THE CHILDREN'S ADVENTURE FARM TRUST

Trustee Vacancy

Lived Experience Trustee

This role is for someone whose life, or whose family's life, has been shaped by disability, additional needs, or the experience of accessing services like CAFT. No governance experience required. What matters is your perspective and your willingness to use it.

About CAFT

Children's Adventure Farm Trust is a farm-based charity in Cheshire. Every year, hundreds of children with additional needs and their families come to us for day visits, activity sessions, and a rare chance to just be themselves without judgment. We're working toward 150,000 cumulative visits by 2030.
We're a small charity with a big purpose. Our board is hands-on, visible, and genuinely involved in the life of the organisation.

Why this role exists

Our board brings together people from a variety of businesses and backgrounds. What we don't yet have is the perspective of someone who has lived what our families live, navigating a world that isn't always built for their children, finding (or not finding) the support they need, and understanding from the inside what a place like CAFT actually means. That gap matters. When we make decisions about programmes, priorities and direction, we want someone in the room who can say: 'That's not how it actually feels.'

Who we're looking for

We're deliberately keeping this broad. You might be:

- A parent or carer of a child with additional needs, disability or complex health conditions
- An adult with your own lived experience of disability or additional needs
- Someone with professional experience in SEND, social care or health who also brings personal lived experience

You don't need to have used CAFT's services, though that would be welcome. What you do need is a genuine connection to the world our families navigate, and the confidence to speak up from that place.

What you'll bring

- Lived experience of disability, additional needs, or caring for someone with those needs
- The willingness to share your perspective honestly even when it challenges the majority view
- Curiosity about how a charity like CAFT works, and a desire to contribute to its direction
- Reliability, commitment and a genuine interest in the children and families we serve

Previous board or trustee experience is not required. We will support you to understand the role and grow into it.

The role itself

As a trustee of CAFT you'll share legal and governance responsibility for the charity alongside the rest of the board. In practice, that means:

- Contributing to strategic decisions about CAFT's direction, priorities and resources
- Holding the CEO and team to account, constructively and supportively
- Bringing your lived experience perspective into board discussions, not as a 'token voice', but as a fully equal board member
- Sitting on a sub-committee relevant to your interests and background (typically one hour, every two months, online)

Time commitment
Six board meetings a year (bi-monthly, approximately two hours each). Sub-committee involvement roughly every two months (one hour, online). Some presence at the farm and at CAFT events. We're a visible board and that matters to us. We'd expect a minimum of four board meetings attended per year.

What CAFT offers you

- A named board mentor, an experienced trustee who will support you throughout your first year
- Full induction to the charity, its governance, and your legal responsibilities
- A warm, committed board that takes its work seriously but also genuinely enjoys it
- The knowledge that your experience is shaping real decisions for real families
- All reasonable out-of-pocket expenses covered

Trustees serve a three-year term, renewable once (maximum six years in total).

Apply

We'd love to hear from you — even if you're not sure yet. Start by getting in touch with us for an informal conversation.

Contact: Catherine Sandland, Chair of Trustees, on 07946604859 or at csandland.trustee@caft.co.uk

If you know someone who would be brilliant in this role, please share this with them.