

**Independent
Audit and Risk
Committee
Member
candidate pack**



Pets change lives
We change theirs



Welcome from Clive Everest

Trustee and Audit and Risk Committee Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming an Independent Audit and Risk Committee Member at Blue Cross.

Animals, especially pets, hold a special place in my heart. Witnessing the profound impact pets have on people's lives has reinforced my belief in the crucial role Blue Cross plays in supporting both pets and their owners during challenging times.

Volunteers are the backbone of Blue Cross, and your involvement on our Audit and Risk Committee will contribute to ensuring transparency, accountability, and good governance within our charity.

As an Independent Audit and Risk Committee Member, you will be joining a dedicated team committed to ensuring the wellbeing of animals across the United Kingdom. Your contribution will be invaluable, and your oversight and expertise will help us manage resources effectively, ensuring every donation directly supports animals and their owners.

Joining the Blue Cross family means collaborating with likeminded individuals who share your passion for making a positive impact. Together, we uphold the highest standards of integrity and stewardship in all our endeavours in support of our charity's value of passion courage and inclusivity.

By volunteering at Blue Cross, you will make a tangible difference in the lives of animals and experience personal fulfilment, professional growth, and a sense of belonging within our vibrant community.

I look forward to the possibility of working together to make a difference in the lives of animals and their owners.

Clive Everest

Clive Everest
Trustee and Audit and Risk Committee Chair



About Blue Cross

The charity has been changing the lives of sick, injured and homeless pets, and the people who love them, since 1897. Our vision is a world where all pets enjoy a healthy and happy life with people who love them.

Pets are at the heart of everything we do. We love the amazing difference they make to the people they live with. So we offer lifelong support and advice to help that unique relationship thrive.

Each year, thousands of cats, dogs, small pets and horses turn to our animal hospitals, clinics and rehoming services for treatment and to find them the happy homes they deserve. Our tailor-made service means we help each pet find the right person for them.

Meanwhile, our education and behaviour teams prepare future pet owners to properly care for their pets for life. We have a national programme of free talks and workshops to promote responsible pet ownership, inspire empathy and help develop successful people-pet relationships – both now and in the future.

Our animal hospitals and pet care clinics provide low-cost veterinary treatment to sick and injured pets when their owners can't afford private veterinary fees. We offer a good quality first-opinion veterinary service focused on welfare, pain relief and a good quality of life. We are not a referral service, and we have to select treatments to be cost effective so we can help as many pets as possible. This may mean that some drugs and procedures are not available from Blue Cross.

Blue Cross partners and collaborates with other like-minded groups to improve welfare for animals across the UK. We focus our work in areas where

we have proven expertise and can make the greatest impact. Our purpose is to help pets and people thrive together. And Blue Cross advocates for meaningful lasting change to help the lives of pets, horses and people.

In April 2024, we launched our updated three-year strategy. It's all based around sustainably growing our services so we can help even more pets and people. Our key goals include expanding our veterinary services, increasing the impact of our rehoming services and reaching more people who have lost a beloved pet. Our full strategy document will be available on our website from Monday 29 April.

We rely entirely on the generosity of donations to deliver our service, along with the contributions people make towards the cost of their pet's treatments at our animal hospitals and clinics. Blue Cross does not receive any money from the government.

Details of our financial performance can be found in our annual report and accounts on our website. This is currently based on 2022 as work is still in progress on our 2023 report.



About the Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee at Blue Cross plays a crucial role in ensuring transparency, accountability, and good governance within the charity. Operating as a sub-committee of the Board, it provides oversight and assurance on audit, risk management, internal control and corporate governance matters.

The Committee oversees the appointment and work of external auditors, directs a risk-based programme of audits led by the in-house Head of Compliance/Head of Internal Audit, and commissions work from the executive to address specific areas of risk.

We recognise the value of appointing an Independent Audit and Risk Committee Member with experience and skills across some or all of the areas of assurance, accounting, operational finance, risk management and IT to enhance the Committee's capabilities.



About the role

As an Independent Audit and Risk Committee Member, you will play a pivotal role in supporting the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance at Blue Cross.

You will contribute towards ensuring that the Audit and Risk Committee provides critical yet supportive feedback on our charity's service and operations to maintain the highest standards of governance and accountability.

Collaboration with fellow committee members to address governance and risk management issues will be integral to the role, contributing to the overall effectiveness and sustainability of our Charity.

Your responsibilities will include:

- Reviewing the Charity's risk management arrangements and seeking appropriate assurance that risks are being effectively managed and mitigated within the Charity's risk appetite
- Reviewing and approving Blue Cross's risk-based internal audit plan, considering the results of this work and management's plans to address issues raised.
- Assessing reports from external auditors and reviewing the annual accounts and Trustees' Report.

