



CHAIR OF TRUSTEES Candidate Pack



Contents

Welcome	1
About Us	3
Our Values	4
Our Impact	5
About the Role	6
Who We're Looking For	7
How to Apply	8



Welcome

Dear potential candidate,

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Pets As Therapy (PAT) as Chair. We are delighted that you are considering becoming part of our journey.

For over 40 years, PAT has brought the comfort and companionship of pets to people who need it most. Each week, thousands of our volunteers - primarily with dogs, and a small number of exceptional cats - visit schools, hospitals, hospices, care homes and community settings across the UK. From helping children build confidence in reading, to easing stress for NHS staff, to bringing joy and connection to isolated older people, our work is both wide-reaching and deeply personal.

As a lifelong dog lover, I have seen first-hand the joy that pets can bring, and as a member of the PAT Board I see enormous potential to expand our impact. Demand for our services has never been higher, with more than twice as many establishments requesting visits than we are currently able to support. At the same time, like many charities, we are operating in a challenging fundraising environment.

We are therefore seeking an exceptional leader who can guide PAT through these uncertain times and help PAT realise its next phase of growth. In doing so, you will have the opportunity to lead an outstanding Board of Trustees, many of whom have been recruited recently. Shaping the Board into a cohesive, effective team and setting a clear strategic direction with the executive will be central to the role.

I hope you feel inspired to join us.

Warm regards,

Ian Windsor
Interim Chair
Pets As Therapy



About Us

Pets As Therapy is a national charity with a simple but powerful mission: to share the joy of pets with people who need it most.

From our base in Oxfordshire and a virtual Hub in Scotland and Northern Ireland, we support around 6,000 volunteer teams across the UK. Together, they bring comfort, connection and companionship to tens of thousands of people every year.

- **In care homes and day centres**, PAT visits brighten the day of residents who may be lonely, anxious or living with dementia - sparking conversations, memories and smiles.
- **In hospitals, hospices and health settings**, PAT dogs ease stress, lift spirits and support recovery, offering moments of calm for patients, staff and visitors alike.
- **In over 2,000 schools**, our Read2Dogs programme helps children - especially reluctant or anxious readers - build confidence, improve literacy, and enjoy learning.

Wherever we visit, the presence of a PAT pet creates a ripple effect of joy, comfort and wellbeing. Demand for our service continues to grow, and with the support of our volunteers, partners and trustees, we are determined to meet it.



Our Values

Our organisational values articulate who we are, what we stand for, and how we behave as a charity and community. They help guide decision-making, strengthen our culture, support staff and volunteer cohesion and ensure we communicate and model the PAT 'way of working' consistently to partners, supporters and the public.

Passionate:

We care deeply about the power of the human-animal bond, bringing warmth, energy and commitment to every visit, every volunteer and every pet in our PAT community.

Ambitious:

We aim high, growing our reach and impact while maintaining the highest standards of quality, care and professionalism in everything we do.

Inclusive:

We welcome everyone who shares our belief in the joy that pets bring, celebrating diversity and ensuring PAT feels like a place where everyone belongs.

Collaborative:

We work as one PAT community, volunteers, staff, trustees, partners and supporters, listening, learning and achieving more together through trust, respect and teamwork.

Joyful:

We multiply joy wherever we go, from the gentle nudge of a nose to the laughter shared on a visit. We celebrate moments of happiness and always look for reasons to smile.

Our Impact

Reducing loneliness and isolation - PAT visits bring companionship, conversation and joy to people who may otherwise feel cut off or forgotten.

Supporting health and wellbeing - from lowering stress levels in hospitals to aiding recovery and rehabilitation, our visits have a proven positive effect on mental and physical health.

Inspiring learning and confidence - through our Read2Dogs programme, thousands of children each year gain confidence in reading, improve literacy skills and discover the joy of books.

Strengthening communities - PAT volunteers create connections across generations and backgrounds, bringing people together through the shared love of animals.

Scaling joy to meet demand - with thousands of new requests for visits every year, our mission is to grow so that more people, in more places, can experience the life-changing comfort of a PAT pet.

To find out more about our work, please do take a look at our recent [annual report](#).



