

## **Trustee Selection Process**

### **Interviews:**

**Venue for Interviews** – The Rufus Centre, Flitwick, Bedfordshire

**Interview Panel** – Jill Pick, Gillian Ormston, and Melanie Hawman

**Service User Panel** – To be confirmed

**Presentation** – 10-minute presentation on the ideas you would bring to the Board for further development of The Disability Resource Centre



# Trustee Information Pack

December 2023

## Foreword

The Disability Resource Centre will be thirty years old in 2024.

A group of disabled people with a vision to create a one-stop-shop for disabled people were the driving force behind the creation of The Disability Resource Centre. Following a piece of local research which provided the evidence needed to secure funding they formed a steering group and they worked with partners to form the charity.

The first Board of Trustees included some of those founding members and since then many others have given their time and expertise. They have overseen the work and strategy of the charity, through challenges and successes and ensure that we fulfil our charitable objectives to support disabled people.

We are recruiting new Trustees who would like to use their knowledge, skills and experience to ensure that the charity continues to fulfil its purpose in the years to come. We particularly need Trustees with experience in finance/accounting, business, health and social care and the charity sector as well as people with lived experience of disability or as a carer, to help us ensure that disabled people are at the centre of all we do. We are also looking to diversify our board of Trustees by encouraging applications from people from different backgrounds who understand the needs of their own communities in relation to disabilities.

So much has been achieved since the charity was set up in 1994 but there is still more to do. You can find out more about [our history](#) by visiting our website.

We are looking for people who live our values with enthusiasm and drive to help us achieve even more in the coming years.

## **An introduction from our Chair of Trustees**

As a recently appointed Chair of Trustees, I am committed to helping the Disability Resource Centre make a real difference to individuals living with their disabilities. I am passionate about supporting The Disability Resource Centre in achieving our vision, mission and values, as well as our strategic objectives. We work together as a team of Trustees, which I am proud to lead. Our recruitment of new Trustees will enhance our team to ensure that The Disability Resource Centre continues to make its unique and vital contribution to the disabled community.

Research has shown that 96% of Trustees say they have gained new skills. I bring many valuable organisational skills, from my public sector career, such as finance and HR. However, I have learnt a huge amount about running a charity working alongside committed people from a variety of backgrounds, who are also sharing their experiences to ensure that the charity makes an impact.

I have benefitted from invaluable opportunities to learn however, I also value the opportunity to contribute proactively and give back to the disability community, of which I am also a member through both congenital physical conditions and additional disabilities developed later in life.

We worked hard to continue to offer support during COVID and beyond and looking to the future are working together with external partners to ensure we provide a sustainable service to empower people to live full and fruitful lives alongside their disability.

Gillian Ormston  
Chair of Trustees

# Board of Trustees

## Gillian Ormston: Chair of the Board of Trustees



Previously Vice-Chair, Gillian has taken the role of Chair and will continue to drive the charity forward with a passion for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion with the intention of widening community participation on the board. Gillian has been a supporter of The Disability Resource Centre for over 10 years, both working as a supplier of confidence building programmes and latterly as a Trustee of the charity. She brings a wealth of experience from public sector senior and strategic management roles ranging from the Ministry of Justice, Education, and Policing roles. Gillian is currently the Chief of Staff to the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner. Previously, Gillian spent 4 years with Hertfordshire Police as the Beds, Cambs and Herts Police Talent Manager which brings HR, leadership, skills development, project management and emotional intelligence skills to the board. Previously, she ran her own business, Intelligent Awakenings Ltd, in coaching and personal development which brings additional skills of business development, finance and commercial acumen.

## Jill Pick – Vice-Chair



Previously the Chair of the Board of Trustees Jill remains committed to The Disability Resource Centre, supporting the new Chair in taking the charity forward. Jill is a retired social worker who has worked in the health and social care sectors, specialising in physical disability and sensory impairment. She has extensive experience with the local voluntary sector. Jill's relationship with The Disability Resource Centre began in 1993 when she was appointed as the Development Officer. As a founding member and The Disability Resource Centre's first employee, she was responsible for setting up the organisation as a charity, finding premises, establishing partners and setting up its first services; the Disability Information and Equipment Advice services. She has been a trustee for many years and was Chair from 2016 to 2023.

