

**Liz Watson**  
Trustee, Springfield Mind



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When Liz retired in 2015, she began volunteering for Springfield Mind’s ‘Green Minds’ allotment project in Leamington Spa. Springfield Mind is a local mental health charity for Warwickshire and Wychavon aiming to help reduce stigma and support people to achieve their own personal wellbeing.

Whilst Liz enjoyed her volunteering, she felt she could offer more, having run large engineering departments and managed big budgets in her professional life as an aerospace engineer at Rolls-Royce. Liz had no experience of delivering mental health services, but she was interested in how Springfield Mind decided what services they would offer, how it obtained funding and how they used it to help people. She was also interested in how business plans work in a mental health charity, which was a very different work environment to the engineering industry and one where it is much harder to judge the outcomes. When she heard that Springfield Mind were looking for new trustees, she made her interest known to one of the charity’s senior managers. After reviewing her experience, the other trustees invited her to join the Board of Trustees formally in summer 2017.

Liz said, “Our job as trustees is to promote the success of Springfield Mind in delivering services for mental wellbeing considering the service users, employees and funders. We all attend regular trustees meetings to discuss progress and review plans and strategy. Each trustee also chooses an area of the charity’s work to get involved in more closely based on their expertise; I chose to focus on budgeting and funding.”

Liz continued, “It is early days for me as a trustee but it is already very rewarding to see how the charity operates and how important its work is; mental health services are complex and there are no quick fixes. My trustee role gives me an overview of how the charity works and an opportunity to contribute to how it develops. I know it is odd to enjoy looking at the budget and where the money goes but sound finances are essential for Springfield Mind to deliver mental health services to the people of Warwickshire long term.”

<https://springfieldmind.org.uk>

Photo details: Liz taking a break at the charity’s Green Minds allotment in Leamington Spa.