About the Role

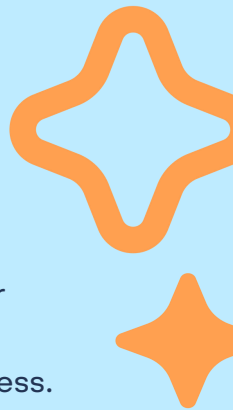
Responsibilities of the Chair:

- Provide strategic leadership to the charity and the Board, ensuring that PAT achieves its mission.
- Work in partnership with the CEO and Executive team to achieve its mission.
- Lead the Board in ensuring that it fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation.
- Optimise the relationship between the Board and PAT's staff and volunteers.
- Plan and chair the Board meetings and the AGM, with others as appropriate.
- Act as an ambassador and spokesperson for PAT.

The Chair provides oversight and guidance while also carrying out the general responsibilities of a Trustee.

Responsibilities of all trustees:

- Support and provide advice on PAT's purpose, vision, goals and activities.
- Approve operational strategies and policies, and monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Oversee PAT's financial plans and budgets and monitor and evaluate progress.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- Ensure that key risks are being identified, monitored and controlled effectively.
- Review and approve PAT's financial statements.
- Provide support and challenge to the CEO.
- Attend Board meetings, adequately prepared to contribute to discussions.
- Use independent judgment, acting legally and in good faith to promote and protect PAT's interests.
- Contribute to the broader promotion of PATS's objects, aims and reputation by applying your skills, expertise, knowledge and contacts.



Terms of Office

- Trustees are appointed for a three-year term of office, renewable for two further terms to a maximum of nine years.
- This is a voluntary position, but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Time Commitment

(Estimated at one to two days per month)

- The Board meets formally at least four times a year for between a half day and a day, depending on business. Two meetings are in-person and are held in central London. Two are virtual.
- All trustees are asked to serve on one or more Board sub-committees and working groups. This adds 3-4 shorter meetings a year, for which preparation can be significant or relatively light. Trustees may be asked to chair sub committees on a rotating basis.
- Ad hoc and occasional support through working groups and / or support to the Executive team.
- Monthly scheduled conversation with the CEO with flexibility to respond to the occasional ad hoc issue.



Who We're Looking For

Personal skills / experience / values

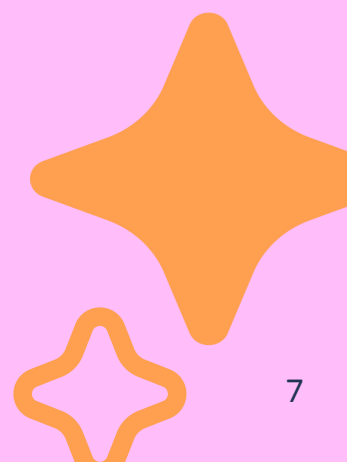
- Willingness and ability to understand and accept responsibilities and liabilities as trustees and to act in the best interests of the organisation.
- Ability to think creatively and strategically, exercise good, independent judgement and work effectively as a Board member.
- Effective communication skills and willingness to participate actively in discussion.
- A strong personal commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Essential skills / experience / values

- A strategic thinker.
- Proven leadership skills with the ability to inspire and engage trustees, staff, funders, partners and volunteers.
- A clear understanding of the charity landscape and the challenges faced by a charity of PAT's size.
- Trustee experience with a clear understanding of charity governance.
- Willingness to act as an ambassador.
- An animal lover with a firm commitment to PAT's mission and values.

Desirable skills / experience

- Familiarity with membership and/or volunteer-based organisations.
- Sector expertise - animal welfare, health or education.
- Experience of encouraging more inclusive processes to extend our charity's impact across a more diverse range of communities.



How to Apply

The TrusteeWorks Team at Reach Volunteering are supporting Pets As Therapy with this recruitment and all applications and enquiries should be sent to TrusteeWorks:

trusteeworks@reachskills.org.uk

To apply, along with your CV please send a short letter outlining:

- Why you are interested in joining our Board.
- Your relevant skills and experience.
- How you think you could apply your skills and experience to strengthen our Board.

If you'd like to have an informal conversation before applying please contact the TrusteeWorks team.

Closing date for applications is 8:00am Monday 9 March 2026.

First round interviews will take place in early April 2026.

