Deaf Action

Help shape the future of Deaf Action

Board of Trustees

Treasurer



Recruitment pack

Thank you for your interest in becoming Deaf Action's Treasurer.

Welcome

Established in 1835, Deaf Action is the world's oldest deaf charity. For over 190 years, we've been supporting and celebrating deaf people, breaking down barriers and creating opportunities.

Our trustees play an important role in shaping our future and ensuring we can continue making a difference.

In this pack, you'll find out more about our charity, the Treasurer role and how you can become part of our Board.

Action beyond words

Welcome from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming Treasurer of Deaf Action.

Deaf Action is a long-established, proudly deaf-led charity. We have a strong mission, a trusted reputation and services with real potential to grow.
We are also clear about the financial challenge before us. Our financial performance has been under sustained pressure, with limited headroom to build reserves or invest consistently in future growth.

The Board has responded by adopting an ambitious Integrated Business Plan for 2026-2029. The plan is intended to strengthen our financial resilience while protecting and expanding our impact. It brings together commercial growth, improved care-service viability and increased unrestricted fundraising, with the aim of generating sustainable surpluses for reinvestment in our mission.

We are looking for a Treasurer who can help the Board turn that ambition into sustainable results. The successful person will value strong controls and assurance, but will also understand that responsible growth requires informed decisions, proportionate risk and carefully managed investment.
This is not an operational finance role. It is an opportunity to bring strategic financial leadership, constructive challenge and clear explanation to the Board of a historic organisation at an important point in its development.

We hope this pack gives you a clear sense of Deaf Action, our plans and the contribution we are seeking from our next Treasurer.

Rev Rosie Addis
Chair of the Board of Trustees

We're a deaf-led charity that supports and celebrates deaf people.

About Deaf Action

Deaf Action works across Scotland and the South of England to empower all deaf people to achieve their potential and participate fully in society, with equality of rights, access and opportunity.

Our legal status

Organisation	Deaf Action
Legal form	Private company limited by guarantee, without share capital
Company number	SC396876
Scottish charity number	SC009898
Regulator	Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)

What makes Deaf Action distinctive?

- Deaf-led: Lived experience is at the heart of our work and decision-making.
- A wide range of services: We bring together charitable, care, commercial and community services to support deaf people.
- Accessible communication: We promote access through BSL interpreting and other communication support.
- A long history: We've been supporting deaf people since 1835, while continuing to develop services for the future.
- Working together: We build partnerships and work with others to improve equality, access and opportunity.

Our reach and services

Our work includes care and support, interpreting, training, assistive technology, digital and video services, community activity and other services that improve access for deaf people. Candidates will receive further information about our current service portfolio and structure during the recruitment process.

Helping secure a sustainable future for Deaf Action.

Why we're recruiting

Deaf Action's challenge is to move from recurring financial pressure to a sustainable operating model that generates sufficient surplus to strengthen reserves and reinvest in our charitable mission.

At the same time, the organisation faces pressure on public funding, rising operating costs, declining reserves and variable contribution to core costs across services.

The Board has chosen not simply to manage decline or continue hoping for break-even. It has adopted a more commercially disciplined approach to income generation, cost recovery and performance, while remaining firmly rooted in Deaf Action's charitable mission.

Why the Treasurer matters

- The Board needs clear, accessible financial information and a shared understanding of financial risk.
- Cash flow, liquidity, reserves and financial headroom require clear and consistent oversight.
- Investment and growth proposals need rigorous but proportionate scrutiny.
- Progress against the Integrated Business Plan must be monitored through budgets, forecasts, cash flow, margins, reserves and delivery measures.
- Trustees need support to distinguish between unacceptable exposure and managed risk taken in pursuit of sustainable mission impact.
- The Treasurer will help strengthen collective Board confidence, rather than becoming the only Trustee who understands the finances.

The Treasurer will therefore be an important partner to the Chair, Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, finance staff and the wider Board. The role brings challenge and assurance, but does not replace executive accountability for operational financial management.

The aim is not surplus for its own sake. Sustainable surpluses allow Deaf Action to protect services, invest in people and systems, respond to opportunity and strengthen long-term impact.