## **Melanie Hawman - Chief Executive Officer**



Melanie is the Chief Executive Officer and responsible for ensuring the vision and values of are lived and aligned with the purpose of The Disability Resource Centre. She also must ensure that the charity remains competitive as a provider of services to disabled people, those with health conditions and increasingly the older local population. After a career working nationally in Welfare to Work, Melanie brings a wealth of experience and qualification in leadership and management in public, private and third sector organisations. As a person with lived experience in acquired disability she understands the need for personal and professional change and disability that may be invisible to others.

## **Clare Copleston - Operations Manager**



Clare has a wealth of knowledge and experience working within the health and social care sector and as a qualified teacher. She has developed a deep understanding of the unique challenges faced by people disabilities and is passionate about making a positive impact on their lives. Clare's dedication to continuous improvement is evident in her commitment to promoting the highest standards of customer service and quality. At The Disability Resource Centre, Clare ensures that every interaction with service users is both meaningful and empowering, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment.

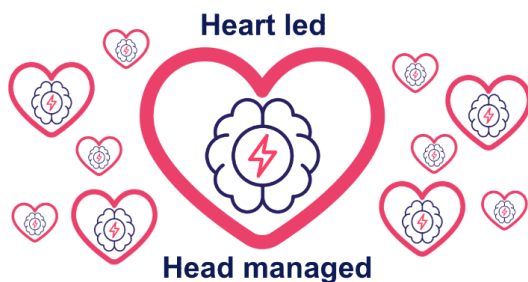
Full details of the Trustee and Operational Management Team at the Disability Resource Centre can be found on the [\*\*Meet the Team\*\*](#) page on our website.

# About The Disability Resource Centre

## Our Vision



The Disability Resource Centre is an award-winning charity. We are here so that disabled people and their families have somewhere to turn if they need help in any situation. We work with local communities to support anyone with a disability or health condition in Milton Keynes, Luton and across Bedfordshire. We work together as a team of Trustees and operational staff along with our CEO in a 'Heart Led, Head Managed' approach.



This allows us to take a fully rounded approach to how we run The Disability Resource Centre, considering both people, welfare and the tasks required to deliver

- Benefits and money management advice
- Disability advice and support for people with health conditions
- Help with food banks
- Carers support
- Support for your wellbeing and mental health
- Help, advice and free support with employment, volunteering and training

You can find out more about [what we do on our website](#).

## Our DRC Values

Our values are important to us and when completing your application form you need to consider how you can evidence your ability to live these values in your role as a Trustee.

### Creativity

Board of Trustee behaviours can greatly influence the level of creativity within an organisation by

1. Encouraging and supporting risk-taking: Trustees can encourage creativity by creating an environment where it's safe to take calculated risks. They can provide resources and support for new initiatives and ideas.
2. Fostering diversity of thought: A diverse board of trustees can bring in different perspectives and ideas, which can lead to more creative solutions. Trustees can encourage diversity of thought by recruiting members with different backgrounds and experiences.
3. Emphasising innovation and creativity: Trustees can prioritise innovation and creativity by setting goals and metrics that reward these behaviours. They can also create programs or initiatives that encourage creativity and experimentation.
4. Providing resources for creative development: Trustees can provide resources, such as training and development programs, that help employees develop their creative skills. This can include workshops, mentorship programs, and access to tools and technology that support creativity.
5. Celebrating success and learning from failure: Trustees can celebrate successes and learn from failures to encourage a culture of creativity. By recognising and rewarding innovative ideas, trustees can encourage employees to continue to think creatively.

Overall, the board of trustees can play a crucial role in fostering creativity within an organisation by creating an environment that supports and rewards creative thinking and innovation.

### Empathy

Empathy is an important quality that can help board of trustees to better understand the needs and perspectives of their stakeholders by

1. Actively listening: Trustees can demonstrate empathy by actively listening to the concerns and feedback of their stakeholders. This means taking the time to understand the other person's perspective without interrupting or judging.

