Trustees

AA1101

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**Managing Director**  
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## Welcome from Michael Vlasto Chair of The Fishermen's Mission

Dear Candidate

I am delighted that you have expressed an interest in applying to be a Trustee of The Fishermen's Mission. We hope that you find the information in this candidate brief and on our website useful: <https://www.fishermensmission.org.uk/>

Commercial fishing remains the most dangerous occupation in the British Isles. The Fishermen's Mission is the only charity that provides emergency support alongside practical, financial, spiritual and emotional care for fishermen both active and retired and their families.

The Council, consisting of up to 15 Trustees, is responsible for the overall direction of the charity and ensuring the Chief Executive and Senior Management team deliver services efficiently, effectively and legally. We are now looking for new trustees with a range of skills and different life experiences to join our energetic Council to help bring direction and focus to the delivery of vital provision in fishing communities. We are particularly keen to recruit trustees with specific knowledge of the Fishing Industry, Finance/Investment, Fundraising, Change Management and Diversity & Inclusion. Becoming a Trustee with The Fishermen's Mission is an exciting and fulfilling opportunity to make a real difference as well as learn new skills.

If this is an opportunity that appeals to you, and you have the skills set out in the job role and key responsibilities section in this candidate brief, we would very much like to hear from you. For a confidential conversation with Thewlis Graham Associates who are managing the process, please contact Sarah Thewlis, Managing Director on 0207 850 4781 or email [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com). Sarah will be happy to discuss this opportunity with you and answer any questions you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Vlasto  
Chair

## 2. About The Fishermen's Mission

The Fishermen's Mission is the national Christian maritime charity that supports the UK's fishing communities. It has an annual turnover of about £3m, it employs over 70 staff and is represented in over 80 UK ports, delivering practical welfare support and pastoral care to the UK's fishing communities, both active and retired. It also provides emergency response in the event of accidents at sea, supporting the bereaved and assisting the injured and shipwrecked.

The Fishermen's Mission is the only fishermen's charity that provides emergency support alongside practical, financial, spiritual and emotional care. Working closely with other maritime partners, the charity's aim is to relieve despair or deprivation, and it particularly gives active support to the retired communities in formerly large fishing ports, like Hull and Grimsby, where there is widespread destitution. The charity provides financial assistance including emergency grants to fishermen and their families in times of need and is also becoming increasingly involved in safety, wellbeing, and legislative initiatives, working with a range of agencies and industry bodies.

Eight 24/7 self-help centres are in place where demand requires, with core service delivery focused on the development of an effective outreach programme to active and retired fishermen and their families where they are and no matter how remote. The charity continues to move forward at pace, with a key strategic challenge to improve the quality and range of its activities, and it is also developing early intervention strategies to reduce or remove longer term needs. Increasing coverage both of the aquaculture sector and into the Irish Republic is also a key challenge.

All development activity is set against the backdrop of post coronavirus/Brexit uncertainty and change for the fishing industry. There is also an increasing trend towards professionalisation and legislation of the charitable sector, especially for those charities that are closely involved in the delivery of 'welfare' services. The Fishermen's Mission aims to respond swiftly to these challenges.

The Fishermen's Mission is a Christian charity with a broad ecumenical tradition, particularly amongst the Front-Line staff. It serves a discrete community unconditionally.

### Our History

Our story of providing practical help and spiritual support to fishermen began well over a century ago.

In 1881, the Fishermen's Mission (also known as the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen – RNMDSF) began its work by going out in a fleet of 'Bethel' ships under the banner of 'Preach the Word, Heal the Sick' offering food and medical supplies.



We met with fishermen while they worked, trying to alleviate the terrible conditions on board.

The fishing industry has undergone many changes over the years and the Fishermen's Mission has always responded accordingly.

We established large accommodation centres to provide a safe place for fishermen to rest or stay when their boats came in, often many miles from home. Some of these centres had more than 100 beds. However, many fishermen now fish from their home ports or have sleeping facilities on board. So, changing once again with the times, we now provide 24-hour 'mini-centres' with good facilities and welfare offices covering the coastline of the UK.

### **Our Work**

Around 12,000 people work in fishing: the UK's toughest and most dangerous peacetime occupation.



At sea, they face death and injury with an average of 15 fishermen killed or seriously injured every year.

On land, many individuals and their families struggle with insecurity, uncertainty, and debt. And for the 50,000 retired fishermen and their dependants, the fishing may have ended but the hardship often continues as they face debt, scant savings, loneliness, poor health and isolation.

The Fishermen's Mission provides emergency response 24/7, 365 days a year.

### **This includes:**

- Looking after the survivors of fishing emergencies or accidents
- Helping injured or ill fishermen
- Providing emergency assistance to families of fishermen who have been killed or lost at sea
- Meeting the rescue teams and helping with accommodation, food, clothing and contacting families
- Offering emergency grants to fishermen and their families in times of need.

The Charity provides Christian, pastoral, and practical help with problems such as debt, sickness and bereavement as well as helping to pay bills, buy food and keep house and home together.

We strive to alleviate loneliness in fishing communities by visiting and calling retired fishermen and their families at home or in hospital.

