



**CROSS
ROADS
CARE
ARE THE
PEOPLE
CARERS
TURN TO**

Crossroads Care Central & South Bucks Trustee Application Pack

What is Crossroads Care, and what does it do?

There are approximately 6 million unpaid carers in the UK including 5.2 million in England and Wales. When we refer to carers we mean someone who looks after a partner, relative or neighbour who needs support because of their sickness, age or disability. The support they provide is unpaid.

- One in eight of all adults is a carer.
- There are 175,000 children and young people with caring responsibilities.
- 1.9 million carers care for more than 20 hours per week.
- 1.25 million carers care for more than 50 hours per week.
- Three out of five people will become a carer at some time in their lives.

Crossroads is the leading provider of practical support for carers in England and Wales. The aim is to give carers time to be themselves, by enabling them to take a much needed break from their caring responsibilities.

The Crossroads network as a whole comprises the Crossroads Association working hand in hand with over 100 local Crossroads schemes. The Crossroads Association is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Local Crossroads schemes are individual independent charities that are members of the Association. The relationship between schemes and the Association is a voluntary one with clear membership criteria based on complementary roles.

Both the Association and schemes exist to provide services to carers, but their roles in achieving this are different. All Crossroads schemes provide breaks for carers by providing workers to take care of the person with care needs for agreed periods of time. Many schemes also provide additional services including young carers' projects, holiday play schemes for disabled children and so on. The role of the Association is to provide support and guidance to schemes on key functional areas, a framework of practice policy and procedure, a quality assurance system, and a central liaison and lobbying function with Government and other key stakeholders concerned with carers issues

Over 4.4 million care hours are provided by Crossroads every year to more than 35,000 carers in England and Wales - The equivalent of over 500 years of care.

What is a trustee?

The Charity Commission recommends that anyone considering becoming a charity trustee should read its information booklet **CC3 – The Essential Trustee: What you need to know**. You can download this document from the Charity Commission web site at www.charity-commission.gov.uk or call their contact centre on 0845 300 0218 to request it.

The following brief information is intended to provide a flavour of the role and responsibilities of a Crossroads trustee.

Trustees are the life blood of the charitable sector. They provide, on a voluntary basis, governance and strategic leadership for charitable organisations, bringing skills, knowledge and expertise from a whole range of backgrounds and experiences. Charity trustees come from all walks of life, and are united by their wish to create positive change in society – within Crossroads we are keen to recruit trustees with a variety of backgrounds, including carers and former carers.

The statutory duties of a trustee are:

- to ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- to ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.
- to ensure the organisation uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects: 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.
- to 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 safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
- to ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- to ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- to protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.
- If the charity employs staff, to appoint the chief executive officer and monitor his/her performance.

In practice Crossroads trustees carry out their roles and responsibilities by working closely with other members of the board of trustees and with staff. This will usually involve:

- regular attendance at and contribution to board meetings.
- membership of and contribution to one or more sub-committees (specialising for example in finance, staffing, care practice, etc).
- attendance at the Annual General Meeting.
- Attendance at appropriate training sessions and other meetings using any particular skills or expertise to assist with necessary work such as recruitment, appeals, fundraising etc.

Governance is not about doing but about ensuring that things are done. That means setting strategy and policy, taking decisions and monitoring work, not doing it yourself. The 'doing' of the work is delegated by the board to paid staff. This is an important distinction that potential trustees should be aware of from the start. Crossroads Care Central & South Bucks separate Code of Conduct provides further details around governance in relation to each Trustee's personal conduct.

Am I eligible to become a trustee?

Most people over 18 can become trustees although a few are ineligible. You are not eligible to become a charity trustee if you:

- are an undischarged bankrupt.
- have previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by a court or the Charity Commission.
- are under a disqualification order under the COMPANY DIRECTORS' DISQUALIFICATION ACT 1986.
- have been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (unless the conviction is spent).

If you stand for election or apply to become a Crossroads trustee then you will be required to sign a declaration of eligibility confirming that none of the above exclusions apply to you. As mentioned previously, Crossroads seeks to achieve a diverse mix of skills, background and experience within its boards of trustees. You do not need to have any particular background or qualifications to be considered for a trustee role.

How might I benefit from becoming a trustee?

People become trustees for a range of different reasons. Your reasons for being interested in this opportunity will be unique, as you are – but here are some potential benefits that may be of interest to you.

- You can contribute to providing and improving services to carers.
- A chance to meet new people in a different environment.
- You can apply your existing skills and abilities in a different environment.
- There will be opportunity to learn new things, develop your skills and undertake training in subjects relevant to the trustee role.

Or if you already have a broad range of skills, this could be an opportunity to learn about a different sector / different type of organisation.

- You can share your unique knowledge, expertise and perspective with your colleague trustees and with staff.
- Simple satisfaction arising from the knowledge that the role you are performing is important to carers and to people with care needs.

The following skills, abilities and knowledge areas have been identified as important to effective performance in the role of Crossroads trustee. It is vital that the board as a whole has a good mix of the identified skills, abilities and knowledge.

Skills Required:

HR	Recruitment, employment law, handling grievances, staff consultations
Marketing	Strategy, PR, service development, design, information provision
Fundraising	Database development, corporate events, donor development
Corporate	To take on Company Secretary role

What time would I need to give as a Trustee?

Part of the Trustees role would be to participate and contribute to the regular Board meetings which are held approximately every 6 weeks. These meetings are critical to ensure that the strategic plans for the organisation are reviewed, action agreed and implemented. Your skills, knowledge and expertise are essential at these meetings to ensure that the organisation makes the right decisions for the future development of its services and support.

In addition to the Board meetings, your contribution in the office during the week will be one of the greatest contributions that you can give in a 'hands on' practical way, utilising your own individual skills and expertise. You ideally would be able to give a minimum of 3 hours per week.

What to do next?

If you would like to like to discuss these opportunities further, then we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact Jane Dell, Volunteer Coordinator on 01494 8681407 or email volunteer@buckscrossroads.org

The Chair of Trustees would be delighted to discuss the opportunities with you, and answer any further questions or general queries that you have. Contact Jane Dell and she will forward your details to the Chair of Trustees, Karen Gill.

Whatever you do, make sure you care to volunteer and make a difference