- Providing oversight over the Charity's programme and project governance and controls.
- Reviewing and supporting the implementation of policies on counter-fraud and Speaking Out.

Terms

The Independent Audit and Risk Committee member will serve a three-year term, with the possibility of renewal for a further three years. As part of our commitment to fostering a successful partnership, we will conduct a review after the first 12 months to ensure that the role is fulfilling and rewarding for both you and Blue Cross.

Commitment

You will be required to attend at least 3 out of 4 meetings per year, typically held in March, June, July and October. Other than the March meeting which is held at Blue Cross's offices in Victoria, London or at Burford, these are usually held remotely over Microsoft Teams. Meetings last approximately 2.5 to 3 hours, with preparation time required beforehand.

The Independent Audit and Risk Committee Member is a volunteer role and is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, although expenses for travel may be claimed.



About you:

We are seeking an individual dedicated to animal welfare and the governance of charitable organisations, showcasing genuine compassion for animals and a keen interest in supporting initiatives to enhance their welfare.

Understanding the crucial role of governance in charitable entities, you will need to be steadfast in upholding the values and mission of Blue Cross.

You should be ready to get involved and committed to dedicating the necessary time to the role, attending meetings when required.

We are looking for candidates with previous experience spanning some or all of audit, risk management, fundraising assurance, operational assurance (such as veterinary or animal welfare), IT projects, or corporate governance. Strong analytical and critical thinking skills, excellent communication and interpersonal skills, and a passion for our mission and values are essential. The ability to work collaboratively in a team environment is also important.

Essential

- Experience working at a Board level position or at a senior level in an Accountancy, Finance, or IT related organisation
 - Proven ability to communicate and explain financial information to members of the Board and other stakeholders
 - Experience in risk management principles and practices
 - Experience in fundraising assurance or relevant operational assurance (such as veterinary or animal welfare)
 - Broad knowledge of accounting, financial and business principles
 - Analytical and evaluation skills, demonstrating good judgement
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, liabilities, and responsibilities of trustees and clear on the difference between governance functions and management functions
 - Able to work well as part of a diverse team of trustees
 - Strong strategic awareness and experience of high-level strategy development
 - A good communicator with excellent interpersonal skills, able to both empower and challenge supportively

Desirable

- Previous experience of working as a Trustee and collective decision making that requires an understanding of commercial and non-commercial issues
- Experience as an executive or non-executive in not-for-profit entities.
- Qualified accountant, risk manager, or IT professional with demonstrated commercial awareness and knowledge
- Knowledge of charity finance and accounting principles, laws, and best practices

For an informal conversation ahead of applying, please do contact Sam Francis, Resourcing Manager by email at recruitment@bluecross.org.uk

How to apply:

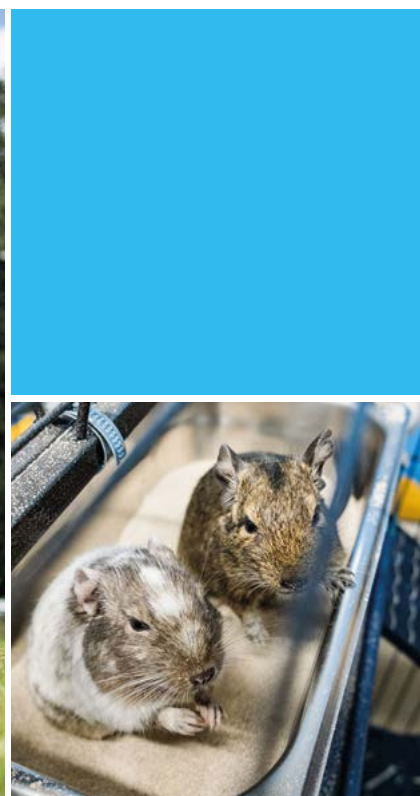
Please click the 'apply now' button to submit your cover letter outlining your interest in the role along with your CV before the closing date of midnight on 16 May 2024.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion

Diversity and inclusion at Blue Cross means creating a workplace where all people, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, nation or country of origin, disability, age, and socioeconomic backgrounds are welcome, respected, supported, and have access to equal opportunities.

We are working hard to reflect the world we live in and the communities we serve at every level of our organisation. As much as we have made positive advances, we consider diversity and inclusion to be a work in progress – a continual commitment that remains a priority for all of us.

If you would like to talk to us about any reasonable adjustments or changes to our recruitment process to support you to be at your best, then please get in touch either via email at volunteer@bluecross.org.uk, via telephone on 01993 825515 or if you would prefer a video call then we can arrange this using Microsoft Teams.





If you would like further information about our work,
please call our supporter care team on:

0300 790 9903
info@bluecross.org.uk
bluecross.org.uk

Registered charity number: 224392 (England and Wales), SC040154 (Scotland).



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