2. Seeking feedback: Trustees can also show empathy by seeking feedback from their stakeholders on a regular basis. This can include soliciting feedback through surveys, focus groups, or other forms of direct engagement.
3. Engaging with stakeholders: Trustees can demonstrate empathy by engaging directly with stakeholders, such as through town hall meetings, community events, or other forums for dialogue.
4. Prioritising stakeholder needs: Trustees can demonstrate empathy by prioritising the needs of their stakeholders in their decision-making. This means considering the impact of decisions on all stakeholders, not just the board's own interests.
5. Building relationships: Trustees can demonstrate empathy by building relationships with their stakeholders over time. This means taking the time to understand their needs, interests, and concerns on a personal level.

Overall, the board of Trustees can play an important role in promoting empathy within the organisation by prioritising stakeholder needs, actively listening, seeking feedback, and engaging directly with stakeholders. By demonstrating empathy, trustees can build trust and create a more inclusive and collaborative culture.

## Collaboration

Collaboration is essential for the success of any organisation, and the board of trustees can play a key role in promoting a collaborative culture by

1. Encouraging open communication: Trustees can encourage collaboration by promoting open and honest communication between all members of the organisation. This means creating a culture where all ideas are welcome and respected.
2. Supporting teamwork: Trustees can support collaboration by providing resources and support for team-based projects and initiatives. This can include providing funding, resources, and recognition for successful team collaborations.
3. Fostering trust: Trustees can encourage collaboration by fostering a culture of trust within the organisation. This means creating an environment where individuals feel comfortable sharing ideas and working together towards common goals.
4. Encouraging cross-functional collaboration: Trustees can promote collaboration across departments and teams by encouraging cross-functional collaboration. This means bringing together individuals from different parts of the organisation to work on common projects or initiatives.
5. Promoting transparency: Trustees can encourage collaboration by promoting transparency in decision-making and operations. This means providing regular updates and feedback to all members of the organisation.



Overall, the board of Trustees can promote collaboration within the organisation by encouraging open communication, supporting teamwork, fostering trust, encouraging cross-functional collaboration, and promoting transparency. By promoting collaboration, trustees can help to create a more effective and cohesive organisation.

## Quality

Quality is a key aspect of any organisation's success, and the board of trustees can play an important role in promoting a culture of quality within the organisation by

1. **Establishing quality standards:** Trustees can promote quality by establishing clear quality standards for the organisation. This means setting expectations for quality across all aspects of the organisation's operations, from products and services to customer service and employee performance.
2. **Ensuring accountability:** Trustees can promote quality by ensuring accountability across the organisation. This means holding individuals and teams responsible for meeting quality standards and taking action when standards are not met.
3. **Providing resources:** Trustees can promote quality by providing the necessary resources, including funding, personnel, and technology, to support quality initiatives. This means investing in the tools and systems needed to promote quality across the organisation.
4. **Encouraging continuous improvement:** Trustees can promote quality by encouraging a culture of continuous improvement within the organisation. This means regularly reviewing and evaluating processes and procedures to identify areas for improvement.
5. **Prioritising customer satisfaction:** Trustees can promote quality by prioritising customer satisfaction. This means putting the needs and preferences of customers at the centre of all decisions and actions.

Overall, the board of Trustees can play a critical role in promoting a culture of quality within the organisation by establishing clear quality standards, ensuring accountability, providing resources, encouraging continuous improvement, and prioritising customer satisfaction. By promoting quality, trustees can help to create a more successful and sustainable organisation.

## Commitment

Commitment is a critical element of success for any organisation, and the board of trustees can play an important role in fostering a culture of commitment by

1. **Leading by example:** Trustees can promote commitment by leading by example. This means demonstrating a strong commitment to the organisation's mission and values and modelling behaviours that reflect this commitment.
2. **Providing clarity:** Trustees can promote commitment by providing clarity around the organisation's goals and objectives. This means ensuring that all

stakeholders understand the organisation's vision and how their individual contributions support that vision.

3. Recognising and rewarding commitment: Trustees can promote commitment by recognising and rewarding individuals and teams who demonstrate a strong commitment to the organisation's goals and objectives. This means acknowledging and celebrating success and progress.
4. Encouraging personal and professional development: Trustees can promote commitment by encouraging personal and professional development for all stakeholders. This means providing opportunities for learning and growth that support individual and organisational goals.
5. Ensuring resources and support: Trustees can promote commitment by ensuring that stakeholders have the necessary resources and support to achieve their goals. This means providing access to tools, training, and mentorship that enable individuals to succeed.

