

Supportability
Making life better for
people with disabilities

Trustee Recruitment Pack



A message from the Chair of Trustees



Let me welcome you to Supportability and thank you for taking the time to read this candidate pack for the role of Trustee on the Board.

I hope that, once you have read it, you will know whether you feel that you are the right person to join us and, if you are, then I hope that you will apply.

I've been a Trustee for 7 years and I chose to be one because I wanted to contribute my time and skills freely to a Charity that really needed them. To me being a Trustee is about being an objective, critical friend and someone that the management team can turn to for independent advice. I must also be prepared to voice my concerns or step in when things are not going quite so well.

Our role as Trustees is difficult in that most of us have full-time jobs, we cannot be around all the time and may not even be sector experts. That said, we are a dedicated and considerate group, all of whom are absolutely committed to Supportability. There are no politics or factions on our Board, and no conflicts of interests tolerated. We really are one unified body and get on well with the Senior Leadership Team.

Everything that we do at Supportability is ultimately for the people we support and this needs to be done with long-term sustainability in mind. You can see from our annual report that we are financially stable and have realistic plans to move to new operations as soon as we find a suitable new home, and you will be part of that choice for our future.

The role is really important to me, to the Board, the Senior Leadership Team, and in fact all the employees and volunteers at our charity. We need exactly the right person. I do hope that we can work together with you for the future of Supportability.

Rob Armstrong, Chair of the Board of Trustees for Supportability.



This role truly matters — to our Board, our Senior Leadership Team, and to every employee and volunteer across Supportability. We hope the right person will join us in shaping our future.



About us



We're Supportability

Since 1953, we have been supporting children, young people and adults with a wide range of complex physical and learning disabilities. Our aim is to enable those with a learning and physical disability to live a fulfilled and independent life.

How do we help?

Put simply – we 'Support'.

We're passionate about providing quality support services that enable those with complex learning and physical disabilities to access and use their inherent capabilities. Supportability enables those with a learning and physical disability to enjoy and take part in everyday life experiences.

Our Vision

Where people with a learning and physical disability are present and active participants in their local community and have the opportunity to live fulfilled lives.

Our Mission

To stand alongside the people we support, providing them with the skills, opportunities and confidence to participate as they would choose in the life of their communities.



Our vision, mission and values

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Our Values



At Supportability we believe diversity is essential to our continued success. Embracing different perspectives, backgrounds and experiences fosters creativity and collaboration.

In addition to this, our values are not just principles, they are our foundation and drive how we work together and serve the people we support.

By staying true to our values, we will ensure consistency, integrity and a shared sense of purpose across all levels across our organisation.

Our Services



Day Opportunities

We offer activities at our day centre in Heaton Moor to adults who have multiple disabilities and complex needs.

Activities include accessible yoga, computers and IT, cookery, crafts, dance, days out, music, relaxation, sports, Wheelers accessible cycling and more.

Leisure Choices

Our daytime, Saturday and evening leisure groups offer a wide range of both outdoor and indoor activities in Stockport and the surrounding areas, providing opportunities to socialise, keep active and have fun.

Activities include; Accessible cycling at Wythenshawe and Woodbank Parks, golf at the Trafford Centre, indoor bowling, outdoor archery, trips to museums and galleries, walks in country parks and more.



Residential Care

Supportability offers residential care at Cheddle Lodge, a purpose-built home located close to Cheadle town centre. We can accommodate up to 13 residents aged 18 plus.

Cheddle Lodge specialises in providing care and support to adults who have learning disabilities and complex needs.



Meet our board of Trustees



Rob Armstrong, Chair

Rob does not have a direct personal connection to the charity. He believes he can make a genuine difference to Supportability by maintaining a completely independent viewpoint.



Nikki Guy, Deputy Chair

Nikki decided to leave her job in retail when her son was born with Downs Syndrome. She became a Trustee for a local Stockport charity called Sharecare and served for 5 years before they merged with Supportability in 2005. Since then she have been a member of the charity's Board. Her son has attended some of the services offered by Supportability.



Roy M Dudley-Southern MBE

Roy has lived in Stockport all his life and been a wheelchair user since he contracted polio in early childhood. He was lucky enough to have had a good education and to graduate with a degree in Economics and International Politics. His career of 44 years was as a Senior Manager in the NHS retiring as a Strategic Planner and Specialised Services Commissioner, working regionally and nationally, in 2012. He became a Trustee of Supportability in 2010 and hopes he is using his experience at work and of living with disability to help the charity in supporting disabled people and their carers to live fuller lives.



Maria Repanos

Maria is a solicitor specialising in clinical negligence, and represents claimants across the UK at inquests and in catastrophic cases such as those involving birth and brain injuries. She has two children and lives in Stockport. She joined the board of trustees in 2007 as she was keen to make a positive contribution to a local charity, where her legal skills and experience in acting for individuals with disabilities and complex needs could be of benefit.



