



Dog A.I.D. Board of Trustees Trustee Recruitment Pack 2023

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About Dog A.I.D.

Dog A.I.D. (Assistance in Disability) was established in 1992 to assist people with physical disabilities, improving their quality of life by helping them train their own pet dogs to provide assistance with day-to-day tasks and in some circumstances providing life-saving interventions.

In 1996, the Dog A.I.D. Scheme was launched nationally at Crufts and today benefits from a team of over 100 Trainers and Assessors working on a voluntary basis across the U.K. from its base in Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

As of November 2023, there are currently 108 fully qualified Dog A.I.D. partnerships throughout the country, with 83 more in training with 91 voluntary Dog A.I.D. Trainers. The training takes up to two years with both dog and disabled owner ('client') receiving specialist education from our network of trainers and attain fully qualified Assistance Dog status through three distinct stages.

Dog A.I.D. is a member of Assistance Dogs UK, a voluntary coalition of eight Assistance Dog charities that aims to promote the freedom, independence and rights of people with assistance dogs across the UK. All Assistance Dogs UK dogs adhere to the highest training and welfare standards as set out by Assistance Dogs International and the International Guide Dogs Federation.

Dog A.I.D. (Assistance in Disability)

Earlyworld House, 7 Darwin Court, Oxon Business Park, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY3 5AL
Telephone 01743 588469 | Registered Charity in England and Wales Number 1178719 | www.dogaid.org.uk

Case Study - Teresa and Sam

Teresa from North Somerset has various medical conditions including Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS) and Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (PoTS). Teresa has trained Sam, her pet dog, with the help of Dog A.I.D. to become her fully qualified Assistance Dog. Teresa was also one of the charity's Trustees, a Client Representative, 2019-2022. This is her story:

As a previous healthcare professional, Teresa often comments that Sam is her 'dogtor', having helped get the underlying diagnosis for her various medical issues pulled together. Sam is a seven-year-old Miniature Schnauzer that Teresa has had from an eight-week-old puppy.



"My shoulder first became fully dislocated on a dog walk and I was later told I had shoulder instability, leading to a long cycle of physiotherapy and the identification of a number of health issues including EDS and PoTS.

At a disability exhibition, I enquired initially about fostering Assistance Dog puppies. I was gently asked why I hadn't considered applying for a dog myself, which is where the journey began. After researching various charities, I found Dog A.I.D., which seemed the perfect option as the only organisation that helps you train your own dog.

We were both accepted by Dog A.I.D. in early 2016 and after commencing one-to-one work with our voluntary trainer, we qualified in November 2017. It was Remembrance Sunday with the 11am bugler silence and an unprecedented squirrel challenge, whilst out having a party in the park!

Sam has turned his paws, with a swish of his beard, to most tasks - many times without even being asked. He can help with emptying the washing machine, opening doors, picking up things I drop such as keys, cards, coins and receipts. He fetches the remote control and phone, even bringing his own toys back from the garden! He also senses chaotic flare ups of my sinus infections, something he is not formally trained to do; often stopping them developing into chest infections due to my asthma.

Every day it helps enormously to have that sense of independence that my Assistance Dog Sam is by my side. I often get asked if I need any help so now, with a smile on my face, I can say that Sam has it covered, often giving a demonstration to show just how amazing his skills are.

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It has taken me some years and tough times to get through to feeling that with Sam, paw in hand, I can see the light of a new life ahead; albeit a very different life to what I had expected. I have met people I never would have met, found different ways of managing challenges and sometimes just getting through the day ahead. I no longer either struggle to pick up dropped items or risk breaking things whilst trying to do so.

Training Sam alongside my Dog A.I.D. trainer has further strengthened our bond. I had always wanted a dog and my husband often commented on my 'dogdar' to notice any dog in the vicinity. The time was never right until we moved into a house with a good garden and my husband ended up working from home. Little did we know how much of a major part Sam would come to play in our lives.