Financial sustainability and growth, 2026-2029

Our Integrated Business Plan

The Integrated Business Plan brings individual service plans together into one organisational strategy. Its goal is to strengthen financial resilience while protecting and expanding Deaf Action's mission impact.

Financial direction

2026/27 target income
£3,756,231

2027/28 target income
£4,320,406

2028/29 target income
£4,750,372

2029 ambition

A sustainable operating surplus sufficient to strengthen financial resilience, rebuild reserves and support reinvestment in Deaf Action's mission.

Three connected growth levers

Financial growth

Expand services and improve contribution to core costs.

Care-service viability

Improve pricing, occupancy, efficiency, and full-cost recovery.

Fundraising growth

Increase unrestricted income and broaden strategic relationships.

The Board’s approach

- Use commercial discipline to support charitable purpose, not displace it.
- Plan for income growth and improved margins rather than relying on an elusive break-even.
- Invest selectively in capability, systems, sales, marketing and operational leadership.
- Monitor revenue, delivery and cultural risks through clear accountability and reporting.
- Maintain appropriate controls while enabling timely, evidence-based decisions.
- Test significant investment and growth proposals against expected return, cash requirements, delivery capacity and downside risk.

Help shape Deaf Action's financial future

The Treasurer opportunity

The Treasurer provides strategic oversight of Deaf Action's financial affairs and supports the Board in fulfilling its collective financial responsibilities.

Role details

Role
Treasurer and Trustee

Term
Four years, with the possibility of one further term.

Location
Meetings may be in person or online; arrangements to be confirmed.

Status
Voluntary Trustee role. Reasonable expenses reimbursed.

Meetings
Normally four scheduled Board meetings each year, plus other agreed activity.

Support
BSL interpretation and other communication support provided as required.

Purpose of the role

The Treasurer provides strategic oversight of Deaf Action's financial affairs and supports the Board in fulfilling its collective financial responsibilities. The Treasurer helps ensure that effective financial controls, reporting arrangements, planning and risk-management processes are in place.

The role is focused on governance, assurance and strategic financial oversight, working with the Chair, Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, finance team and wider Board.

The kind of Treasurer we are seeking

- ✓ Strategic and commercially aware.
- ✓ Able to explain finance in plain, accessible language.
- ✓ Independent in judgement and constructive in challenge.
- ✓ Comfortable testing assumptions and asking difficult questions respectfully.
- ✓ Able to balance risk appetite with deliverables and investment necessary for sustainable growth.
- ✓ Committed to Deaf Action's deaf-led identity, purpose and values.

Sound financial judgement with an ability to support the strategic aims of Deaf Action in an enabling way.

Someone who can help the Board balance assurance, opportunity and mission impact.

The responsibilities of our Treasurer

Role description

The role is focused on governance, assurance and strategic financial oversight, working with the Chair, Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, finance team and wider Board.

Strategic financial oversight

- Support the Board in maintaining effective oversight of Deaf Action's financial position and long-term resilience.
- Review and provide constructive challenge on budgets, management accounts, cash-flow forecasts, financial plans and year-end projections.
- Support the Board in monitoring delivery of the Integrated Business Plan, including income growth, cost recovery, margins, reserves, investment requirements and progress towards sustainable annual surplus.
- Ensure the Board has clear visibility of liquidity, cash-flow outlook, reserves and financial headroom, including appropriate early-warning indicators.
- Help Trustees understand the financial implications of strategic proposals and major decisions.
- Encourage appropriate scenario planning and sensitivity testing where plans depend on uncertain income, investment or delivery assumptions.
- Support proportionate financial appraisal of significant investment, growth and commercial proposals, including key assumptions, expected return, cash requirements, downside risk and impact on reserves.
- Provide strategic financial insight and advice to the Board and, where appropriate, act as a sounding board to the Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer and senior finance staff, while maintaining clear governance and operational boundaries.
- Present or support the presentation of financial information in a clear and understandable format.
- Help build the financial confidence and capability of the whole Board.
- Work constructively with the Chair, Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, finance staff and other Trustees.

