



Executive Director

Application Pack



ADCH

Association of Dogs and Cats Homes

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1180574

Welcome from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Executive Director of ADCH.

After three successful years leading ADCH, our current Executive Director, Rebecca Cooper, has made the decision to leave the Association later this year. We are naturally very sorry to see Rebecca go, but she leaves ADCH in a strong position and at an exciting point in its development.

Over recent years, ADCH has expanded its services and activities, strengthened its financial position and continued to build on the success of its annual Conference. We have an ambitious strategy in place and a clear focus on continuing to develop the support, services and influence we provide for our members and the wider rescue and rehoming sector.



Alongside recruiting our next Executive Director, we are investing further in our Central Team. Our staffing structure is evolving to provide additional capacity and clearer areas of responsibility, with a number of new colleagues joining the Association. This creates a particularly exciting opportunity for our next Executive Director to lead and develop the team through this next phase, while building on the considerable knowledge, experience and relationships already in place.

Our members are at the heart of ADCH. They range from some of the largest animal welfare organisations to small independent rescue and rehoming charities, operating across the UK and Ireland. Despite their differences in size and context, they share a commitment to improving animal welfare and to learning from and supporting one another.

Our next Executive Director will lead the delivery of ADCH's strategy, working closely with the Board, Central Team, members, volunteers and partners. We are looking for an experienced and collaborative leader who can bring strategic thinking alongside strong organisational leadership; someone who can nurture relationships, strengthen our voice and influence, and lead and support a small team to deliver effectively. That reflects the breadth of the role set out in the JD, which spans strategic delivery, people leadership, financial sustainability, governance, sector relationships and influence.

There is a great deal to build upon and plenty still to do. Most importantly, there is a genuine opportunity for our next Executive Director to bring their own experience, ideas and leadership to ADCH and help shape the next stage of the Association's development.

I hope you will be excited by that opportunity, and we look forward to hearing from you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Giles Webber'.

Giles Webber
Chair, Association of Dogs and Cats Homes



LEADERSHIP



COLLABORATION



INTEGRITY



PROFESSIONALISM



SUPPORT

About Us:

Established in 1985, the Association of Dogs and Cats Homes (ADCH) is the leading representative charity for dog and cat rescue and rehoming organisations across the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands. ADCH promotes the safeguarding of welfare standards for dogs and cats needing new homes and supports those working and volunteering in the sector

At the heart of ADCH is a strong collaborative ethos. With over 160 member organisations, all of which are registered charities, we unite organisations of all sizes large and small; embracing over 45,000 staff and volunteers, all dedicated to working together for Dogs and Cats.

A key part of this ethos is the peer network ADCH nurtures, where members connect, exchange ideas, share knowledge and resources, and offer mutual support. Through this network, organisations are able to address common challenges, collaborate on solutions, and strengthen their collective impact on animal welfare.

We host the UK's largest animal welfare Annual Conference for the rescue and rehoming sector, the ADCH conference attracts over 500 attendees each day. The event brings together organisations from across the UK and overseas, providing valuable opportunities for networking and learning. In addition to the Annual Conference, ADCH connects members through its online group, open meetings, and a variety of other events and opportunities held throughout the year.

ADCH also plays a key role in advocacy, using its Minimum Welfare and Operational Standards to inform responses to government consultations and to promote improvements in animal welfare practices.

Our Vision

A positive life for all dogs and cats

Our Mission

ADCH is an umbrella organisation which works on behalf of its members to create a professional and sustainable sector which improves the lives of dogs and cats.

Our Values

ADCH is committed to:

- **Leadership**
ADCH and its Members leading the sector and proactively tackling future issues and facilitating solutions while listening to all involved.
- **Collaboration**
We all share knowledge, expertise, and actions for excellence.
- **Integrity**
High standards including transparency, respect and inclusion.
- **Professionalism**
Innovative experts with ambition for the sector
- **Support**
Helping members to grow and develop together for dogs, cats and people too.

Other Useful Documents

- [ADCH Website](#)
- [ADCH Strategy](#)
- [ADCH Annual Accounts](#)



Who We Are Looking For

This is a rare opportunity to lead The Association of Dogs and Cats Homes (ADCH) through the next stage of its development. As Executive Director, you will have the opportunity to shape and lead a respected membership organisation with a strong reputation and ambitious plans.

