**Communication Matters**

**Call For Trustees 2025**

This year there are **five vacancies** on the Board of Trustees. The announcement of Trustees will take place at the virtual Annual Meeting of Associate Members on Sunday 7th September 2025, ahead of the Communication Matters International AAC Conference.

**What does being a Trustee involve?**Trustees have a very important role. They share the ultimate responsibility for governing Communication Matters and directing how it is managed and run. Communication Matters is the UK Chapter of ISAAC (International Society for AAC).

The Board of Trustees appoints a Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer - however **all** Trustees are equally responsible for keeping Communication Matters running and to enable it to carry out its range of activities.

The Board of Trustees meets at the University of Leeds four times a year in November, March, May and September (the day before the Annual Conference). Two of these meetings are usually two day meetings and so overnight accommodation can be arranged for those living a long way from Leeds.

Trustees are expected to attend all the Board meetings and also to represent Communication Matters at other meetings and events during the year. As well as these face-to-face meetings, Trustees communicate with each other frequently by email, phone & Zoom/Teams - there’s a lot to do to keep Communication Matters running smoothly!

Employed Communication Matters Associate Members who are considering standing as a Trustee should discuss this level of commitment with their line managers before seeking appointment and are welcome to contact our Chair, Helen, with any further questions: chair@communicationmatters.org.uk.

For more information about the role of Trustees, please visit our [website](https://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/about-us/trustees-and-staff/) and please also read ‘*Further important information from the Chair of the Board of Trustees’* on the next page.

You may also find it useful to read this document from the Charity Commission: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-trustee-welcome-pack>

**What are Communication Matters looking for?**Communication Matters needs Trustees with a **range of skills** who can help to develop it as an organisation and implement its strategic objectives. Particularly important to us this year are:

* people with skills and experience in Social Media
* someone with a Clinical Science / Environmental Controls background
* someone with experience of Bid Writing / Fundraising

We are keen to increase the inclusive nature of the Board of Trustees so that it more accurately reflects the diverse nature of the CM membership and so we would encourage individuals from all communities to put themselves forward as a Trustee.

Perhaps most important is commitment and enthusiasm and a capacity to give your own time.

**Am I eligible to be nominated as a Trustee?
YES! If you:**

1. want to help Communication Matters develop and further its aims and objectives;
2. are a fully paid-up **Individual** AssociateMember of Communication Matters for 2025;

*Note that it is not the role of a Trustee to represent the organisation for which they work or in which they have interests, so if you have CM Organisational, ISAAC Institutional or ISAAC Corporate membership,* ***you are required to have or to take out an Individual membership in your own name.*** *To check your membership category and number, please email* *admin@communicationmatters.org.uk**.*

1. have time to devote to Communication Matters work, to attend Trustees’ meetings and to represent Communication Matters at other events; at busy times of the year you might find you’re spending two or three hours a week working on tasks for Communication Matters;
2. can attend the virtual Annual Meeting of Associate Members on Sunday 7th September 2025 from 1.00pm.We would love to meet you, if this will be a problem please contact us.

**Further important information from the Chair of the Board of Trustees - please read!**The time has come again to request nominations for Trustees for the next term in the life of Communication Matters. This is a role which demands stamina, commitment and skill mixing but which can be very stimulating and enjoyable!

The Board is usually made up of 12 Trustees, although we currently have 13, all of whom are unpaid volunteers. Each year at least four Trustees have to stand down. There are also places on the Board for up to three co-opted Trustees who serve for up to a year. Trustees are usually appointed for a three year term of office; they can then either stand down or stand for re-appointment on a further two occasions.

This year one Trustee, our Chair, is standing down after being on the Board this time for seven years - Helen Whittle. (Our huge thanks to Helen for all her hard work and dedication). And four Trustees will have reached the end of their first terms - Sarah McPoland, Beth Moulam, Michelle Paton and Bob Sagoo. We are delighted that Sarah, Beth, Michelle and Bob have all decided to stand for re-election. Finally, one Trustee has come to the end of their one-year co-opted term - Jessica Macrae-Pemberton. Jessica will be starting her first full term this September. This means there are five vacancies to fill.