Overall, the board of Trustees can promote commitment within the organisation by leading by example, providing clarity, recognising and rewarding commitment, encouraging personal and professional development, and ensuring resources and support. By fostering a culture of commitment, trustees can help to create a more engaged and motivated organisation.

## The Difference We Make

So, we could tell you lots about how we think we **make a difference**, however, have a look at the website and you'll see lots of updates from the people we work with. We are very proud of the difference we make and are keen to hear from you about the difference you will make by joining our board of Trustees.

# Role description for Trustees of The Disability Resource Centre

The duties of a Trustee are:

1. To ensure that the charity complies with its governing document, charity law, company law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
2. To ensure that the charity pursues its charitable objects as defined in its governing document.
3. To ensure that the charity applies its resources exclusively in furtherance of its objects, i.e. the charity must not spend money on activities, which are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are.
4. To contribute actively to the board of Trustees' role of giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
5. To safeguard the good name and values of the charity.
6. To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the charity.
7. To ensure the financial stability of the charity.
8. To protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.
9. To appoint and support the Chief Executive Officer and monitor their performance.
10. In addition to the above statutory duties of all trustees, each trustee should use any specific knowledge or experience he or she may have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This will involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, and providing advice and guidance requested by the board on new initiatives or other issues relevant to the area of the charity's work in which the Trustee has special expertise.

The Board of Trustees meets every two months at our offices in Flitwick.

Trustees are asked to join at least one committee where they can use their skills to discuss matters in more detail. These are Personnel Committee, Services and Marketing Committee and Finance and General Purposes Committee. They meet every two months and are currently held online.

Trustees will need time to read the reports in preparation for meetings.

Individual Trustees often contribute in other ways supporting working groups or task and finish activity.

## Trustee Application Form

<b>Application number</b>
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Please submit a short Curriculum Vitae (2 page max) together with this Application Form. Please note that this is in addition to the information given on the application form, not in substitution for it. The Equal Opportunities Monitoring Information should be completed and submitted separately to [gillian.ormston@drcbeds.org](mailto:gillian.ormston@drcbeds.org)

This form should be completed in black ink or black type.

Personal details

Surname	<input type="text"/>	Home/mobile: (Please indicate which)	
Other names	<input type="text"/>	Home	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>	Other	<input type="text"/>
		Email	<input type="text"/>

Do you have any previous Volunteer/Trustee experience?

Yes  No  (please check appropriate box)

If yes, please give details:

I understand and am able and willing to commit the necessary time, preparation and effort to the proper discharge of the responsibilities of a trustee.

Please tell us how you fulfil the criteria.

In each section below, please give a brief outline of how your skills, knowledge and experience fit the criteria. Please give demonstrable examples wherever possible to support your application.

Summarise why you want to be a Trustee and how you feel you could contribute to the Trustees' work for the charity? Please limit your response to 300 words.

#### Knowledge and Experience

- A clear understanding of the role of a trustee and the willingness and the commitment to devote the necessary time, preparation and effort to the proper discharge of the responsibilities of a trustee
- Experience of operating in a senior role
- A broad knowledge of social, charitable, management and governance issues

Please limit your response to 250 words.

#### Abilities and skills

- A strategic thinker
- Effective communicator: clear, concise and able to adapt to the needs of the audience
- Proactive, willing to offer constructive challenge and support judgments
- A team player, respecting different views and able to work with Board colleagues and the executive
- Able to build strong relationships and champion the work of the charity.

Please limit your response to 250 words.

#### Our Values – Evidence your personal qualities which match our values e.g.

- An empathy with and/or support for the aims and values of The Disability Resource Centre.
- A commitment to inclusion and diversity

Please limit your response to 250 words.

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### References

Please give the name and address of two referees who can comment on your suitability for this role. Please note references from relatives are not acceptable.

Name

Name

Position

Position

Organisation

Organisation

Address

Address

Telephone

Telephone

Email

Email

Signature

Date