Our current Executive Director is leaving after three successful years with ADCH, at a time when the Association is in a strong position. We have an ambitious strategy, a sound financial platform and a diverse membership spanning the rescue and rehoming sector across the UK and Ireland. We are also investing further in our Central Team, creating additional capacity to support our future ambitions.

The role

Working closely with our Board of Trustees, you will lead the delivery of ADCH's strategy and have overall responsibility for the leadership and management of the organisation. You will lead and develop our staff teams, engage with volunteers, oversee organisational and financial performance and sustainability, and build relationships with our members and stakeholders.

This is an exceptional opportunity to work with an engaged and supportive Board of Trustees to deliver ADCH's ambitious strategy. As ADCH's public voice and lead ambassador, you will strengthen our influence, champion the interests of our members and raise the profile of the organisation across the animal welfare sector.

The Person

We are looking for:

- An experienced senior charity leader who has the ability to turn strategy into effective delivery.
- An authentic, collaborative and empowering leader who is able to inspire and communicate effectively at all levels across the organisation.
- Proven financial and commercial acumen, ensuring organisational sustainability
- A skilled relationship-builder, comfortable working with a Board and able to lead a small organisation with both a strategic and operational focus

You must also be passionate about animals and pets, understanding the value they have in society and have a genuine interest in animal welfare issues.

Knowledge of the animal rescue, rehoming or wider animal welfare sector would be advantageous but is not essential.

The role is home-based and requires some travel, including visiting member organisations, attending meetings and delivering events, some of which may involve overnight stays. Candidates must be able to travel as required by the role, and a full driving licence is preferred as some member organisations may be in rural locations with limited public transport.

This is an exciting opportunity to build on strong foundations, lead an evolving team and bring your own experience, ideas and leadership to the future development of ADCH.

ADCH is committed to building a diverse and inclusive organisation and welcomes applications from candidates of all backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.

Please see the Job Description for full details of the role and person specification.

Job Description: Executive Director

Dept/Team: ADCH	Location: This is a home-based role with travel required, including visits to ADCH members' animal rescue and rehoming facilities, and attendance at meetings and events. Occasional overnight stays will be required.
Hours: 28 hours per week, with flexibility to work these across either four or five days.	
Responsible to: Board of Trustees	Duration: Permanent
Works With/Key Contacts: Board of Trustees, ADCH Team, Members, Committees and Task & Finish Groups, funders, corporate and strategic partners, government and policy stakeholders and other organisations across the animal welfare sector.	Salary: £55,000 FTE (£44,000 per annum for 28 hours)

Main Purpose of the Role

The Executive Director provides strategic and executive leadership to ADCH, leading the delivery of the Association's Strategic Plan and working closely with the Board of Trustees to ensure ADCH is effective, sustainable and well managed.

Responsible for the overall leadership and management of the organisation, the Executive Director will lead and develop the staff team, drive delivery of ADCH's strategic priorities and maintain effective oversight of organisational performance, finance, income generation, governance, compliance and risk.

The Executive Director will build and nurture influential relationships with members, funders, partners, policy makers and the wider animal welfare sector. Acting as ADCH's public voice and lead ambassador, they will champion the interests of members, strengthen ADCH's influence and use evidence and insight to support positive change across the rescue and rehoming sector.

Responsibilities/Objectives

Strategic Leadership & Organisational Development

- Lead the delivery of ADCH's Strategy, translating its priorities into clear organisational plans, objectives and measures and maintaining executive accountability for delivery through the staff team.
- Monitor progress against the strategy, ensuring the Board has clear evidence of organisational performance, impact and areas requiring further action.
- Align committee responsibilities and individual staff objectives with strategic priorities and ensuring effective monitoring of progress and delivery.
- Maintain a strong understanding of the external environment, identifying emerging opportunities, challenges and risks affecting ADCH, its members and the wider animal welfare sector
- Ensure ADCH works effectively across all jurisdictions in which its members operate, recognising differences in legislation, policy and context while promoting equitable access to ADCH services, support and opportunities.
- Lead organisational development and change, ensuring resources and capacity remain focused on strategic priorities, reducing unnecessary activity and continually improving organisational effectiveness and efficiency.

People Leadership & Management

- Lead, manage and develop the ADCH staff team, creating a positive, collaborative and accountable culture in which people are supported to perform effectively and develop within their roles.
- Set clear organisational and individual objectives along with accompanying budgets, ensuring staff understand their responsibilities and are accountable for delivery.
- Ensure effective delegation, communication and coordination across the team, enabling staff to take ownership of their areas of responsibility while maintaining appropriate executive oversight.
- Oversee recruitment, performance, development and wellbeing, ensuring effective people management practices and supporting organisational resilience and succession planning.

