



CANDIDATE PACK FOR TRUSTEE



WELCOME

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Aquarius as a Trustee.



Since 1977, Aquarius has used evidence-based research to shape services that enable us to support people and their families with drugs, alcohol and gambling issues. Aquarius recognises that alcohol, drug and gambling use does not just affect individuals. Often, the consequences of these behaviours also have a great impact on families, friends and loved ones and Aquarius prides itself on delivering services offering support to those affected.

Services run by Aquarius stretch across the Midlands from Telford to Bedford, from Derby to Buckinghamshire, and further afield. We work with more than 8,000 individuals around the Midlands with a workforce of 250. Having expanded our service reach into new parts of England, we are supporting more people than ever before, building on our powerful coproduction ethos. Recent developments have included a young people's Recovery Hub in Birmingham, a Transitions service for people 18-25 in Northamptonshire to support them into a stable adult life of wellbeing, and a total family support service in Derby supporting all adults and children in family networks affected by substance use.

Aquarius is a subsidiary of Waythrough, formed by the merger of Recovery Focus and Humankind in 2024, enabling us to reach more communities and address complex issues on a larger scale. To find out more about Waythrough, please consider watching this YouTube video.

Our shared vision for the future remains breaking down the barriers that stop people getting the support they need to live a life they value. Together, we will continue working in partnership to inspire individual recovery and believe that with the right support, recovery – however that's defined by an individual – is achievable for everyone.

Aquarius is now looking to appoint a Trustee with a background in the substance use sector. You will work with colleagues to steer our organisation through an exciting era of development and impact in our communities; your knowledge, insight and expertise will guide and enrich discussion, helping us weigh up the many opportunities ahead, and ensure our services are aligned with best practice. You will ensure that our Senior Leadership is fully supported and held accountable and that we operate best in class governance. You will also demonstrate sound judgement, excellent interpersonal and influencing skills, and independence of thought.

Most importantly, we're looking for colleagues who share our passion for social justice and serving vulnerable communities; you may have lived experience or be someone who has worked with the communities we support previously. It is also likely that you will have a personal connection with the Midlands area.

If you believe you have the skills, experience and qualities we're looking for, I very much look forward to hearing from you.

Danielle Oum
Chair, Aquarius Board

AQUARIUS IN BRIEF

We are a research-based charity set up in 1977 to develop effective new interventions for people with alcohol problems. We now operate across the Midlands, providing services for people with alcohol, drug and gambling issues. Aquarius also has a number of pioneering social enterprises including Aquarius Life training and support for commercial enterprises, our Aquarius Evolve cafés, and our soon to open Aquarius Homes housing provision for young people who are care leavers.

Our ambition is inspiring individual recovery nationwide. We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to take control of their life and to develop new meanings and purposes. We concentrate on the person and their individual needs, choices and aspirations, rather than on diagnostic categories or labels and tailor what we do accordingly. One of our founding principles is that we work with the people we support as equal partners to design, plan and provide services together. We recognise that we all have valuable skills, knowledge, experience and resources that could improve the quality of life for individuals and our communities. We harness this by creating opportunities for people to be more actively involved at all levels of the work that we do including:

- individuals' own recovery support plans
- how our services are run
- how our organisations are run
- raising awareness of mental health and substance misuse issues and challenging stigma in society

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about Aquarius please visit <https://aquarius.org.uk/>

For further information about Waythrough please visit <https://www.waythrough.org.uk/>



ROLE DESCRIPTION

All trustees are expected collectively (with fellow directors) to:

- Set the strategic direction for the group;
- Be assured that the charity provides safe, high quality, cost-effective services for those using the services and relevant stakeholders;
- Ensure the charity is sustainable in the long term.

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Collectively, Trustees will:

- Ensure those using our services are at the heart of everything we do and be able to use lived experience to inform process.
- Be confident in participating in board discussions.
- Set strategy for the group by contributing to reviewing the market, setting policy and priorities, defining goals and evaluating performance against agreed plan targets.
- Be assured that the group is appropriately managing risk, has effective controls in place (and receives assurances to that effect) and uses resources effectively.
- Ensure we are making ourselves accountable to our stakeholders and partners.
- Constructively work alongside fellow directors and staff to be an ambassador at all times, including when visiting our services and stakeholders but also with national and regional agencies plus other networks.
- Uphold the latest legal and regulatory standards required of directors.
- Define and aid compliance with the values and objectives of the group and ensure these are reflected in the actions of and communications from group partners.
- Appoint and monitor performance of the senior executives in both the group parent and provider partners within the group.
- Ensure they have adequate information and guidance to execute the above responsibilities and are not conflicted in their involvement in the decisions.

You will meet with the Aquarius senior team and delivery managers from time to time to stay abreast of issues and offer support from an independent and external perspective.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- We are specifically seeking someone with a background in, and deep understanding of, the substance misuse sector to join our board in the Spring 2025.*
- Background within roles focusing on collaboration, partnerships and mergers.
- Track record as a strategic leader, within business, communities or public service.
- Thorough understanding of the NED role, of good governance and of independent decision-making in setting and shaping future / strategic direction.
- Strong personal track record of contributing to social justice, ideally at Board level.
- Sound working knowledge of the sector in which Aquarius operates, along with an appreciation of the wider market and policy trends, and safe delivery of effective services.
- Experience of shaping future plans that meet diverse stakeholder needs.

YOUR SKILLS, ABILITIES AND STYLE

- Natural partnership and alliance-builder with effective communication and influencing skills.
- Sound judgement; able to balance considerations such as resources, risk and performance.
- An effective networker and ambassador.
- Strategic thinker.
- Strong integrity.
- A champion for the values and coproduction ethos of Aquarius.
- Strong personal commitment to, and interest in, serving vulnerable communities.
- Personally committed to diversity and committed to ensuring that the principles of ED&I are promoted across all aspects of our work.
- Committed to supporting the continuous quality improvement initiatives for the benefit of the future users of our services across the spectrum of care and support delivered by Aquarius.

*If you do not have this background, and are interested in joining Aquarius, you can still apply and will be considered for wider vacancies.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

TIME COMMITMENT

The time commitment is around 1.5 days per month.

There are six Board meetings per year, plus a small number of board development commitments, including service visits.

All Trustees sit on a committee which have four meetings per year.

LOCATION

Board meetings are held in person in Birmingham.

REMUNERATION

This role is performed on a voluntary basis. All reasonable travel expenses incurred in fulfilling the role are met.

TERM OF APPOINTMENT

Appointments are made by the group parent for a term up to three years in duration.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We ask all candidates to ensure they are free from actual or potential conflict of interest. We are happy to discuss this at first stage interview for longlisted candidates.



HOW TO APPLY

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/aquarius-trustee/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A covering letter that sets out your motivation for the role and describes the specific experience you can bring to the appointment.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Deadline for applications is **Monday 24th March 2025**

RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

Closing date: Monday 24th March 2025

Preliminary interviews: w/c 31st March 2025

Final Panel interviews: 14th / 15th April 2025