Dog A.I.D. has had a huge and positive influence on us all. We like the ethos of a small charity and the benefit of being supported by a local professional trainer, as well as taking part in annual training workshops with the wider Dog A.I.D. community. I have represented the charity at Crufts, done things I never would have imagined doing years ago and am now on the Board of Trustees. Sam is a total superstar.

Overview of the Board

Dog A.I.D. is a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) and registered charity, number 1178719, with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The charity is governed by a Board comprising of up to ten Trustees.

Dog A.I.D.'s Board of Trustees is led by our Chair, Paul Miles. This is a very exciting time for the charity; in 2023 we developed our new three-year strategic plan which sets out the ambitious goals of doubling our number of volunteer trainers and doubling the number of clients we support. Dog A.I.D. recruited a new CEO in October 2023 who will be, along with the Board, accountable for delivering on this strategy.

The Trustees collectively oversee and have legal responsibility for Dog A.I.D.'s governance, management, values and strategic development.

The current Trustees are:

- Paul Miles (Chair)
- Isobel Michael (Deputy Chair)
- Andrew Binks (Treasurer)
- Gillian Kirkman (Client Representative)
- Robert Moore (Client Representative)
- Fran Murtaugh (Trainer Representative)

Profiles of the trustees available at www.dogaid.org.uk/meet-the-team.

Trustees are appointed for an initial three-year term, after which trustees would be eligible for reappointment. Three roles are elected through the charity's AGM: two Client Representatives and one Trainer Representative.

The trustees meet at least four times per year, usually online via Teams but we have plans to have some face-to-face meetings and Away Days in the future. Trustees are asked to make a commitment to attend each meeting and to represent the board on committee(s) where they have specific interests and/or expertise. Trustees are also asked to take part in training and strategic development meetings and contribute to decision making and discussion via email where necessary.

Trustee Role Description & Person Specification

Responsibilities

- Ensure that Dog A.I.D. pursues its charitable objects, as defined in the Constitution, by developing and agreeing a long-term strategy
- Ensure that Dog A.I.D. complies with its governing document (Constitution), charity law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensure that Dog A.I.D. applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects
- Safeguard the good name and values of Dog A.I.D.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of Dog A.I.D., including having appropriate policies and procedures in place
- Ensure the financial stability of Dog A.I.D.
- Declare any conflict of interest while carrying out the duties of a Trustee
- Appoint and support employees, monitor and review their performance
- Use any specific expertise, knowledge or experience to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions - this includes leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives or other issues where appropriate
- Attend all meetings, scrutinise papers in advance of meetings, and attend sub-committee meetings as appropriate
- Participate in other tasks as they arise from time to time, such as helping with fundraising and representing the charity at events or other opportunities
- Keep informed about Dog A.I.D.'s activities and wider issues which affects its work

Person Specification

- A commitment to Dog A.I.D. and its charitable objectives
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a Trustee
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively
- A willingness to speak their mind
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship (*training and information will be provided*)
- An ability to work effectively as a member of the team
- A commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

How to apply

Thank you for your interest in joining Dog A.I.D. to help to grow and develop this small charity to support many more physically Disabled people throughout the U.K. to become more independent through training their own Assistance Dog.

We are seeking to grow and strengthen our Board by recruiting passionate and committed Trustees who will help to guide the charity through the next stage of its development. We are particularly keen to recruit Trustees who have lived experience of physical disability and/or Trustees with professional experience in law, marketing, public relations and communications.

In order to apply, please send a copy of your CV and a covering letter to Isobel Michael at isobel.michael@dogaid.org.uk

Please use your covering letter to demonstrate how your skills, qualities and experience meet each of the requirements listed in the Role Description, and how they have helped you achieve relevant, positive results.

The Board of Trustees will review the applications and invite shortlisted applicants to interview via Teams.

If you have any questions or would like to have a confidential conversation about the role with one of the Trustees before making your application, please contact isobel.michael@dogaid.org.uk