



Autism at Kingwood

**BRIEF FOR THE POSITION OF CHAIRMAN
AUTISM AT KINGWOOD**

APRIL 2019



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WHO WE ARE

Many thanks for your interest on serving on the Autism at Kingwood Board.

2019 sees us celebrating its 25th anniversary year. Autism at Kingwood was created as the result of brave and decisive action by parents looking for the right support for their son; refusing to accept the only option available for their autistic adult son was a locked ward in a hospital. Dame Stephanie Shirley established The Kingwood Trust (as it was known then) in 1994 when she purchased a house on Kingwood Common, Berkshire, and employed caring people to look after her son.

Now, in 2019 Autism at Kingwood employs approximately 300 people, has a turnover of approximately £6 million and last year provided a service to more than 400 autistic adults.

With the Head Office based in Lower Earley (Berkshire) and satellite offices in Didcot and Witney (Oxfordshire) we provide a range of support services for autistic adults across the Thames Valley, operating mainly in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. We provide traditional 1:1 support for approximately 140 people living in the community in a range of accommodation settings.

A lot of people live independently in shared accommodation and receive support tailored to meet their needs. This could be assistance with shopping, house work and the provision of personal care. Some people live with their parents and the support we provide may be to access leisure activities or attend develop new skills in readiness for independent living.

Each employee, trustee and volunteer plays a part in the delivery of services to adults with autism, each receiving autism training regardless of their role. One of the Charity's key strengths is its personality and the culture; that give it the determination and enthusiasm to make a difference.



WHAT WE DO

Autism is a lifelong development disorder and a spectrum condition and affects each person differently. Autism at Kingwood exists to improve the quality of life for autistic adults. Our work is centred around the people we support, doing our very best to assist and enable them to live the life they choose. We want to make our vision, our mission and our 3 year strategy a reality.

Our vision is ‘a world that embraces autism’.

Our mission is ‘to enable each person we support to develop greater independence, discover their potential and enjoy a good quality of life’.

Our approach is founded on the principles of positive behaviour support: we get to know the people we support with particular emphasis on developing an understanding of their preferred and most successful methods of communication. We can then learn how to listen effectively to what people want and need, helping to reduce the number of difficult situations and ultimately aiming to make life more enjoyable.

We have developed a strategy for 2019 – 2022 that focuses on 5 objectives that we believe will help us to achieve our vision and mission.



Success of that strategy is dependent on the people executing it. Therefore we strive to achieve our mission through working with anyone who can help: partners, autistic people, people we support, relatives of autistic people; professionals and our workforce.

We want to ensure equality and life choices are not limited because someone is autistic.

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Our current Chairman will stand down after 20 years in June 2019. Autism at Kingwood is seeking a dynamic, experienced and committed individual to work with our Board of Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team in the pivotal role of Chairman.

The new Chairman will command the confidence of Trustees and enjoy working with a dedicated team exploring new ideas and projects, alongside the delivery of existing services. Ideally the new Chairman will have a familiarity of autism and how it can affect people differently, however this is not essential as training can be provided.

We are looking for someone with a track record of success in strategic and operational leadership and experience as a non-executive director, Trustee or Chairman. You will have a keen understanding of governance and the ability to combine good judgment with excellent strategic and communication skills. You may already be a Chairman of Trustees, or looking for the opportunity to chair your first board. You will lead the Board of Trustees to ensure that the charity is properly governed and managed with a key focus on maximising the 'quality of life for autistic adults'.

With the capacity to think creatively and offer fresh perspective you will bring the ability to engage at all levels internally and externally.

Experience

- Experience of providing leadership at a senior strategic level within organisations of similar scale and complexity.
- Experience of charity governance and working with or as part of a Board of Trustees.
- Significant experience of chairing meetings.
- Experience of external representation, delivering presentations and managing stakeholders.

Knowledge and Skills

- Strong leadership skills, with the ability to motivate others and bring people together.
- Sound financial acumen and understanding of charity finance issues.
- A good understanding and attitude to charity governance and the non-executive nature of a Chairman role.

Personal qualities

- Strategic vision and good judgement.
- A disposition to listen and value others and the ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment.
- Willingness and ability to devote the necessary time and effort to the proper discharge of the responsibilities of a trustee
- Strong interpersonal and relationship-building abilities including a willingness to represent Autism at Kingwood in an ambassadorial capacity.
- A passion for the welfare of vulnerable adults.

This is an unpaid voluntary position for which proper and reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed.

The initial term will be for three years with the expectation that it will be renewed for a second term of three years.

HOW WE ARE GOVERNED

The Autism at Kingwood Board of Trustees currently has 5 members with a live advertisement currently in place for up to 2 more. The skills of existing members are varied and particularly relevant for the services Autism at Kingwood delivers.

Sandra Meadows, Vice Chairman: Director & Human Resources Consultant
David Swann, Treasurer
Dr Stephen Carnaby: Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Rebecca Vickers: Solicitor and mother of an autistic son.

The time commitment for the Chairman is approximately 16 days a year to meet existing governance arrangements. The Chairman would ideally need to give a further 6 days a year to devote time to other matters i.e. support to the Chief Executive; liaise with other trustee colleagues between Board and attend 3 x family meetings/celebrations.

The Board meets in Reading four times a year and the charity's governance also benefits from sub-committee meetings: Finance & Development; Risk & Care Practice and HR Committee. Skype and tele-conferencing can negate the need for physical attendance at some of the meetings.

Trustees typically choose their preferred sub-committee: the Treasurer chairs four meetings of the Finance sub-committee, the Legal Trustee chairs four meetings of the sub-committee dealing with the risks and practice that relate to the work of the charity and the Vice Chairman leads the HR Committee. The Chairman currently attends each of the sub committees.

We are keen to achieve a more diverse Board of Trustees and welcome trustee applications from all sections and ethnic backgrounds of the community. Unfortunately in order to preserve the confidentiality of people we support we do not accept applicants whose relative is receiving support from Kingwood.



HOW TO APPLY

Applications should be sent by email to Sandra Meadows, Vice Chairman sandymeadows@saxonbury.com . Interested parties wanting an informal discussion about the role should also contact Sandra on the above email address.

The closing date for applications is Monday 17th June 2019.

Interviews will take place on Wednesday 26th June, Tuesday 2nd July or Wednesday 10th July

Your application should comprise: A full CV including a full employment history showing more significant Executive and Non-Executive positions, responsibilities held and relevant achievements; alongside a covering note of not more than two pages summarising your motivation and reasons for being interested in the Chairman position at Autism at Kingwood.

We believe the successful candidate will enjoy working with the Autism at Kingwood team and will find involvement with the charity and its work very rewarding

If you are a proven strategic leader with a clear alignment with our vision, mission and values then we look forward to hearing from you



Kate Allen, Chief Executive.

