



Registered Charity 1125679
Registered Company: 6599429

Trustee Application Information 2021:

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Welcome from the Chair of SWAN Board of Trustees

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee.

South West Advocacy Network (SWAN) is looking for new Trustees to strengthen and diversify our Governing Board. Over 20 years we have established an excellent reputation for providing quality advocacy services across Somerset, Bath & North East Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Bristol, Wiltshire and the Isle of Wight. We want to continue developing our Board, ensuring it is as inclusive as possible, and representative of the diverse communities and people that we support.

If you share our vision of providing a sustainable model of independent advocacy to people living in, and around, the south-west region, and believe that everyone should be empowered and supported to have a voice in the decisions that impact on their lives, then we would like to hear from you.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Claire Tough", written in a cursive style.

Claire Tough
Chair of the Board



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About us:

SWAN is an incorporated charity that was initially established in 1999 to provide multiple advocacy services throughout Wiltshire. Over subsequent years the organisation expanded its services by securing additional contracts and funding to provide other advocacy services across, and around, the South and South West of England.

SWAN's mission is to ensure a clear voice for vulnerable adults through the provision of effective and inclusive independent advocacy based on the principles of equality and fairness; and tailored to meet the needs and wishes of each individual.

Our services operate under the auspices of the Advocacy Charter and are subjected to accreditation under the 'Advocacy Quality Performance Mark' every 3 years.

Our current services include:

- **Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA):** supporting people who do not have an appropriate person represent them on issues concerning medical treatment or medium and long-term hospital or care home residency.
- **Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA):** for people detained under the Mental Health Act
- **Care Act Advocacy:** for those receiving or needing support and care under the 2014 Care Act.
- **Generic, or Community Advocacy;** case-by-case representation for most other marginalised groups, such as people who have learning difficulties, physical health problems and acquired brain injury.
- **Health Complaints Advocacy (IHCA):** for those who need support to pursue a complaint against the NHS.
- **Victims of Crime Advocacy (VOCAS):** supporting people who have been victims of crime
- **Be Heard:** Bespoke self-advocacy projects operating in each of our service areas, delivering self-advocacy training to tailored groups of individuals.

For full information about our range of advocacy services and to meet our dedicated team please visit our website: <https://swanadvocacy.org.uk/>

The Trustee's Role:

The Board of Trustees are jointly and severally responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of SWAN, its financial health, the probity of its activities and developing the organisation's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the agreed strategy, and legal and regulatory guidelines.

The Trustees support the current Strategic Plan and help drive the changes identified, support the Chief Executive, oversee strategic financial planning, and work collaboratively and creatively with external partners and complementary organisations.

The Statutory Duties of a Trustee:

These are set out in the Charity Commission's document- "**The Essential Trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do**" which can be found on their web site:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>

In summary Trustee duties are:

- To ensure the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- To make sure that the charity is carrying out the purposes for which it is set up (as set out in its Governing Document, the articles of association), and no other purpose; and applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives
- To comply with the charity's governing document and required legislation
- To act in the charity's best interests and safeguard the good name and values of the organisation
- To manage the charity's resources responsibly
- To act with reasonable care and skill and contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To ensure the charity is accountable and complies with statutory accounting and reporting requirements

Who are we looking for?

We are seeking trustees who:

- Share SWAN's core values,
- Have a commitment to our work
- Understand the duties of a trustee
- Enjoy working as part of a team
- Are able to contribute strategically across a wide range of issues
- Have skills and expertise in one or more of the following
 - Business/service development:
 - The Criminal Justice system
 - Social or Health Care services
 - Third Sector advocacy or care services
 - Digital developments and IT
 - Communications and public relations
 - Civil Law
 - Finance & Resource management

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It would be an advantage if new trustees were based in our main operating areas of Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Bath, Bristol or the Isle of Wight so they can apply their local knowledge to help develop SWAN's services in these areas.

A willingness to travel across our service delivery area is essential.

Eligibility:

You cannot act as a Trustee if you are disqualified under the Charities Act unless your disqualification has been waived by the Commission. Reasons for disqualification include if you:

- Are disqualified as a company director*
- Have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception (such as fraud*)
- Are an undischarged bankrupt (or subject to sequestration in Scotland), or have a current composition or arrangement including an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) with your creditors*
- Have been removed as a trustee of any charity by the Commission (or the court) because of misconduct or mismanagement*
- Are on the sex offenders' register*

There are further restrictions for charities that work with children or adults at risk. See section 3 of the *"The Essential Trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do"* for more information.

Please note all trustees will require a current Disclosure and Barring Certificate (DBS) which will then need to be updated every 3 years.

Time Commitment:

- SWAN Trustees serve a 3-year term and are eligible for re-appointment for two additional terms.
- Core meetings are held at approximately 6 weekly intervals. These consist of:
 - Quarterly Board meetings.
 - More informal quarterly Board Evaluation Meetings with managers and employees
- Trustees are encouraged to lend their skills and experience as appropriate to relevant working groups or sub committees
- There may be a maximum of 3 'Away Days' for Employees and Trustees each year
- Meetings with external stakeholders as and when appropriate
- Attendance at training sessions as appropriate to their role, experience, and expertise
- On average, in total, your commitment will amount to approximately 8 to 10 hours per month.

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How to apply:

If you are eligible to serve as a Trustee and wish to apply, please send us:

- A supporting statement illustrating your fit for this role against the criteria and experience sought, and crucially, your motivation for applying for the role
- A current comprehensive CV, including details of two referees (who will not be contacted without your prior knowledge and consent)
- Your signed Trustee Eligibility Declaration (page 7 of this document)

Applications should be sent to recruitment@swanadvocacy.org.uk



Vikki Holloway
Chief Executive Officer



Peter Harding
Chair of the Board Working Group

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TRUSTEE ELIGIBILITY DECLARATION

By completing and signing this form, you declare that you:

Are willing to act as a trustee of the organisation named above

Are not prevented from acting as a Trustee for any of the following reasons:

- ☐ have an unspent conviction for one or more of the offences listed here *
- ☐ have an IVA, debt relief order and/or a bankruptcy order
- ☐ have been removed as a trustee in England, Scotland, or Wales (by the Charity Commission or Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator)
- ☐ have been removed from being in the management or control of any body in Scotland (under relevant legislation)
- ☐ have been disqualified by the Charity Commission
- ☐ are a disqualified company director
- ☐ are a designated person for the purposes of antiterrorism legislation
- ☐ are on the sex offenders register
- ☐ have been found in contempt of court for making (or causing to be made) a false statement
- ☐ have been found guilty of disobedience to an order or direction of the Charity Commission

Name:

Address:

Signature:

Date:

* https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/673797/Auto_disqualification_table_v1.1.pdf