



Candidate Pack for Chair



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Chair.

We are the charity that supports people as they become parents. Our vision is that everyone who becomes a parent feels confident, connected, and safe because we believe parents help build the foundations of the future. Every year NCT supports over 250,000 parents on their unique journeys through pregnancy, birth, infant feeding, and into early parenthood. We connect, inform and support parents through our antenatal and postnatal courses, peer support programmes, and community-based events. We provide access to evidence-based information through our website and free Infant Feeding Support Line 365-days a year.

Our charity has a proud 65-year history of creating transformative change in the lives of expectant and new parents as a trusted voice, a reassuring presence and a strong advocate, campaigning on the issues that matter most. But there is still much more to do.

As the UK grapples with the realities of life post-pandemic, a difficult economic situation and challenges within our public services, our work to support parents navigating the intrinsic challenges of pregnancy, birth, caring for babies against that backdrop is more important than ever. Significant inequalities in our society have been exposed, and we know that as an expectant or new parent in the UK your experiences vary widely depending on a range of factors that are often tied to where you live and the community you come from. One year into our new strategy, ***For Every Parent***, we are committed to changing this by influencing public policy and practice and making the social changes that matter most to parents.

This is a time of change and opportunity for NCT and as the Chair of our Board, you will be integral in helping us achieve our aims, working with an exceptionally engaged, strategic, diverse and open Board of Trustees, as well as a highly motivated community of staff, practitioners, volunteers, peer supporters and students.

We are looking for an exceptional leader who is ambitious and committed to the work of NCT with the vision and skills to lead the NCT Board and drive us forward. Wherever your professional skills and experience lie, you will bring significant governance experience and the ability to navigate complex external and internal drivers, balance diverse perspectives and foster collaboration around shared goals. How you bring about your influence will be more important than your subject knowledge in this role, but you will be a first-class communicator and ambassador who will inspire others and help us further our goals to extend our engagement and impact with parents.

NCT is committed to social justice and equity and diversity, believing inclusion is everyone's responsibility. We celebrate diversity, challenge inequity and are taking positive action to build an environment so all our people can thrive, and we can best represent and meet the needs of the pregnant women, new parents and families we serve. As Chair, your own commitment to this will be absolutely critical.

Parents help build foundations of the future. If you are motivated to be part of an ambitious charity, making a real difference, we hope you will be inspired to find out more.



Sarah Brown
Vice Chair



Angela McConville
Chief Executive

About us

NCT is the charity supporting people as they become parents. We are a membership charity and a strong, motivated community of volunteers, practitioners, peer supporters, staff, students, advocates and campaigners.

Every year we support over 250,000 parents across the UK on their unique journeys through pregnancy, birth, and early parenthood.

Our vision is that everyone who becomes a parent feels confident, connected, and safe because we believe that parents help build the foundations of the future. Through pregnancy, birth and early parenthood:

- We create opportunities for parents to connect with others
- We build local capacity in communities so we can be there for parents, now and in the future
- We empower parents to make decisions that are right for them
- We share evidence-based information that parents can trust
- We listen to parents' experiences and campaign for improvements.

Our programmes and services span antenatal and postnatal education, information and support, alongside a UK-wide suite of free-to-access support for parents experiencing challenges with mental health, infant feeding, social isolation, or other vulnerabilities.

We provide community-based, free support (e.g., NCT Bumps & Babies groups, NCT Walk & Talks, postnatal drop-ins, Baby Bundles, Baby Café, Baby First Aid) to over 50,000 parents a year via 330 volunteer-led branches. Over 75,000 parents access our gold-standard antenatal and postnatal courses, which help people feel supported, confident and connected throughout their pregnancy.

Nationally, we support parents with high-quality, trusted digital information and resources on our website, which receives over 6 million visits per year.

We also run a free Infant Feeding Line, helping over 8,000 parents annually with a range of feeding and other perinatal issues.