You can see our latest trustees' report and financial statements [here](#).

### 3. The role and responsibilities of the Trustee

The Fishermen's Mission is an incorporated charity, meaning it is a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. The charity is directed by a Board known as the Council of Management (or 'Council') consisting of up to 15 Trustees. Trustees are also company directors and are responsible for the overall direction of the charity, the general control and management of the administration of a charity and ensuring that the Chief Executive and Senior Management team delivers the charity's services efficiently, effectively and legally.

Currently there are 10 Trustees with a variety of backgrounds and skills. The Fishermen's Mission is particularly keen to increase the diversity of the current board and is looking for a number of Trustees with a range of skills and different life experiences to help bring direction and focus to the delivery of vital provision in fishing communities.

#### Main responsibilities of Trustees

There are six main responsibilities of a Trustee:

- (1) Ensure the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.
- (2) Compliance with the Charity's governing document and the law.
- (3) Act in the charity's best interests.
- (4) Manage the charity's resources responsibly.
- (5) Act with reasonable care and skill.
- (6) Ensure the charity is accountable.

Trustees must have and accept ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of The Fishermen's Mission, ensuring effective and efficient administration, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place and holding the Chief Executive to account when necessary.

Trustees must ensure that the charity pursues its stated charitable objects, in compliance with the Articles of Association, establishing a clearly defined vision, set of values and strategy, ensuring that there is a common understanding of these by trustees, staff and associated personnel and evaluating output performance against agreed targets.

Trustees must ensure there are regular reviews of the environment in which the charity operates, identifying changes that might affect the way the charity operates - political, financial, demographic, competitive, partnerships, alliances.

#### Management of Resources

It is a Trustee's legal duty to responsibly manage the resources and ensure the financial stability and solvency of The Fishermen's Mission, including the proper investment of its funds. Trustees must ensure that operational plans and budgets support the vision and strategy, that resources are consumed exclusively in pursuance of its charitable objects and that appropriate financial controls are implemented, and risks managed.

### **Personal conduct**

It is a Trustee's legal duty to act with reasonable care, skill and prudence in all matters relating to The Fishermen's Mission. Trustees must always exercise a proper degree of care in administering the charity, seeking and taking appropriate advice as necessary.

Trustees must always bear in mind that their prime concern is the interests of the charity and must not let any personal views, prejudices or actions affect their conduct as a trustee or adversely impact upon the reputation and values of The Fishermen's Mission which it is their duty to uphold.

Trustees will commit to Nolan's seven principles of public life, namely: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

### **Conflict of interest**

It is also a Trustee's legal duty to act in the best interests of The Fishermen's Mission. Where trustees are required to make a decision that affects the personal interests of one or more of the trustees, the charity's governing document may require that those persons should not be present at any discussion or vote on the matter.

### **Minimum age**

Trustees will be at least 16 years old.

### **Disqualification**

You must not act as a trustee if you are disqualified under the Charities Act unless your disqualification has been waived by the Commission.

### **Fit and proper persons**

The Fishermen's Mission is entitled to claim UK tax relief and exemptions e.g. Gift Aid. Trustees must therefore meet the management condition in the Finance Act 2010 which requires all the charity's managers, including trustees, to be 'fit and proper persons'.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks**

The Fishermen's Mission will conduct appropriate DBS checks prior to appointment.

### **Personal Qualities**

Trustees of The Fishermen's Mission will be committed to the values and goals of the charity including a commitment to equal opportunities and the active promotion of diversity across the charity. Trustees will be willing to devote the necessary time and effort to the role. They are expected to exercise independent, strategic thinking and good judgement; speak openly; challenge appropriately ("critical friend"); support and advocate willingly as part of a unified team.

### **Professional skills**

Trustees will be recruited to provide Council with specific knowledge and experience across a range of areas including: the fishing industry; charity/corporate law & governance; fund-raising; leadership & management; financial management; healthcare, welfare and well-being; data analysis; marketing, media and public relations.

## The Governance Jigsaw – The Essential Trustee (CC3)



**It's about knowing:**

- what your charity can and can't do within its purposes
- how your charity is fulfilling its purposes and benefiting the public
- what difference your charity is really making

**It's about being:**

- familiar with your governing document
- up to date with filing accounts, returns and any changes to your charity's registration details
- aware of other laws that apply to your charity

**It's not about being:**

- an expert - but you do need to take reasonable steps to find out

**It's about:**

- making balanced, informed decisions
- recognising & dealing with conflicts of interest
- ensuring trustee benefits are allowed
- being prepared to question and challenge
- accepting majority decisions

**It's not about:**

- preserving the charity for its own sake
- serving personal interests

**It's about:**

- managing risks, protecting assets (reputation) and people
- getting the resources your charity needs
- having and following appropriate controls and procedures
- dealing with land and buildings
- responsibility for, and to, staff and volunteers

**It's about:**

- using your skills and experience
- deciding when you need advice
- preparing for meetings
- getting the information you need (financial, management)
- being prepared in case something does go wrong

**It's about:**

- meeting legal accounting and reporting requirements
- being able to show that your charity complies with the law and is effective
- being accountable to members and others with an interest in the charity
- ensuring that staff and volunteers are accountable to the board
- welcoming accountability as an opportunity not a burden



## 4. Time commitment, Location, Expenses and Induction/Training

### Time commitment

Council meets four times a year: three times 'in person' during the day and mostly in London, and once online. One sub-committee meets three times yearly and two others meet twice yearly; the Council also meets once annually for a strategy 'away day'.