Financial Management & Income Generation

- Lead the financial management of ADCH, working with the Treasurer, Governance Committee and Board to ensure effective financial planning, budgeting, monitoring and longer-term sustainability.
- Lead ADCH's approach to income generation, identifying opportunities to strengthen and diversify income and providing strategic oversight of fundraising, membership, events, corporate and other income streams.
- Build and nurture strategic relationships with funders, corporate supporters and partners, identifying and developing opportunities that support ADCH's financial sustainability and strategic ambitions.
- Build upon the success of Solidarity Membership, nurturing relationships with existing Solidarity Members, developing mutually beneficial opportunities and identifying opportunities to further develop this area of membership.
- Ensure robust financial controls, monitoring and reporting are maintained, including appropriate oversight of the annual accounts and external scrutiny.

Governance, Compliance & Risk

- Work closely with the Chair and Board of Trustees to support effective governance and informed strategic decision-making.
- Promote clear and effective governance arrangements, ensuring appropriate distinction between the Board's governance and oversight responsibilities and the Executive Director's delegated authority for the leadership and management of the organisation.
- Ensure Trustees receive clear, timely and appropriate information, advice and recommendations and that Board decisions are effectively translated into organisational action.
- Ensure effective systems, policies and controls are in place to support ADCH's compliance with its legal, statutory, regulatory and contractual responsibilities, providing appropriate assurance and advice to the Board.
- Lead the management of organisational risk, ensuring strategic and operational risks are identified, assessed and managed effectively, with significant risks appropriately reported and escalated to the Board.
- Provide leadership on significant, sensitive or potentially reputational matters, including oversight of complaints and their appropriate resolution.
- Work effectively with ADCH's Governance, Standards & Animal Welfare and Legislative Committees, ensuring appropriate communication and coordination between the Board, Committees and staff team.
- Oversee the development and use of Task & Finish Groups to bring together appropriate expertise and progress specific organisational priorities in a timely way.

Members, Partnerships & Sector Influence

- Build and nurture strong relationships with ADCH members of all sizes, ensuring their experiences, priorities and expertise inform the Association's work and development.
- Develop influential relationships and strategic partnerships across the animal welfare sector and with government, policy makers, funders and other key stakeholders.
- Act as ADCH's public voice and lead ambassador, representing the Association with government, policy makers, the media and at external meetings, events and other relevant forums.
- Strengthen ADCH's profile, credibility and influence, identifying opportunities for ADCH and its members to provide leadership, collaborate, share expertise and contribute to positive change across the wider animal welfare sector. Lead ADCH's external engagement and influencing activity, ensuring the Association responds effectively to developments affecting members and animal welfare.

Data, Insight & Impact

- Lead ADCH's strategic approach to data, insight and evidence, ensuring these are used effectively to understand the sector, inform priorities and demonstrate impact.
- Lead the development of the ADCH Almanac as an authoritative and valuable source of insight into the rescue and rehoming sector, working collaboratively with colleagues, members and relevant stakeholders.
- Ensure organisational and sector data is translated into meaningful insight that supports members, informs ADCH's external voice and strengthens its influence with policy makers, funders and the wider sector.

Organisational Performance & Effectiveness

- Provide strong, collaborative and inclusive leadership, leading by example and fostering a positive culture in which colleagues feel valued and supported, and a willingness to take a hands-on approach where circumstances require.
- Maintain executive oversight of organisational delivery, ensuring ADCH's programmes, services and activities are delivered effectively through the staff team and aligned with strategic priorities.
- Monitor organisational performance against agreed plans, budgets, objectives and measures, taking action where required and reporting appropriately to the Board.
- Ensure ADCH has effective systems, structures, contracts and external services in place to support the organisation and its staff.
- Ensure responsibilities are appropriately delegated and areas of work are effectively coordinated, maintaining executive oversight without unnecessary duplication of operational delivery.
- Lead and oversee significant organisational projects, developments and change as required.
- Promote and uphold ADCH's Mission, Vision, Values and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation.

The above job description is intended to be an outline of the duties and responsibilities for this role. This is not an exhaustive list, and it is likely to change over time. You may be expected to undertake other duties that are commensurate with this role and grade.