Assurance, control and risk

- Promote effective financial controls, delegated authorities and transparent reporting.
- Support the Board’s oversight of financial and business risks, ensuring that risk is understood, owned and managed proportionately.
- Maintain appropriate oversight of reserves, liquidity, restricted funds, assets, liabilities and significant financial commitments.
- Support appropriate arrangements for the preparation, independent examination or audit of annual accounts.
- Liaise with external auditors or independent examiners on behalf of the Board where appropriate and help the Board consider findings and follow-up actions.
- Alert the Chair and Board promptly to material financial concerns while respecting the distinction between oversight and operational management.

Board responsibilities

- Contribute actively to Board discussion, collective decision-making, annual planning and Board development.
- Act as an ambassador for Deaf Action and uphold the Trustee Code of Conduct.
- Act in the interests of Deaf Action and support its charitable objectives.
- Exercise care and diligence and help ensure compliance with legal, regulatory and governing-document requirements.
- Set and safeguard Deaf Action's strategy, values and long-term direction.
- Hold the Chief Executive and Executive Team accountable for implementation and organisational performance.
- Oversee the preparation and implementation of business strategies and plans.
- Ensure appropriate policies are in place to manage risk, control finances and provide fair and lawful conditions of employment.
- Prepare for and attend Board meetings, read papers in advance and complete agreed actions.
- Declare and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.
- Respect confidentiality, collective responsibility and the distinction between governance and operational management.
- Build constructive relationships and use relevant knowledge and contacts for the benefit of Deaf Action.
- Promote Deaf Action's work and do nothing that could bring the organisation into disrepute.

Time commitment

The expected commitment will normally include four scheduled Board meetings each year, preparation time, occasional additional meetings or discussions, an induction programme, and agreed contact between meetings. The Treasurer may also attend relevant committees, audit meetings or planning discussions where required.

The skills, experience and qualities we're looking for

Person specification

The person specification sets out the essential requirements for the Treasurer role, alongside additional experience and knowledge that would be desirable.

Essential criteria

Financial leadership	Senior financial leadership, accountancy or equivalent commercial-finance experience.
Financial understanding	Ability to interpret budgets, forecasts, cash flow, management accounts, reserves and financial risk.
Communication	Ability to explain complex financial matters clearly to people with different levels of financial knowledge.
Strategic judgement	Ability to connect financial information to strategy, mission impact and organisational sustainability.
Risk and opportunity	Evidence of balanced judgement, proportionate risk management and responsible investment decisions.

Essential criteria continued

Challenge	Independent judgement and the confidence to question assumptions constructively and respectfully.
Board contribution	Ability to work collectively, respect role boundaries and contribute beyond the specialist finance remit.
Values	Commitment to Deaf Action's purpose, deaf-led identity, equality and accessible participation.
Qualification	A chartered accountancy qualification and current membership of ICAS or ICAEW.

Desirable criteria

Sector context	Experience in charities, social care, public contracts or regulated services.
Transformation	Experience of growth, turnaround, business transformation or improving financial sustainability.
Charity finance	Knowledge of restricted funds, reserves, full-cost recovery, charity accounts and audit or independent examination.
Lived experience	Lived experience of deafness or strong knowledge of deaf communities and barriers to access.

Working together to guide Deaf Action's future

How the board works

Deaf Action is governed by a Board of between five and eight Trustees. The Board sets the organisation's strategy and values and holds the Chief Executive and Executive Team accountable for successful implementation.

Meetings and participation

- The normal cycle is four Board meetings each year, with additional meetings if required.
- Meetings may be held in person or online. Final arrangements will be explained to candidates.
- BSL interpretation and other communication support are provided as required so that all Board members can participate fully.
- Papers are normally circulated electronically in advance through the Board SharePoint site.
- Trustees receive a Deaf Action email account and are expected to use it for Board business.
- Trustees are expected to prepare, participate actively, challenge sensitively and accept collective decisions.

Induction and support

The appointed Treasurer will receive a structured induction, including Deaf Action's Articles of Association, Governance Handbook, Trustee Code of Conduct, strategic and business plans, latest Annual Report and Accounts, Board calendar, relevant policies, principal risks and the current financial position and reserves approach.