It is normal practice, where possible, for Trustees to attend the Annual Staff Training Conference (2/3 days) held in June. An increasing amount of Council business is conducted out of committee so timely responses to emails is expected.

### Location

Head Office based in Whiteley, Hampshire.

### Expenses

Trustees are all volunteers, although reasonable out of pocket expenses are covered.

### Induction/Training

A full induction and training programme is provided. New Trustees are teamed up with an existing Trustee to act as a mentor.

***For a confidential conversation please contact Sarah Thewlis, Managing Director of Thewlis Graham Associates on 0207 850 4781 or email [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com).***



## 5. Timeline, Application Process and How to apply

### Timeline

Dates	Activity
Wednesday 8 February at 4pm	Applications close
W/C 13 and 20 February	Thewlis Graham consultant interviewing of interested candidates
Thursday 23 March	Client Interviews

### Application Process

Thewlis Graham Associates will acknowledge all applications. These will be assessed against the criteria in the Role and Responsibilities section and the people who best meet these will be invited for interview with Thewlis Graham Associates online.

Those candidates not invited to interview will be advised by email by early March.

Longlisted candidates will be advised by email. After a consultation between The Fishermen's Mission and Thewlis Graham Associates a Shortlist will be drawn up and Shortlisted candidates invited for interview with the Client at their Head Office at Mather House, 4400 Parkway, Solent Business Park, Whiteley, Hampshire PO15 7FJ.

### How to Apply

To apply for this role, please email in word format to [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com) the following documents quoting reference **AA1101**: -

1. A comprehensive CV
2. A covering letter containing:
  - A personal statement which fully addresses the criteria listed in the role and responsibilities section.
  - Answers to the following questions, illustrating your responses with examples or evidence from your own life experiences – these could be from your working, volunteering, community, or personal life:
    - Why are you interested in joining The Fishermen's Mission specifically? (300 words)
    - What knowledge, skills and experience have you gained in your life that you would bring to our Council? (500 words)
    - How would you make a difference to The Fishermen's Mission? (200 words)
  - Your availability for the time commitment required.
  - The name, job title, organisation, email address and mobile number of two professional referees (Please note referees will not be approached without your prior permission).

3. We also ask that you complete a diversity and inclusion monitoring form, the link for which is in the next section.

***Please ensure that you include your mobile phone number and email address in your application. Do not hesitate to contact Claire Drummond on 020 7850 4781 if you have any queries.***

***Additionally, if you would prefer to receive this candidate brief in a more accessible format, please contact us.***

## **6. Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring**

Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring is independent of the recruitment process but please do complete your form as Thewlis Graham Associates is committed to monitoring and analysing diversity and inclusion information so that we can ensure that our processes are fair, transparent, promote equality of opportunity for all, and do not have an adverse impact on any particular group.

The link to this form is here: [click here](#). If you have any problems with this, please contact Tracey on: [tct@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:tct@thewlisgraham.com).

Any information provided on this form will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only. It will not be seen by anybody directly involved in the selection process. No information will be published or used in any way which allows any individual to be identified.

Thank you.



## 7. Advert



### Trustee

#### Voluntary Role

Commercial fishing remains the most dangerous occupation in the British Isles. The Fishermen's Mission is the only charity that provides emergency support alongside practical, financial, spiritual and emotional care for fishermen both active and retired and their families.

The Council, consisting of up to 15 Trustees, is responsible for the overall direction of the charity and ensuring the Chief Executive and Senior Management team deliver services efficiently, effectively and legally. We are now looking for new trustees with a range of skills and different life experiences to join our energetic Council to help bring direction and focus to the delivery of vital provision in fishing communities. We are particularly keen to recruit trustees with specific knowledge of the Fishing Industry, Finance/Investment, Fundraising, Change Management and Diversity & Inclusion. Becoming a Trustee with The Fishermen's Mission is an exciting and fulfilling opportunity to make a real difference as well as learn new skills.

#### Key Responsibilities

- Ensure The Fishermen's Mission is accountable and carrying out its purposes for public benefit.
- Ensure compliance with the Charity's governing document and the law.
- Responsibly manage the resources and ensure the financial stability, solvency and proper investment of funds.
- Support our values and goals including a commitment to equal opportunities and the active promotion of diversity across the charity.

**Full details of the role and responsibilities required can be found in the link below.**

**Please apply by visiting [www.thewlisgraham.com/assignment-briefings](http://www.thewlisgraham.com/assignment-briefings) and following the instructions in the candidate brief quoting reference AA1101. The closing date is 8 February at 4pm.**

**For a confidential conversation with Sarah Thewlis or for any other information please email [applications@thewlisgraham.com](mailto:applications@thewlisgraham.com).**

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