We have a long history of campaigning and are proud of the positive changes we have driven over many years through user-led and research-based policy work. This includes early campaigns to enable the presence of a woman's choice of birth companion and end unnecessary non-evidence-based interventions, such as routine episiotomies or use of enemas before birth; through to better birth environments, women's right to breastfeed in public places without discrimination, and securing funding for every new mum in England to have a 6-week postnatal check in primary care. More recently, during the Covid-19 pandemic, we campaigned for changes in legislation and guidance to protect and support pregnant women and new parents at a time of significant isolation and vulnerability.

For further information on us, please visit [The UK's leading charity for parents | NCT](#)

About the NCT Board of Trustees

NCT's Board is composed of a minimum of nine and maximum of twelve trustees. Up to eight trustees are elected by the membership and up to four are appointed by the Board.

The Board of Trustees is supported in its work by two Board Committees:

- Audit, Risk and Scrutiny – covering the adequacy of financial control, external reporting of performance, and budget and risk management.
- Nominations and Remuneration - covering people issues, inclusion, trustee recruitment and remuneration policy for senior management and other key groups.

Voluntary independent members work alongside trustees on each of the committees to support these specific governance areas. The independent members are not trustees but are appointed as co-optees on the committees to bring additional skills, experiences and perspectives to our governance work.

The Nominations and Remunerations Committee are responsible for assessing the current Board's skills, experience and diversity, and oversee the election and appointment of trustees. In 2020, we took positive action to increase the diversity of our Board and Committees. We were delighted to welcome five new trustees and independent Committee members to support strong governance at NCT. You can read more here.

NCT also has a trading company, NCT Trading Limited, to conduct commercial activities to procure profits for the purpose of paying them to the charity. An independent Director sits on the board of the trading company.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

NCT is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion and has been focused on evolving a diverse leadership and governance team, and an inclusive, open Board culture. Every year we conduct a skills and diversity audit of our governance team and are proactive in developing strategies to maintain a diverse team, which reflects the diversity of the UK, and in particular the UK birthing population.

To find out more about our trustee board, please visit - [Our board of trustees](#) | [About us](#) | [NCT](#)



Role Profile

Purpose

The Chair is the most senior Trustee and representative of the Board. Their role is to provide leadership and direction to the Charity's Board, guiding and supporting Trustees in fulfilling their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the organisation.

The Chair will meet regularly with, support, motivate, constructively challenge and appraise the and work with them to optimise the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the Directors Group, while maintaining appropriate role boundaries.

The Chair will work with the Company Secretary and to ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, Charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations and that NCT pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.

Responsibilities

The Chair has all of the responsibilities of an individual Trustee, plus the following additional responsibilities:

- To provide leadership, management and motivation to the Board of Trustees, enabling Trustees to fulfil their collective responsibilities for the overall governance and for setting the Charity's strategic and long-term direction and goals;
- To promote a Board culture of trust, openness, integrity and inclusion, working to resolve any conflicts that may arise;
- To set the agenda, prepare for and chair Board meetings effectively, facilitating all Trustees' contributions;
- To ensure (with the support of the Company Secretary and) that Board processes and procedures comply with the Charity's governing documents, and policies, that appropriate decisions are correctly made and that proper minutes taken and records kept;
- To report to members on the performance of the Charity and chair the AGM and any other general meetings called from time to time;
- To ensure that the views of all stakeholders, including beneficiaries, staff, practitioners, volunteers, members and partners, are represented to and considered by Board;
- To work closely with the to:
 - develop the Board's agenda
 - ensure that Trustees decisions are implemented
 - ensure that the Charity is managed effectively, in line with agreed strategy, plans and policies, with governing documents, and agreed delegated authority
- To meet regularly with, support, motivate, constructively challenge and appraise the ; to lead their annual performance appraisal, consulting other Trustees as appropriate, including ensuring the invests time in their own continuing professional development; recommend to Nominations and Remuneration Committee any change in remuneration and benefits;
- To assist with senior appointments if requested; review Directors Group appraisals and support grievance and disciplinary processes as required;
- In collaboration with the , to ensure that the Board and the Directors Group are aware of and working within their respective roles and responsibilities;

