

Paws For Support



PAWS FOR SUPPORT Volunteer strategy

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Paws For Support – Volunteer Strategy

Mission Alignment

To support Paws For Support's mission of improving people's lives through therapeutic and educational dog interactions, the volunteer strategy focuses on recruiting, training, and retaining compassionate individuals who can contribute to therapy visits, dog training, fundraising, and community outreach.

1. Volunteer Roles

Role	Description
Trustees	Trustees are responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of Paws For Support. They ensure the charity complies with legal obligations, uses its resources effectively, and stays true to its mission of improving lives through therapy dog interactions
Trainers	Trainers at Paws For Support are responsible for preparing therapy dogs and their handlers to safely and effectively participate in therapeutic and educational visits across the Bailiwick of Guernsey. Their work ensures dogs meet behavioral, health, and welfare standards suitable for public interaction.
Therapy Dog Handler	Therapy Dog Handlers are volunteers who work with their certified dogs to provide emotional, educational, and therapeutic support during visits to schools, care homes, workplaces, and public events across the Bailiwick of Guernsey. Whilst complying with all PFS standards.
Assistance Dog Handlers	Assistance Dog Handlers work with certified dogs trained to perform specific tasks that help them as individuals with recognised disabilities. These dogs support independence and wellbeing through practical assistance with daily tasks. Whilst complying with all PFS standards.

Role	Description
Supporters	Supporters help promote, sustain, and grow the mission of Paws For Support by contributing their time, skills, or resources in non-handling capacities. This role is ideal for individuals who are passionate about therapy and assistance dogs but may not own a dog or be involved in direct service delivery.
Coordinators – lead roles	<p>Roles such as - Schools/School Resources, Visits, Offices, Members Liaison, Social events and Fundraising, Head Trainer,</p> <p>Involves Organising and scheduling therapy visits, liaises with Offices, Nursing Homes, Schools and other community groups. Working with other members to plan and run events for fundraising/ advertisement of the charity, as well as opportunities for members to socialise together and checking on members wellbeing. As well as Recruiting new members and training of our trainers.</p>

2. Recruitment Plan

- **Local Platforms:** Post roles on Volunteer.gg and Giving.gg.
- **Social Media:** Use Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram to share volunteer stories and calls to action.
- **Community Visits:** Represented at schools, care homes, offices, court Support, hospital and community groups. Some individual sessions through specific referrals/requests.
- **Community Events:** Local public events like Seafront Sundays/West Show/Rotary Christmas Charity Fayre. As well as PFS organised events like the Annual Pet Dog Show.
- **Members Referrals:** Encourage current volunteers to bring friends or family.

3a. Onboarding & Training – Therapy Dog Handlers

- **New Members Meetings:** Opportunity for potential new members to learn more about the charity, ask questions and for PFS to have an initial meet of the dogs and handlers.
- **Membership Paperwork and fee:** Paperwork to cover health and safety and make sure all PFS standards/protocols are met e.g. Vet forms, Vaccination certificates etc.
- **Dog Training and Assessment:** Temperament and skills for therapy dogs taught through 7 week rolling training program and assessed.
- **Handler Training:** The handlers skills in handling and knowledge and understanding of general dog communication (via Body language) and ability to keep those we visit, their dogs and themselves safe on visits. Handlers made aware of the charity values, policies and procedures, insurance, safeguarding, and visit protocols.
- **Advanced DBS Checks:** Required for all handlers working with vulnerable groups (adults and children).
- **Mentorship:** New handlers paired and supported with experienced handlers for initial visits until confident to conduct visits solo.

3b. Onboarding & Training – Assistance Dog Handlers

- **1-1 Meeting with Assistance Dog Coordinator:** Opportunity for potential new members to learn more about the charity, ask questions and for PFS to have an initial meet of the dogs and handlers.
- **Membership Paperwork and fee:** Paperwork to cover health and safety and make sure all PFS standards/protocols are met e.g. Vet forms, Doctors Form, Vaccination certificates etc.
- **Dog Training and Assessment:** Temperament and skills for Assistance dogs taught through 1-1 sessions and assessed through Public Access Test (at the same standard as ADI). Also training group sessions.
- **Handler Training:** The handlers skills in handling and knowledge and understanding of general dog communication (via Body language) and ability to keep their dogs and themselves safe whilst out in Public. Handlers made aware of the charity values, policies and procedures, insurance, safeguarding, and visit protocols.

3c. Onboarding & Training – Supporters / Non dog handling members

- **Initial Meeting with Trustee:** Opportunity for potential new members to learn more about the charity, ask questions and for PFS to have an initial meet of the potential new member.
- **Membership Paperwork and fee:** Paperwork to cover health and safety and make sure all PFS standards/protocols are met e.g. Code of Conduct, Membership form.
- **Supporters / Non dog handling members**
 - **Trainers Training:** The handlers skills in handling and knowledge and understanding of general dog communication (via Body language) and ability to keep those we visit, their dogs and themselves safe on visits. Handlers made aware of the charity values, policies and procedures, insurance, safeguarding, and visit protocols.
 - **Supporters:** Given guidance and support, with supervision at any public events.
 - **Mentorship Assistance Dog Trainers:** Given opportunity to shadow an existing Trainer and support and participate in Public access assessments.

4. Engagement & Retention

- **Recognition:** Annual Volunteer Awards. Newsletter Spotlight – Event or Dog of the month. Qualification and Requalification Certificates, Social Media Shoutouts.
- **Community Building:** Members Social Events – to meet up and chat with other members outside of normal charity activities. A private Facebook group.
- **Feedback Loop:** Regular surveys and informal check-ins by our members liaison/Media and communication coordinator.
- **Development:** Offer additional training for trainers via external and internal professionals. Safeguarding training for Trustees and Trainers, Dog first aid course offered to all members. Utilise training opportunities provided by the Association of Guernsey Charities (AGC).

5. Compliance & Safeguarding

- **Charity Registration:** Maintain compliance with Guernsey's Charities Ordinance.
- **Policies:** Clear safeguarding, data protection and all other policies.
- **Insurance:** Ensure public liability and volunteer insurance are renewed annually. Assistance Dog Handlers must prove they have their own public liability insurance once qualified.
- **Safeguarding:** Training offered to Trainers and Trustees. DBS conducted for all visiting members.

6. Impact Measurement

- **Metrics:** Track number of visits, volunteer hours, and people reached.
- **Stories:** Collect testimonials from schools, care homes, and volunteers.
- **Reporting:** Share impact via newsletters, social media, and annual reports.

7. Sustainability & Growth

- **Volunteer Database:** Maintain an up-to-date contact details and other member details including dogs health. Visits coordinator keeps a record of all visit activity – dates, places and members/dogs attending.
- **Succession Planning:** Identify, train and mentor future trainers and key role coordinators.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborate with schools, care homes, offices, local businesses and community groups.