



Macular Society

Beating Macular Disease

Chair

January 2026

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Chair.

Macular disease is one of the biggest public health challenges in the developed world and is increasing.

As one of the only sight loss charities in the UK that actively funds and drives research into macular disease, we've set a bold ambition: to Beat Macular Disease. We provide fair and accessible information, and a breadth of advice and support services to our communities to improve the lives of people living with macular disease, and campaign for eye health to be prioritised across society.

As our new Chair you will join at an exciting time for the charity as we look to grow our influence, income and profile further. We are shaping our long-term strategy, have plans to double our growth and will kick start a digital transformation project in 2027. We have a refreshed senior leadership team and board and dedicated volunteers and are an organisation that is ambitious and driven to achieve our mission.

We are looking for a commercially astute, strategic leader with a healthy risk appetite and deep understanding and experience of supporting organisations through transformation to help steer us through the next phase of our journey. You will demonstrate a deep commitment to the cause, exceptional leadership skills, and the ability to foster collaboration, innovation and inclusion within the board and the charity.

We are open on the background our next Chair comes from, however, excellent communication and influencing skills and the ability to engage with a wide range of partners is essential. You will however bring significant governance experience gained in a similarly complex organisation.

An understanding of charity governance gained chairing a committee or board will be advantageous. We have a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion and actively welcome applications from underserved communities. If you have lived experience of macular disease, we would be very interested to hear from you.

If you are excited and ambitious to contribute to our mission and vision and feel that you bring the right blend of skills and experience we are looking for, we hope you will read on to find out more.

Cecilia Bufton

Chair of the Board of Trustees, Macular Society



Every day, around 300 people are diagnosed with macular disease. It's the biggest cause of sight loss in the UK. Macular disease is cruel and isolating. It steals your sight, your independence, and your ability to do the things you love.

The Macular Society is working to deliver our ultimate ambition – to Beat Macular Disease. We are determined to end the fear and isolation of macular disease with world-class research and the best advice and support.

Finding a cure

We will continue to invest in research until we Beat Macular Disease. We will maximise our impact by working collaboratively with other research funders to make a bigger difference. We will involve a diverse range of patients in our research decisions. We will maintain the high quality of the work we fund, spending the gifts of our donors in the best possible ways.

Providing the best advice and support

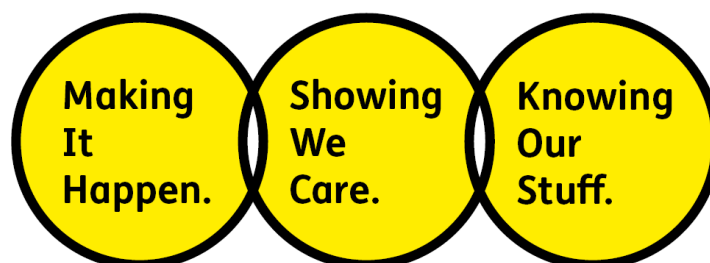
We will provide the best quality advice, information and support for people with macular disease. We will understand more about the people affected by macular disease; how they feel, what support they need, where and when. We will ensure our services meet those needs. In this way we will double the number of people we help within the next six years. Everyone who comes to the Macular Society will find something of benefit.

Making sure vision matters

Macular disease should be a UK health priority. We will campaign to increase understanding of the impact of macular disease so that it is given the priority it deserves. We will encourage the public to have regular eye health checks. We will engage with health and care professionals who work with people affected by macular disease and encourage referral to our specialist services. We will raise awareness of the need for better emotional and practical support for people affected by macular disease.

Our values

We will beat macular disease by...



Knowing Our Stuff - we have Integrity and we act Honestly

Showing We Care - we are Supportive and Caring

Making It Happen - we are Ambitious

Our vision

We will end macular disease.

Our mission

Beating the fear and isolation of macular disease with world-class research, and the best advice and support.

We are Ambitious.

We will Beat Macular Disease.

We are committed to be brave in our actions to make the progress that people need.

We will fundraise to find a cure, empower our team, be progressive yet supportive and dedicated in our belief...

...to Beat Macular Disease.

We are Supportive and Caring.

We provide a caring, approachable, and supportive environment for each member, supporter, volunteer, and all members of our team.

We act with empathy in all that we do. We listen to each other and we all work together...

...to Beat Macular Disease.

We have Integrity and we act Honestly.

We are trusted for our supportive, open and collaborative approach, our professional expertise and our dedication to be the best we can be to do more...

...to Beat Macular Disease.

To read our research strategy please [click here](#)

To read our impact report please [click here](#)

To read our annual report please [click here](#)

Commitment to Diversity

We are passionate about treating people fairly and as equals, doing so is instinctive to us. We know that to Beat Macular Disease for all we have work to do. We recognise this and we are committed that what we do and how we do it is inclusive – for everyone.

To read more about our commitment to diversity please [click here](#).

We are a Disability Confident employer.



Role title: Chair of the Board of Trustees

Role purpose

The Chair provides leadership and direction to the Board of Trustees, working with and guiding the Chief Executive, collectively ensuring the delivery of the organisation's charitable objects, vision and mission.

