

# The Good Board



## Chair of the Trustee Board Support Through Court



December 2021





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Confidential Candidate Brief for the position of:

## **Chair of the Trustee Board**

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# Chair - Support Through Court

## Welcome from the Board

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Welcome, and thank you for your interest in the role of Chair for Support Through Court.

We are a leading social justice charity supporting litigants in person, victims and inexperienced court users, face to face, on our national helpline and on-line as they face court without legal representation.

With the support of a dedicated Board of Trustees and executive team along with hundreds of outstanding and committed volunteers, it has been my privilege to lead the Board of Support Through Court over the past three years.

The new Chair will join the organisation at a time when the need for our services has never been greater or more important. Far too many people face court alone each year and Support Through Court has an ambitious strategy and plan to increase the accessibility of our services to those who need our practical and emotional support.

Support Through Court has a compelling story, mission and reputation for excellent work that makes a difference to the lives of the clients we serve. We couldn't make this happen without the hundreds of highly skilled, dedicated volunteers who are at the heart of the organisation, and our team who make it happen. The Chair is instrumental in ensuring the voice of those we serve, our clients, and those who serve them, our staff, and volunteers, are heard across the organisation.

Our colleagues are committed to modernising Support Through Court, so we better understand and meet the needs of our clients. Over the last 18 months we have adapted our services to respond to the challenges created by the pandemic, improving our digital and phone access and our service model. This hybrid model of face to face, digital and phone access is key to our future development and there is much more to be done.

There will always be more to do to raise the profile of Support Through Court as an advocate and voice for social justice and for those who are not represented through our court system. The Chair has an opportunity to be an influential contributor to that voice and impact, enhancing the reputation of the good work the organisation does and creating a positive legacy.

The work we do is difficult, important, and hugely fulfilling. Knowing that we make a real difference to individuals, often during one of the most difficult and confusing life experiences, is something that galvanises and inspires the whole organisation. If you share our passion for social justice and the desire to make a tangible difference, we look forward to your consideration of the opportunity to join and lead the Board at Support Through Court.



**Peter Crisp, Chair of the Trustee Board, Support Through Court**



# Chair - Support Through Court

## Support Through Court

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Every year, thousands of people in the UK face court alone. Without help, they have to represent themselves, navigating a complex legal system while they go through a divorce, apply for a child arrangement order, make, or defend a personal injury claim or face eviction from their home. The increase in cuts to legal aid and closure of legal advice centres over recent years means that, each year, thousands more people face the civil or family courts alone.

Support Through Court (previously PSU) is a leading social justice charity, and we are the only organisation exclusively dedicated to increasing access to justice for those without legal representation in civil or family courts. We were founded in 2001 by Diana Copisarow OBE and Michael Naish with the help of Mark Sheldon at Linklaters and the aim of reducing disadvantage for individuals without legal representation. Over the last 20 years there have been significant changes to the justice system and an increased need for our support which is anticipated to continue to grow. In 2020 alone we supported clients on almost 30,000 occasions.

At the heart of Support Through Court are our several hundred volunteers. These dedicated and highly skilled individuals provide much needed support every day to our clients. Our volunteers, in turn, are supported by a team of 40 individuals who manage the operations of Support Through Court. The Board comprises diverse Trustees and Support Through Court also has the support of an eminent group of Patrons.

During the lockdown, and despite the huge impact of COVID-19 on the court system and its users, Support Through Court has proved itself to be an adaptable organisation with an innovative workforce and volunteer base. In the absence of being able to see Court users personally, we launched a new National Helpline which is now helping on average over 1,000 clients a month. In addition, our court-based units are steadily coming back to life and there are face-to-face and in court operations across England and Wales with national on-line and telephone support.

There is a real opportunity to continue to grow the charity and provide more support where it is most needed. Support Through Court volunteers provide a free service across England and Wales, offering support and guidance before, during, and after court. Tailored to each individual, volunteers offer wide-ranging practical and emotional support. This assistance from Support Through Court's volunteers not only makes people's experience much less stressful but can also have a direct impact on case outcomes and can be life changing.

