

Trustee

Information Pack 2024



Coalition of 
Disabled People
South Devon

Charity No: 1108663
Company Limited by Guarantee 5144355

About Us

Overview

The Coalition of Disabled People South Devon (CDPSD) now operates as Disability Support Torbay (DST). Although serving people in any part of South Devon, the Charity's registered office and service hub is next to the Town Hall car park in Torquay. Our client group includes people with physical, sensory and learning disabilities, mental health and long-term health conditions, and carers.

History

The charity came into being in 1989, the vision of an exceptional lady, Marion Gammon. At that time we were based in Paignton and called 'South Devon Disability Focus'. Marion's vision was for an organisation of disabled people who would help and support others using their own knowledge and experience. CDPSD was one of the first voluntary sector organisations in the country to be organised and run by disabled people themselves.

In 1999 a constitutional change was made so that the organisation could be known as the 'South Devon Coalition of Disabled People'. This change was in line with moves at the time to form "Coalitions" all over the country. In 2004 the title was changed to its present one following a re-branding exercise with an external consultant and became a company limited by guarantee. Sadly, Marion Gammon died in 2005 leaving a great legacy of service in Torbay. Since then, CDPSD has consistently delivered services in Torbay. However, in 2012 the office was renamed "Disability Support Torbay" because the word "Coalition" seemed to be deterring donors because of its political associations.

The organisation is managed by a Board of Trustees which meets a minimum of 4 times a year and we aim to maintain a high proportion of disabled people in our membership. This ensures that it can maintain its constitutional aim to be an organisation of disabled people working for disabled people.

With a commitment to maximum user involvement, we are still largely run by disabled people themselves. However, we are now very pleased to welcome carers and 'allies' (people who are not disabled but who have the skills, experience and knowledge to support our guiding principles) to work alongside staff, volunteers and trustees in furthering our aims.

Funding

We are funded until 30 June 2026 by the Reaching Communities Fund from the National Lottery. There is an element of matched funding required and we need to build ways to raise funds beyond that date. We are grateful to Torbay Council for providing premises rent and rate free. This contributes to our matched funding together with the many volunteer hours given by both operational volunteers and trustees. CDPSD itself is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. We are covered by employer, public liability and trustee insurance.

Our Services

Information

Over the years we have found that the intervention of a small team with the ability to refer a client quickly to another member of staff works really well in supporting a variety of needs, particularly those with complex issues. The current office in Torquay is a drop-in centre for anyone making the first step perhaps needing information or a listening ear. Other services are by appointment and can be managed face to face, by phone or electronic means.

Benefits

Our focus has always been to support people to do it themselves if possible. Initially the support was to help to navigate the benefit system. We have considerable expertise in completion of forms, mandatory reconsiderations and appeals with a success rate close to 100%.

Housing

Responding to the needs expressed by our client group a few years ago, we introduced a housing service. Again, this is about supporting access to databases, agencies and landlords, as well as sourcing items needed when setting up home.

Counselling

After a gap over the lockdown, we have now recruited a strong team of counsellors who are qualified but need to carry out regular counselling sessions to complete their training. This enables us to offer a free counselling service for those unable to access a service through the NHS.

Referrals

Many clients self-refer through our drop-in service, Facebook page, phone and email. We are also pleased to be part of the Torbay Advice & Information Network and the Torbay Helpline. We also take referrals from professionals including Social Workers, Torbay Housing Department and GPs.

The Team

We have four paid staff – Project Manager Bettina Farley, Receptionist/Information Officer Jane Turner, Housing/Information Officer Sheila Shearing, and our Administrator, Claire Hill. We also have a brilliant team of volunteers who help us to deliver our work. We are proud that many of team all have experience of the impact of disability and long-term health conditions on daily living.



Governance

The Board

Alex Sorrell (Chair)
Steph Read (Vice Chair)
Jill Read (Company Secretary and Treasurer)
Richard Dawson

Meetings

Disability Support Torbay, 1 Lymington Road, Torquay TQ1 4BW

2025 Meeting Dates

Friday 21 February
Friday 23 May
Friday 19 September (tbc)
AGM Friday 21 November

Finances:

The accounts and annual report for 2024 are attached.