The induction will include detailed briefings on current budgets and forecasts, cash flow, reserves, major commitments, financial controls and the assumptions underpinning the Integrated Business Plan.

Induction will also cover communication support, digital access, service familiarisation, key relationships and any individual development needs. Ongoing training and reasonable expenses associated with the Trustee role will be supported.

The Treasurer strengthens collective Board oversight. The role is to ensure that the right financial questions are asked, that the Board receives reliable information and that significant risks and opportunities are properly understood before decisions are taken.

An opportunity to make a meaningful difference.

What Deaf Action offers

The opportunity to help shape the financial future of an ambitious deaf-led charity.

What we offer

- Working with fellow Trustees and staff team to strengthen services, equality and opportunity for deaf people.
- A direct role in overseeing an Integrated Business Plan designed to move Deaf Action towards sustainable annual surplus.
- The chance to combine charity stewardship with commercial thinking, growth and service improvement.
- A Board environment in which accessibility and communication support are built into participation.
- A structured induction and access to relevant governance, strategic and financial information.
- Ongoing training and development appropriate to the role.

Our commitment to inclusion

Deaf Action welcomes interest from people with varied backgrounds and routes into financial leadership. We particularly welcome applications from deaf people and others with lived experience or strong understanding of deaf communities. We also want the Board to benefit from a broad range of perspectives, professional experiences and personal backgrounds.

Candidates will be invited to tell us about any communication or access requirements. Reasonable adjustments and appropriate communication support will be provided throughout the recruitment process.

A note on challenge and risk

We want a Treasurer who will protect Deaf Action's assets, insist on reliable information and challenge weak assumptions. We also want someone who recognises that financial stewardship is not simply about avoiding risk. Sustainable growth may require carefully considered investment and appropriate risk-taking.

The successful candidate will help the Board understand the choices, test the assumptions, assess the potential return and downside, and then make deliberate, evidence-based choices and monitor the consequences carefully.

Take the next step towards becoming Deaf Action's Treasurer.

Recruitment and application process

Thank you for your interest in joining Deaf Action's Board of Trustees.

The following pages explain how to apply, the recruitment and selection process, and the information we'll ask you to provide.

To apply, please submit the following:

- A current CV or summary of relevant experience.
- A supporting statement of no more than two pages explaining why you are interested in Deaf Action, how you meet the essential criteria and what you would bring to the Treasurer role.
- Details of two referees. References will normally be taken up only after discussion with the preferred candidate.

Indicative selection process

- Applications assessed against the published person specification.
- Shortlisted candidates invited to an accessible interview or structured conversation.
- Opportunity to meet the Chair, Chief Executive and relevant Board or finance representatives.
- References, eligibility and any required due-diligence checks completed before appointment.
- Recommendation considered and appointment approved through Deaf Action’s governance arrangements.

Eligibility and appointment checks

The preferred candidate will be asked to confirm eligibility to act as a charity trustee and company director and to declare relevant interests.

The preferred candidate will also be expected to complete Deaf Action's normal Trustee declarations of interests and due-diligence requirements.

Appropriate identity, reference and regulatory checks will be completed.

Questions for the supporting statement

- Why does the Treasurer opportunity at Deaf Action interest you now?
- How have you helped a Board or leadership team understand financial performance and risk?
- Based on the information in this pack, what do you see as the most important financial questions the Board should be asking over the next three years?
- What would you describe as the key financial challenges for Deaf Action?
- Give an example of balancing financial control with investment, growth or innovation.
- How would you help Trustees with different levels of financial knowledge engage confidently in financial decisions?
- What would you want to understand in your first three months as Treasurer?

Key dates

Closing date	29 November 2026
Interview	15 December 2026
Expected appointment	11 March 2027

Submitting your application

Please submit your application documents to:
recruitment@deafaction.org

Contact and enquiries

If you have any questions about the Treasurer opportunity or would like to make an informal enquiry, please get in touch at recruitment@deafaction.org

Discussions can be arranged in either English or BSL.

Thank you for your interest in joining Deaf Action

Deaf Action

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Registered company no. SC396876
Registered charity no. SC009898