Support Through Court is an important voice for social justice and levelling the playing field in what is in danger of becoming a two-tier legal system. This advocacy extends to influencing a broad and complex range of potential stakeholders and developing strong working relationships across the justice system

For further information please visit <https://www.supportthroughcourt.org>



# Chair - Support Through Court

## The Opportunity

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Our current Chair, Peter Crisp reaches the end of his second term of office in the summer of 2022, and we are seeking to appoint his successor along with a successor for the current CEO who is retiring at a similar time.

The role of Chair is to strategically lead the important work of the charity with the Board; working closely with the CEO and executive team to drive forward the five-year strategy with a focus on delivering effective, efficient, and compassionate services to those in need.

Primary responsibilities and duties include:

- Setting the strategic agenda and leading the Board in their responsibility to support and hold the executive team to account for the management of a long-term strategic plan which is regularly reviewed and developed in line with changing needs and circumstances.
- Ensuring the Board are focussed on the strategic risks and opportunities, context, and trends, setting overall policy, goals, targets and evaluating performance of the charity and ensuring robust and transparent financial management and ongoing sustainability of the charity.
- Developing a diverse, inclusive, and actively engaged Board which is representative of key stakeholders. Ensuring all Trustees are aware of their duties; that their experience and skills are fully utilised and that there is an effective Board review and evaluations process in place.
- Inspiring the delivery of the mission of Support Through Court by actively engaging with a complex group of stakeholders including senior leaders across the legal and judicial sector, in government, legislative bodies, potential funders and other partners.
- Ensuring that there is open communication across the organisation so that the voices of Support Through Court clients, staff and volunteers are heard and valued and that concerns are addressed and opportunities for improvement identified throughout the charity.
- Working in partnership with the Chief Executive, helping them to achieve the mission of the organisation and acting as coach and mentor when required.
- Promoting a culture that is agile and impactful in working to support our clients, whilst promoting accountability and responsibility of the executive team, staff, and volunteers.
- Steadily guide our organisation during a period of organisational structure and system changes to modernise services and become more efficient and effective.
- Playing an ambassadorial and advocacy role, supporting us to engage locally, regionally, and nationally in the communities we serve. Through effective networking, influence funding and donors and raise the profile of Support Through Court and issues of social justice.
- Lead the Board in ensuring that it fulfils its responsibilities for effective governance, financial stability, and sustainability of the organisation.



# Chair - Support Through Court

## The Person

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Successful candidates will bring experience and complementary skills to those which currently exist on the Board, demonstrating the following:

- **Sector:** Genuine interest and commitment to social justice and to our vision and purpose, with a familiarity and understanding of the legal services sector particularly helpful.
- **Leadership:** A dynamic and effective leader who is able to manage the Board, inspire individuals across the charity and support the executive team to deliver the strategic plan.
- **Board:** Experience as an effective Non-Executive or Chair of a Board with the ability to balance appropriate challenge with a collaborative approach to decision making.
- **Commercial:** Strong commercial acumen and financial perspective, ideally bringing some understanding and an appreciation of the challenges of fundraising within the charity sector.
- **Communication:** Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills, able to convey ideas clearly and concisely, an open and inclusive style, strong listening, and facilitation skills.
- **Strategic:** Strong strategic, analytical, commercial, and intellectual thinking with experience of supporting and challenging the executive team to deliver a clear strategic vision..
- **Stakeholder:** An excellent reputation, personal credibility, strong diplomatic skills and the ability to build and manage effective relationships with key senior stakeholders.
- **Change:** Experience of leading significant transformational, cultural, and operational change in service-oriented organisations.
- **Governance:** A strong understanding of corporate governance best practice, Nolan principles, diversity, and equal opportunities.

### Successful candidates will also bring:

- Diversity of background, perspective, and experience to challenge board thinking and ensure full representation of stakeholder perspectives.
- Commitment to fairness, equity and impartiality, and commitment to the values and mission of the charity and to the delivery of a truly world class service.