Main responsibilities

Strategic leadership, constructive challenge and oversight

- Providing strategic leadership and insights to the Board, its Committees, the CEO and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure the alignment of the charitable purposes, mission, vision, and values of the charity support agreed strategic priorities
- Supporting/leading the Board to collaborate with the SLT and key stakeholders to develop and implement long-term strategies that advance the charity's objects, impact and financial sustainability
- Discussing and agreeing the risk appetite of the Board and ensuring major risks and opportunities are regularly reviewed and addressed within the agreed risk management framework
- Ensuring that the impact and effectiveness of the Macular Society's activities are measured and reported to the Board in accordance with agreed key valuation metrics
- Promoting innovation within the Macular Society to stay ahead in the field of research and ensuring that research funds are allocated appropriately.
- Ensure that the board provide a reassuring presence and voice to our staff, supporters, volunteers and groups as we continue to develop our services
- Leading Board meetings to ensure high-quality, inclusive debate and well-informed, timely decision-making in the best interests of the Macular Society
- Ensuring Trustees are fully engaged and supported to contribute effectively, and take collective ownership of decisions made
- Working closely with Committee Chairs to ensure their delegated remits are met

- Working with the Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Governance to plan meetings and agendas, ensuring decisions are implemented and monitored and ensuring that the business is covered efficiently and effectively
- Ensuring, in liaison with the Director of Finance and Governance, that appropriate procedures, processes and controls are in place and followed.

Stakeholder engagement and accountability

- Representing the Macular Society to partners and key stakeholders, including regulators, partner organisations in the health and research community, policy makers, funders, and opinion formers
- Building and maintaining close relations between the charity's various constituencies and stakeholder groups to promote the effective operation of the charity's activities
- Cultivating positive and constructive relationships among individual Trustees and between Trustees and the SLT.

Performance, development and diversity

- Supporting the chair of GNPC in ensuring that the Board has the necessary diversity of skills, expertise, lived experience, behaviours and competencies to perform their functions in line with the law, regulatory requirements and the best interests of the charity
- Encouraging all Trustees to contribute positively to their individual roles and that of the Board, ensuring constructive challenge, robust scrutiny and range of views are welcomed to demonstrate sound decision-making
- Upholding the values of the charity by example, and ensuring that the organisation promotes equality, diversity and inclusion creating a welcoming board environment that values diversity of experience, backgrounds and thinking to create better decisions for the direction of the charity

- Committing to good governance practices, ensuring the regular review of internal policies, procedures and behaviours to deliver the highest standards of performance and propriety
- Ensuring, with the support of the CEO and SLT, compliance with statutory requirements and that the organisation pursues its objectives as defined in its Articles of Association
- Developing the culture, knowledge, and capability of the Board, ensuring ongoing development and conducting annual appraisals with Board members and ensuring effective succession planning
- Ensuring regular reviews of Board, Committee and governance effectiveness, reporting outcomes to the Board.

Oversight and support of the CEO

- Providing leadership and support to the CEO for their personal development and benefit of the charity
- Supporting and annually appraising the performance of the CEO
- Supporting and encouraging the CEO in their talent pipeline and succession planning activities, with the input of relevant Board committees
- Maintaining regular, open communication with the CEO, providing a sounding board and being alive to emerging priorities.



We ask the following for all our team members:

- 1. You will be committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work.**
- 2. Have an open and collaborative approach to work, helping us to achieve our Knowing Our Stuff value by working with integrity, making informed decisions to be the best we can be to Beat Macular Disease.**
- 3. Be able to act with empathy; we provide a caring, approachable and supportive environment for all – we Show We Care by listening to each other and working together.**
- 4. Be ambitious in your approach to help Make Things Happen; we are progressive yet supportive, and brave in our actions to make the progress that is needed to Beat Macular Disease.**
- 5. Be happy to work in an organisation that puts the people we support first, be able to advocate for the Macular Society at all times and be comfortable that all members of the team are ‘fundraisers’.**



Part one: Knowledge and experience

- Significant non-executive experience, ideally gained as a Chair or Vice Chair in the charity, public or commercial sector
- Considerable experience of strategic leadership in a complex organisation undergoing growth and change
- Demonstrated ability to build and maintain partnerships with a variety of stakeholders, e.g., donors, volunteers, corporations, government agencies
- Strong knowledge of the principles of good governance and financial oversight, and the respective roles of the Board and Executive

Part Two: Skills and abilities

- Highly effective influencing and communication skills
- Clear strategic thinker, able to see the bigger picture
- Able to lead a diverse board, reconciling differing perspectives and achieving progress
- Exceptional chairing skills; able to facilitate discussion and debate amongst an accomplished group of Board members.

Part Three: Leadership style and behaviours

- Demonstrable evidence of the Nolan Principles of leadership
- Strategic vision and financial acumen
- Collegiate style: high capacity for self-reflection and is emotionally intelligent
- Personally flexible and adaptable
- Undisputed personal stature, presence, and integrity, sound judgement
- Fosters group and collective accountability and a good role model who sets the tone for the organisation
- Deep commitment to the mission and values of the Macular Society.
- Commitment to inclusive leadership and to ensuring that the diversity of communities served by the Macular Society is reflected in governance.

Remuneration

This is a voluntary position, with reasonable expenses paid.

Location

Any in person meetings will be held at our Andover office or in central London. Travel to other locations/external events will be required.

Time Commitment

This role requires around 2-3 days per month, which includes:

- Three board meetings at our offices in Andover
- An in-person Board Away Day also occurs once per year, usually in London

The dates and times for 2026 Board meetings which generally run between 10am and 2.30pm with a longer strategic meeting taking place in June.

- Thursday 19 March – Andover
- Tuesday 23 June – London
- Tuesday 15 September – Andover
- Wednesday 9 December – Andover

Term of Appointment

The Chair is appointed for 3 years with an option to extend for a further three years, with a maximum term of six years.



How to apply

To make an application, please visit the [Starfish Search website here](#) and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A covering letter that sets out your motivation for the role and describes the specific experience you can bring to the appointment.

We would also be grateful if you would 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.

Recruitment timetable

Closing date:

Friday 27th February 2026

Preliminary interviews:

w/c 16th March 2026

Final Panel interviews:

w/c 6th April 2026