

**Leicester Animal Aid
Community Pet Support Scheme (CPSS)
Bank CPSS Animal Care Assistant**



Summary of project:

The Community Pet Support Scheme (CPSS) was launched in July 2016 and provides elderly, physically disabled, vulnerable and housebound people with assistance to care for their companion animals in their own homes in the districts of Hinckley & Bosworth, Oadby & Wigston and Blaby.

This is a preventative community outreach initiative. The project aims to enhance human and animal wellbeing through sustaining the relationship between companion animal and human in the community for as long as it is mutually beneficial.

The scheme seeks to:

- Provide elderly, physically disabled, vulnerable and housebound people with assistance to care for their companion animals in their own homes.
- Create a foster support network (for the temporary care of owned pets or animals at LAA seeking an alternative environment).

The prevention/postponement of a move into a rescue centre environment or the provision of an alternative to this type of environment is beneficial for companion animals. The specific improvements in both physical and mental wellbeing arising from pet ownership is evidenced in multiple studies. The 24/7 companionship can be seen as an imaginative 'antidote' to the modern challenges of social isolation and loneliness.

The Scheme is delivered by Animal Care Assistants with the support of a dedicated Co-ordinator in three districts close to our Charity; Blaby, Oadby and Wigston and Hinckley and Bosworth and works in conjunction with professional referral partners such as social services and the local authority.

As anticipated, the Scheme has grown and we recognise the need to expand our current team to support the growing number of client referrals.

The Scheme has been independently evaluated by The School of Veterinary Medicine and Science at the University of Nottingham.

Bank CPSS Animal Care Assistant:

- To deliver companion pet support as agreed between the CPSS Co-ordinator and the client. This will involve visiting the client at their own home. Practical tasks may include: dog walking, basic grooming, cleaning cat litter trays, providing transport for the client and their pet to a nominated veterinary practice and giving flea and worm treatment. (The role does not include providing personal health care for the client).
- To deliver the services with due regard to the CPSS handbook and LAA policies.
- To assist/encourage the client to care for their companion pet as much as is practical.
- To participate in induction and associated training.
- To monitor the wellbeing of the client and their companion pet and to inform the CPSS Co-ordinator promptly of any concerns or issues relating to the on-going delivery of the service agreed that may arise.
- To liaise with the CPSS Co-ordinator to ensure that the data relating to the client, companion animal as well as the services being provided is in accordance with LAA's Data Protection Policy, maintained appropriately and kept up to date.
- To gain feedback after each interaction with the client and their companion pet from the client and provide same to the CPSS Co-ordinator.

- Attend monthly operational meetings at the Charity's Centre in Huncote.

This position operates on a bank work basis which means you will be paid for the appointments you undertake but registration on the bank does not constitute or imply mutuality of obligation between either party; ie there is no obligation on the Charity to offer you a certain number of hours and no obligation on you to take additional hours (over and above your specified availability). Workers will however be asked to indicate their availability in terms of days and location and based on this are expected to take client work with reasonable notice, often requiring ongoing and long-term commitment.

Selection criteria

Motivation

- Appreciation of the mutual benefits arising from supporting the human/companion pet relationship.
- Demonstrated interest in companion animals (and experience of caring for them).
- An understanding of the needs of older people &/or those with on-going health needs from a range of cultural backgrounds.

Willingness to:

- Work in a team comprising of paid and unpaid colleagues involved in the CPSS.
- Undertake initial induction and on-going training.
- Work in line with the CPSS handbook underpinning this programme and associated LAA policies – notably in relation to lone worker, safeguarding vulnerable adults and animal welfare.
- Undergo a DBS enhanced check.
- Able to commit to a minimum of 3 days each week (between Monday and Friday) and availability between the hours of 9am and 4pm. It is envisaged that you will be required to support pet care for between 3 and 4 clients with an average of three visits per client per week. The client appointments are on average 1 hour in duration.

Essential experience/skills

- Experience of caring for domestic pets.
- An understanding and/or experience of supporting vulnerable adults.
- Good interpersonal and communication skills.
- Compassionate.
- Ability to keep accurate and concise records.
- Sound organisational skills.

A full clean driving license and use of a car, for work in the local community is essential.

Support

You will receive on-going support, guidance and advices from the CPSS Co-ordinator with back-up support, as and when needed, from the team at LAA.

Association policies

Staff will be expected to work in accordance with the Charity's policies (including those relating to data protection and confidentiality and safeguarding vulnerable adults). The information related to both clients and companion animals is confidential and should not be either released or discussed with those outside LAA without prior written consent.

Recruitment

Recruitment is undertaken in line with safe recruitment practices. LAA is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults. Applicants should be aware that roles will only be offered subject to relevant checks which include satisfactory references. As this work will include contact with vulnerable adults, staff will need to abide by the Charity and Local Authority's procedures for safeguarding and be prepared to undergo a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check prior to appointment.

The DBS check will be undertaken by LAA and at the expense of LAA.

LAA is an Equal Opportunities employer.

Training

All staff will be provided with a project handbook and will be expected to undertake in-house animal care training, safeguarding vulnerable adults and data protection. The training sessions last approximately 3 hours and are held at the Centre in Huncote.

Insurance

All staff will be covered by LAA's insurance policy. This does not include motor insurance. (Please note that this does not usually cover the giving of prescribed medication to a client's companion animal).

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A Member of the Association of Dog and Cat Homes (ADCH)