Person Specification

Essential

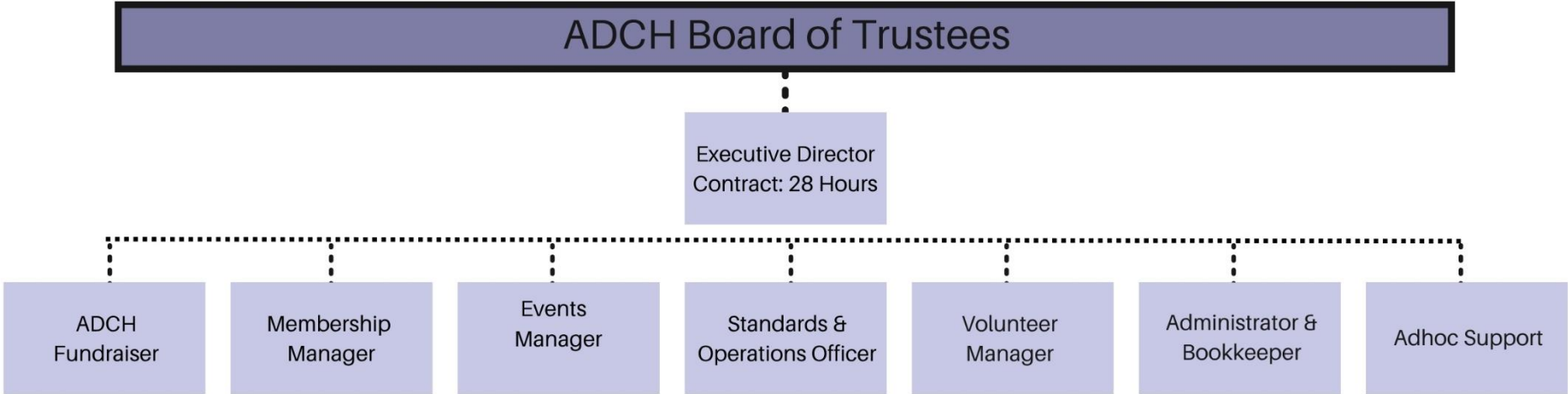
Significant experience of operating at a senior leadership level within a charity, including responsibility for leading, managing and developing staff.
Experience of developing income-generating partnerships, fundraising and/or commercial opportunities.
Proven experience of leading the delivery of organisational strategy, translating strategic priorities into effective delivery and demonstrating organisational performance and impact.
Strong financial and commercial acumen, with significant experience of financial management, budgeting and developing or overseeing sustainable and diversified income.
Experience and understanding of charity governance, compliance and risk management, including working effectively with a Board of Trustees.
Proven ability to build and nurture influential relationships and partnerships at a senior level and represent an organisation credibly with members, funders, policy makers, partners and other external stakeholders.

Desirable

It would also be great (but not essential) if you had:

Senior leadership experience within a membership organisation or representative body.
Strong knowledge and experience of the animal rescue, rehoming and/or animal welfare sector, with an understanding of the differing contexts in which organisations operate across the UK and Ireland.
Experience of policy development, influencing and contributing to sector-wide change.
Experience of using data and insight to demonstrate impact and influence sector development.
Experience of acting as an organisational spokesperson, including media engagement.
Experience of leading a small, remote or geographically dispersed organisation

ADCH Organisational Chart





How to apply

To apply for this role, please complete our [online application form here](#).

As part of your application, you will need to upload:

- your **CV**; and
- a **covering letter** outlining your motivation for applying and demonstrating how your skills, knowledge and experience meet the **Essential criteria** set out in the Person Specification.

Please use specific examples to evidence your experience rather than general statements such as “I usually...”. While we appreciate that a love of dogs and cats may have drawn you to ADCH, we are looking for evidence of the experience and capabilities you would bring to the Executive Director role.

Your covering letter should be **no more than two sides of A4**, using a clear and readable format with a minimum font size of **11pt**.

Closing Date:

Tuesday 8th September 2026, 5pm.

First Round Interviews:

Thursday 17th September 2026 (Online)

Second Round Interviews:

Tuesday 22nd September 2026 (Location TBC)

Please note that we reserve the right to close this post early, should we receive a high volume of applications.

If you do not hear from us within two weeks of the closing date, please assume you were unsuccessful on this occasion.

As a small charity team with limited resources, we regret that we are unable to provide individual feedback on applications.

Please ensure you review this pack carefully before beginning your application.





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Registered charity no. 1180574



adchsocial



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