



# Chair Candidate Pack



# A letter from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in joining our board.

PIP works in the Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster communities to support adults with learning disabilities and autism to achieve their potential, move towards independence, and live a life of their choice.

Established in 1983 by parents wanting more challenging and ambitious support for their children, we have had 40 years of impact and support in our communities. Our history is rich & varied, and we have grown from 25 students a decade ago to over 75 students today.

From our custom-adapted centre on Kensal Road where we moved in 2022, we run four key curriculum areas: Creative and Performing Arts; Employability, Health & Wellbeing, and Independent Living Skills. Alongside this work we run services like Gig Buddies which supports our students to access social events and our SW1 service supporting older adults with learning disabilities.

The organisation is led by a chief executive with deep sector experience, a skilled and settled management team, and a board of ten trustees with a diversity of experience and perspectives.

As we complete a period of renewal and expansion for our board, we are looking for a new Chair to support PiP in the next of its development. We are delighted that you may be considering this position, PiP is a unique charity in impact, ambition, and heart. We are on a sound financial footing and are actively exploring new ways to support our students. As a charity we are well established and you will have good support structures in place as you get to grips with the role and our organisation.

I hope the following information on PIP captures your interest and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,  
John Leach  
Chair







## Who we are:

PIP works in the Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster communities to support adults with learning disabilities and autism.

With 28 staff and a Board of 10, we work to empower over 75 adults with Learning Disabilities and Autism every year to achieve their potential, move towards independence and live a life of their choice. We believe our staff and volunteers are our greatest asset and we have just completed a 25% expansion of our staff team to meet service demand and ensure our colleagues have the capacity to offer the quality of service we're known for in our community.

Our approach is student-led and each student's timetable is the result of a collaborative approach with students, families, and social workers. Student goals can vary widely from learning to cook a meal to securing part-timework, to having friends through to exploring creativity. Each student at PiP is referred by our Local Authority partners and with a waiting list of over 40 students we are confident we offer a top-tier service.

Financially we are stable with strong financial reserves and an income mix circa 75% commissioned services and 25% philanthropic partnerships. From this position of strength, we plan to invest in our team and projects to expand our provision and secure more impact in our community.

## Why we need you:

PiP's current chair is leaving the role after 10 years of service and having stewarded the growth of the organisation from supporting 25 adults with learning disabilities to 75 with a commensurate rise in income from just over £550K to £1.6M.

Today, as we recruit a new chair, we're looking for someone with vision, leadership, and a strategic mindset to plan and oversee our next stage. Considering questions like:

- How to diversify our offer to meet all the needs of those we support
- How to better support students ready to leave PiP
- What new projects and services would reach more people in more communities.





## Who we support and why:

At PiP, our focus is on teaching and learning life skills; so those we work with self-identify as PiP students. Ranging in age from 18 to 92, our average student is around 34 years old.

PiP students have a range of learning disabilities including Down's Syndrome, Fragile X, Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC), dual diagnosis with mental health problems and/or physical health conditions such as Diabetes and Epilepsy.

PiP's team deliver person-centred support to each of our students to identify their strengths, interests and passions. We support them and their families & carers to maximise opportunities in their community through signposting and working in partnership with like-minded organisations.

Structural inequalities in society mean that people with learning disabilities are not always recognised for their skills and talents and given the opportunity to live independent lives. Our board and staff team want to challenge that, making sure that every PiP student has a voice and can make their own choices about their own lives.

We are keen for our students to always have a voice, inside and outside of PiP. To support this, we run advocacy sessions and every week our students hold a student's meeting with their own agenda where they can express their views on PiP and ask about anything like new staff, our leisure programmes, or fundraising. Meeting monthly is our student council where student representatives feedback on their experience and opinions to senior management and our board.