- To ensure an annual evaluation of the work of the Board of Trustees takes place;
- To oversee the board development plan and ensure that it addresses any development needs identified;
- To be a member ex-officio of all Board committees and working groups, and support and advise their Chairs on their work and Terms of Reference;
- To support, advise and guide individual Trustees to enable them to contribute as fully as they can to the work of the Board and conduct an annual appraisal with each Trustee;
- To allocate Trustees to NCT committees and to other duties as required;
- To work with the President as required in carrying out their role;
- To work in collaboration with the Chair of NCT Trading Ltd;
- To carry out any other roles, responsibilities or duties specified for the Chair in the Articles, the Governance Handbook, policies and agreed financial procedures or as otherwise agreed by the Board;
- To represent NCT externally, as an ambassador of the Board, to promote the charitable objectives and work of NCT, and to internal audiences as required.



Who we are looking for

Your knowledge and experience

- Significant non-executive/trustee experience, ideally as Chair or Vice Chair or with experience of chairing sub-committees.
- Experience of leading at a senior strategic level and of working collaboratively to develop organisational strategy, outcomes and impact.
- Personal experience of engaging with a wide range of stakeholders and of building co-operation and shared commitment across competing perspectives, with strong experience of representing organisations externally on public platforms.
- Excellent understanding of good governance and the discipline of Board leadership and management.
- A broad understanding of charity finance and strategic financial planning, risk and assurance.

Skills and abilities

- Astute: you will be sharp on interpersonal dynamics, have sophisticated influencing skills and be a great judge of character.
- Ability to think and lead strategically; able to understand and relate to the specific challenges and strategic opportunities for NCT.
- Strong Board chairing skills: people immediately listen to you; you will have a great track record of actively facilitating discussion and debate, summarising points of discussion to support decision making, and consensus building.
- Personally influential: you will be someone known for their compelling communication style, listening skills, excellent judgement and diplomacy.
- Ability to support, collaborate with and challenge the charity's .

Your personal style and behaviours

- A trusted presence, with low ego and high personal credibility; you will bring an engaging and collaborative style that inspires confidence.
- Undisputed personal integrity is a must: you will bring a fair, inclusive and open leadership style and your values will be compatible with those of our organisation.
- A demonstrable commitment to the values and vision of NCT.



Terms of appointment

Term of office

The Chair normally serves for a first term of four years and is eligible for reappointment for one further term of four years.

Remuneration

This is an unremunerated role, but reasonable expenses will be offered.

Time commitment

An average of three days per month; occasionally this may be slightly more. We are looking for a Chair who can offer the personal flexibility and availability to commit to the role. The Board meets around six times per year.

An annual schedule of Board and Committee meetings is based on our planning, budgeting and reporting cycle and is agreed at least 12 and ideally 18 months in advance each November.

We look forward to formally welcoming our new Chair at our autumn AGM (usually held in November).

Location of meetings

Usually online or in London. Hybrid options are available.

How to express interest in the role

We hope you will consider making an application to become Chair of our Board at NCT. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/nct-chair/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- a CV (no more than three sides) or equivalent biographical information
- a short covering letter that explains your motivation, suitability, availability and confirms that you would not be subject to any conflict of interest
- please tell us if there are any dates during the selection process (outlined below) when you would not be available to participate.

If you have a disability and identify any barriers in the job description or person specification, please tell us.

We would also be grateful if you would also complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Selection Timeline

Closing date	Monday 20th May 2024
First stage discussions	w/c 10th June 2024
Agreement of the shortlist	End of w/c 17th June 2024
Informal conversations with stakeholders	w/c 24th June 2024
Final interviews	w/c 1st July 2024