Trustee Role Description

Introduction

The Charities Act 2011 defines charity trustees as the people responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity. In CDPSD they are the Board of Trustees. Under charity law, the Board holds the ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the charity, and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and delivering the charitable outcomes for which it has been set up. This document seeks to define the key responsibilities of the trustees and provide clarity on the personal skills and experience required to successfully fulfil the role.

Role Description

All trustees of the Coalition of Disabled People South Devon are required to ensure:

- that the charity pursues its stated charitable objects as defined in its governing document, by establishing a clear vision, set of values and strategy, that there is a common understanding of these by trustees, staff and volunteers
- that operational plans and budgets support the vision and strategy.
- the views of stakeholders (service users, healthcare professionals, staff and volunteers) are regularly sought and considered.

- there is regular review of the external environment for changes that might affect the charity (political, financial, demographic, competitive, partnerships, alliances).
- that the charity complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- that the charity applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its charitable objects.
- that the charity defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets.
- they uphold the good name and values of the charity.
- the effective and efficient administration of the charity, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- the financial stability of the charity.
- serious consideration is given to procuring external professional advice on any matter that presents a material risk to the charity
- the charity acts in accordance with employment law and exercises a duty of care to its employees.
- the major risks to the charity are regularly identified and reviewed and that systems are in place to mitigate or minimise these risks.
- that the charity has a governance structure that is appropriate to its size/complexity, stage of development, and its charitable objects
- that the board regularly reviews the governance structure and its own performance against an agreed programme.
- that the board regularly reviews its own training needs.
- that trustees have an agreed code of conduct and comply with it, and that there are mechanisms for the removal of trustees who do not abide by its principles.

Person Specification

All CDPSD trustees must be able to demonstrate the following skills and values:

- a commitment to the organisation.
- a commitment to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity.
- a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort.
- strategic vision.
- good, independent judgement.
- ability to think creatively.
- willingness to speak their mind.
- an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
- ability to challenge current thinking, the method of governance and management of the organisation in a constructive manner.
- ability to evaluate and interpret management information and other data/evidence.

Specific skills and experience

All CDPSPD trustees are required to demonstrate specific knowledge and experience in at least one of the following areas (the areas in bold represent our current search):

- **financial management**
- **marketing, media and PR**
- **organisational strategy**
- **leadership**
- living with or have experience of disability, mental health or long term health conditions
- charity law and governance
- charity fundraising
- leadership or management of a small to medium organisation
- the management of change
- monitoring and evaluating performance in the commercial and/or not for profit sector
- recruitment and human resources including employment legislation.
- business development
- risk management

Appointment and resignation

- Trustees will usually be elected, although trustees may be co-opted at any time and confirmed by election at an AGM or EGM.
- All trustees' terms of office are for three years.
- A trustee may serve for more than one term of office.
- When trustees are approaching the end of their term of office or anticipate that they will need to resign their positions mid-term, there is a general expectation that they will provide no less than three calendar months' notice. Whilst it is recognised that there may be occasions where this is not possible, CDPSPD would welcome as much notice as possible for succession plans to be actioned and trustees' best efforts in this regard are much appreciated.



Additional Information

DBS & References

Trustees will need to provide two written references and complete a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Services check at enhanced level; costs for this will be met by the charity.

Out of pocket expenses

Volunteers will be reimbursed for reasonable and receipted out of pocket expenses. (Mileage, parking, public transport etc). The Charity is committed to achieving equality of opportunity in both services to the community and the employment of people and expects all employees to understand and promote its policies in its work. As with all positions, this role outline will be kept under review and may develop to meet the changing needs of the service.

Recruitment Process

Applications to be made to our recruitment partner, Jackie Dawkins, Shine Charity Recruitment (jackie@shinecharityrecruitment.co.uk) 07974/808193

- Initial discussion with Jackie Dawkins
- Meeting with Chair and other Trustees
- Invitation to attend first board meeting as an observer.
- References and DBS checks

Probation/Induction

The following activities will take place early in the period and a review will take place after 3 months:

- Be encouraged to become involved between Board Meetings in activities that particularly interest them;
- Meet the staff and volunteers;
- Be familiar with the strategy and financial plan;
- Introduction to policies;
- Introduction to quality assurance and relationship with funders
- Biographies of other Trustees;
- Process for Trustee appraisal;
- Identify any additional skills/training they may wish to acquire.

Additional Documents

- Annual Report and Accounts 2023