Helen Roberts

Helen is an Occupational Therapist and works for the Health Service. She is the designated Trustee for Safeguarding and supports the Board to ensure that all activity undertaken meets Supportability's safeguarding responsibility.



Jonathan Bloom

Jonathan qualified as a Chartered Surveyor in the early 1990's. His early career was spent with the Inland Revenue; however, he has spent the last twenty plus years working for a multi-national trader. He first joined the Board of Trustees in 2008, and following a couple of years away, he re-joined in 2021. He hopes his professional experience, especially in property, will be of assistance to the charity.



Natalie Hinchcliffe

Natalie I have enjoyed attending Board meetings and visiting Cheddle Lodge. She has special interests in finance and risk management.

Trustee Role Description



Introduction

Our Trustees play a vital role in making sure that Supportability achieves its core purpose and oversee the overall management and administration of the charity.

They also ensure that Supportability has a clear strategy and that our work and goals are in line with our vision. Just as importantly, they support and challenge the Senior Leadership Team to enable Supportability to grow and thrive and, through this, achieve our mission.

Board members have a collective responsibility. This means that Trustees always act as a group and not as individuals.

Duties:

- Support and provide advice on Supportability's purpose, vision, goals and activities.
- Approve operational strategies and policies and monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Oversee Supportability'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 Supportability's financial statements.
- Provide support and challenge to Supportability's CEO in the exercise of their delegated authority and affairs.
- Keep abreast of changes in Supportability's operating environment.
- Contribute to regular reviews of Supportability's own governance.
- Attend Board meetings, adequately prepared to contribute to discussions.
- Use independent judgment, acting legally and in good faith to promote and protect Supportability's interests, to the exclusion of their own personal and/or any third-party interests.
- Contribute to the broader promotion of Supportability's objects, aims and reputation by applying your skills, expertise, knowledge and contacts.

Trustee Role Description

As a small charity, there will be times when the trustees will need to be actively involved beyond Board meetings. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, presenting externally, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

What we are looking for

We are looking for people willing to bring energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the role, and who will broaden the diversity of thinking on our board. You do not need previous governance experience – we will provide a full induction and training.

Personal skills and qualities

- Willingness and ability to understand and accept their 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 equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Enthusiasm for our vision and mission.
- Willingness to lead according to our charity values.
- Commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Terms of appointment

Terms of office

- Trustees are appointed for a 3 year term of office, renewal for 3 further years.
- This is a voluntary position, but reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

Time commitment

- Attending all Board meetings quarterly. Currently meetings are held in person at Granville House
- Attending AGM, Audit sign-off and specific development or training.
- Attending Business Strategy/Budget workshop annually.
- Time allocated to prepare for the Board Meeting by reading papers and posing questions to the Senior Leadership Team.

Committee membership

Ad hoc and occasional support through working groups and / or support to the Senior Leadership Team.

We need you



We welcome interest from anyone with the required skills, experience and genuine desire to further the work of Supportability. However, we have recently undertaken a skills audit of our Board and identified the following areas where we would be particularly interested in exploring:

Parent or carer of a child

As we seek to grow in the area of provision for children and young people, it would benefit us to have hands-on experience within the Board. We currently have the experience from parents of adults and that is of great benefit to us.

Social Care/Social Work – Local Government

The vast majority of our work comes from Local Government, through social work services in their broadest sense. This will always be the case; however, we have not had the benefit of having Trustees with such experience for many years and it would help to have someone on the Board with experience, knowledge and understanding from this perspective.

Clinician/Nurse/Therapist

As the nature of need changes, we are without doubt seeing an increase in the number of people being referred to us with more complex health and social care needs. This includes additional needs and different conditions where we are reliant on the support of allied health professionals to provide support. This too is only going to continue, so it would help us if we had someone on the Board with some experience of working within this sector.

How to apply



If you're interested in becoming one of our Trustees, we would love to hear from you!

Please email Rachel Chadwick, Head of HR at hr@supportability.org.uk your CV and a covering letter telling us about yourself, explaining why you're suitable for the role and why you would like to be one of our Trustees, highlighting any relevant skills or experience.

You will also need to confirm that you are eligible to become a Trustee (have not been subject to a Charity Commission order of disqualification or would be unable to gain satisfactory DBS clearance) and declare any conflict of interests that may affect your potential appointment to the Board (for example, related to a staff member or Trustee).

Once your application has been reviewed, if successful, we will then arrange an informal meeting with the CEO and the Chair of Trustees, to discuss your application in greater detail.

Please note that successful appointments will be subject to an enhanced DBS including barred list check, amongst other key vetting requirements. Please note that it is also an offence to apply for a role if you are barred from engaging in regulated activity.

Our Commitment to you

We're committed to creating a genuinely inclusive organisation where everyone feels valued, respected, and able to thrive. Our recruitment process is designed to remove barriers and give every applicant a fair and positive experience. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds and lived experiences, and we actively encourage candidates to let us know if they need any adjustments at any stage, we're intentional about building an environment where difference is recognised as a strength.

Supportability

Making life better for people with disabilities



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