## Our Board

Each Board member serves for three years and is able to serve two terms. You will be serving alongside the following trustees (links to LinkedIn and PiP profiles for further information):

Chair of Trustees: [John Leach](#)

Trustee: [Mark Barrie](#) - strategy and risk specialist

Trustee: [Patrick Brown](#) - organisational development and talent management

Trustee: [Terri Cash](#) - outreach, engagement, and community specialist

Trustee: [Theresa Ekendu](#) - HR and organisational development leader

Trustee: [Tilly Lang](#) - legal, governance, and data protection expert

Trustee: [Dan Wakerley](#) - technology entrepreneur

Trustee: [Judy Wilcox](#) - our local community expert & representative

Trustee: [Kate Clarke](#) - English secondary school teacher and parent

Trustee: [Leanne Williams](#) - technology lead and business analysis



## What we're looking for

Below outlines the broad criteria that PiP desires from the person who fills this post. We expect that the individual appointed may not meet all the criteria below, and that experience, skills, and understanding of our work may come from many areas including voluntary or lived/caring experience.

As Chair your primary responsibilities will include:

- Chair meetings of the PIP Board of Trustees, providing leadership and support to the CEO including meeting regularly to discuss current issues
- Lead the board in the performance of their roles and scrutiny of PiP's work
- Enable trustees to fully engage with their role, board sessions, and the organisation's work
- Hold the CEO to account for the performance and financial sustainability of the charity and give appropriate support and challenge
- Oversee the strategic direction, financial management & performance of the organisation
- Provide leadership for the organisation
- Support in the income generation, communications, and community engagement of the organisation
- Lead on the appointment of trustees and CEO as required and ensure that posts receive appropriate induction, advice, training and information
- Ensure that PIP complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations





PiP is looking for an individual with the following skills and experience:

- Strong leadership skills, with the ability to think strategically and creatively
- Good communication skills with the ability to inform and engage a wide range of audiences
- An understanding of leadership, management and governance and the respective roles of the Chair, the Board and the Chief Executive
- The ability to understand and scrutinise the financial management of the organisation
- An understanding of the importance of PiP's work and our person-centred approach to addressing inequalities for adults with learning disabilities
- A willingness to commit time and effort to the development of PiP
- The ability to engage comfortably at all levels
- A commitment to PiP's values

## What's in it for you?

You will be joining a friendly board with a variety of skills and you will gain immense satisfaction from a role in which you will steward our mission to combat social inequalities and their effect on people with learning disabilities. Your involvement will mean we can ensure that every PiP student has a voice and can make their own choices about their own lives.

The trustees have overall control of the governance of PiP. They are ultimately responsible for the charity, although the day-to-day running of it is delegated to the Senior Management Team. As Chair you lead the board, oversee our strategic work, and provide a vital governance function





## Time commitment

Board meetings take place 4-5 times per year for normally two hours in the early evening at our centre on 306 Kensal Road. Papers are sent out in advance and are regarded as pre-read for meeting purposes.

There is also a Finance Sub-committee, which the Chair may choose to attend.

In order to fulfil this role effectively, the successful candidate would need to be able to devote up to circa a day per month on average, some of which would be remote/outside of office hours. The position is voluntary, unpaid, and non-executive. Reasonable expenses such as travel will be paid.

## How to apply

Eastside People is supporting PIP (Pursuing Independent Paths) in the recruitment for this role. Please [click here](#) submit your CV and a cover letter, which should indicate why you are interested in applying for the Chair role and joining PIP, how you meet the role requirements, as outlined in the Candidate Information Pack and how your skills and experience would add value to the organisation.

If you would like a call to discuss the role in more detail, please email Lucinda at [lucinda@eastsidepeople.org](mailto:lucinda@eastsidepeople.org) to arrange a convenient time. Having a call of this kind will not influence the success or otherwise of your application.

We want you to have every opportunity to demonstrate your skills, ability and potential. Please contact us if you require any assistance or adjustment so that we can make the application process work for you.

The closing date for applications is 9.00 am on Wednesday 5th June and interviews with the recruitment panel at PIP will take place week commencing 10th June. The successful candidate will be asked to attend the Board meeting on 8th July at 5.00 pm – 7:00 pm to meet the trustees.