As a Board of Trustees we also have the option of appointing up to 3 places for co-opted Trustees who serve for a year. This is often a good way for people to be introduced to the role of being a Trustee. Please feel free to contact the Chair if you would like to discuss any of these roles further.

The present Board of Trustees is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Name* | *Designation* |
| Helen Whittle (Chair)  | Speech & Language Therapist (England)  |
| Andrea Sharples (Deputy Chair) | Clinical Director at an Independent SLT Service |
| Sarah McPoland (Treasurer) | Speech & Language Therapist (England) |
| Katherine Broomfield | Researcher / Speech & Language Therapist (England) |
| Martin Fisher | Regional Manager at an AAC Specialised Service |
| Helen Hewson | AAC User |
| Jessica Macrae-Pemberton | AAC Company Supplier |
| Charlie Moran | Speech & Language Therapist (England)  |
| Beth Moulam | AAC User |
| Saffron Murphy-Mann | Senior Teacher  |
| Michelle Paton | Speech & Language Therapist (Scotland) |
| Bob Sagoo  | AAC Company Supplier & Parent of an AAC User |
| Tina Voizey | Special Educator / Independent Consultant |

At the end of one Communication Matters year and the start of another it is important to remember that all the Trustees serve on a voluntary basis, I wish to express my grateful thanks to everyone who has served on the Board this year.

*Helen Whittle,* Chair of Communication Matters

**How can I be nominated?**

You need to use the form below to provide information (no more than 200 words) to be included on the online survey (e.g., your role/interests/activities, why you want to stand as a Trustee, what you could bring to the organisation). The survey is sent to all our associate members to give their opinion on who they would like to serve on the Board.

**Your nomination must be proposed and seconded by current paid-up associate members (any category) of Communication Matters.** **Your proposer and seconder must have different membership numbers. You must also be a current (individual) associate member.**

To be included in this year’s nomination list, please email your completed form to admin@communicationmatters.org.uk by **Friday 18th July 2025.**

**The Voting Process**

The Trustees of Communication Matters are keen to reflect the views and wishes of the associate membership and so ask all prospective new Trustees to provide some information about themselves and why they'd like to be a Trustee. The associate membership then “vote” for their preferred nominees and this vote informs the final decision of the Trustees.

Current paid-up associate members of Communication Matters will be sent a link to an online survey to cast their vote. The online voting process will remain open until noon on Friday 29th August 2025. If you have any questions related to online voting, please contact admin@communicationmatters.org.uk.

2025 Nomination Form for Potential
Communication Matters Board of Trustees

Name of nominated person:  Enter name of nominated person

Membership number of nominated person: Enter membership number of nominated person

Name of proposer: Enter name of proposer
Membership No. Enter membership no. of proposer
Please tick this box to confirm your proposer has read this document [ ]

Name of seconder: Enter name of seconder
Membership No. Enter membership no. of seconder
Please tick this box to confirm your seconder has read this document [ ]

1. Information for inclusion on the online survey (no more than **200 words**). Please include your relevant experience and skills and why you want to stand as a Trustee:
 Enter information for inclusion on the online survey (no more than 200 words)

2. If you are employed - please tick this box to indicate you have discussed, with your line manager, your nomination and the level of commitment required [ ] .

3. If you are an AAC user or have a disability - please tell us what support you would require to be a Trustee and attend meetings:
 Enter information for Trustees

4. All nominees - please tick this box to indicate you have read the Trustees Code of Conduct and our Trustee Conflict of Interest Policy, both of which are available to download from [here](https://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/about-us/trustees-and-staff/) [ ]  .

5. Please download, complete and return our Equal Opportunities Monitoring form along with this nomination form.

Please email your completed nomination form (and equal opportunities form) to Communication Matters, to arrive by **Friday 18th July 2025**, to **admin@communicationmatters.org.uk**