## Chair - Support Through Court

### Non-Executive Board

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- **Elisabeth Davies** - Elisabeth is Chair of the Office for Legal Complaints, the body which oversees delivery of the Legal Ombudsman Scheme. Alongside this she is the Senior Independent Member of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman and a member of the Civil Justice Council.
- **Caroline Field** - Caroline is a volunteer at our charity in Liverpool. Caroline has a background in Housing and has served as a Board Director in a number of sectors.
- **David Wilkin** - David is an Emeritus Professor of Health Services Research and a magistrate with extensive experience as a charity trustee in various non-executive roles, including as Chair of Manchester CAB.
- **Samantha Gargaro** - Samantha is a Solicitor with extensive experience of working in private practice. She is currently Director of Birmingham City University Law Clinic.
- **Tim Nash** - Tim is Chief Executive of Edwin Coe LLP.
- **Stephen Adler** – Stephen is a Support Through Court volunteer. Previously he was a Magistrate is a family mediator and ran his own management consultancy, advising at Board and Senior Executive level on strategic, operational and business decisions.
- **Alexander Hulbert** - Alex has been a solicitor for a decade in matrimonial and private affairs and is now a Director and Chief Operating Officer for one of the country's most respected litigation lending businesses.
- **Anthony Fincham** - Before retiring in 2019, Anthony was a partner at CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang from 1984.
- **Kay-Dene Petgrave** - Currently trainee solicitor at BDB Pitmans, Kay-Dene previously worked in paralegal for Bates Wells, and the General Pharmaceutical Council.
- **Robert Pitt**- Robert is a volunteer for Support Through Court and is a management consultant with extensive experience of developing and implementing business and technology strategy and driving business change.
- **Zubair Chaudry** - Zubair joined HMRC in 2014, now working as a tax litigator in the Solicitors' Office. Since 2019, he has also sat as a Magistrate.



# Chair - Support Through Court

## Terms of appointment

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### **Remuneration and time commitment:**

This is a non-paid, volunteer role for approximately 2-3 days per month.

### **Board meetings:**

Board and committee meetings are usually held quarterly in London although some may be held via videoconference.

### **Term of office:**

Board members are appointed for a period of up to three years, with an option for the Board to review and extend the term for a maximum additional period of three years.

## Equal Opportunities

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At Support Through Court, we are committed to equality of opportunity for all. We believe that the most effective and impactful boards are those that are diverse, inclusive and reflect the communities we serve, and we welcome applications from all backgrounds.

We are committed to supporting equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring that all eligible individuals are considered on the basis of merit irrespective of gender, colour or race, nationality or ethnic or national origin, age, disability, religion, marital status, sexuality, part time working, caring responsibility or political beliefs.

## Key dates

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We will work to accommodate diary requirements where possible, with key timings as follows:

- **December/January:** Please send your CV and covering letter to The Good Board by 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022 via: [shivani@thegoodboard.com](mailto:shivani@thegoodboard.com)
- **January:** First meetings will be with The Good Board in January 2022.
- **Early-February:** First stage meetings with Support Through Court will take place end of January or in early February.
- **Referencing:** References will be taken at shortlist stage, please provide details of two referees whom we would be able to contact at this point.
- **February:** Final stage meetings with Support Through Court will take place in February.
- **Spring:** The appointment is expected to be confirmed in the early spring.



# Chair - Support Through Court

## Support Through Court and The Good Board

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The Good Board is a purpose-led executive search and leadership development firm. We work with organisations and leadership teams to accelerate positive change and are delighted to partner with Support Through Court. As Louise Gatenby our Founder says:

*“Working towards the SDG goal of ‘Reduced Inequalities’ is a core focus for The Good Board, and we are delighted to be able to partner with Support Through Court who demonstrate their passion and commitment to social justice in everything they do.*

*Providing practical and emotional support to vulnerable individuals facing court alone is vital to securing fair and just outcomes and in reducing social injustice. We are privileged to partner with Support Through Court on the appointment of a new Chair to lead the ongoing success and impact of the organisation and people they serve.”*

The Good Board team deliver leadership appointments and development programmes across a range of sectors with expertise in not for profit, charity as well as commercial sectors through our three core services:

<b>Find</b>	Executive & Non-Executive Search, Interim and Fractional Leadership.
<b>Develop</b>	Leadership Development, Coaching & Consulting.
<b>Connect</b>	Creating mutually beneficial opportunities for collaboration.

## Contact Information

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If you have any queries in relation to the role or application process, or wish to have an informal confidential discussion please contact:

- Lexie Sims                      [lexie@thegoodboard.com](mailto:lexie@thegoodboard.com)
- Shivani Patel                    [shivani@thegoodboard.com](mailto:shivani@thegoodboard.com)

