



Veterinary - Public Affairs

Job Title:	Regional Public Affairs Officer – Northern Ireland
Reporting to:	Public Affairs Manager
Dogs Trust Grade:	E
Location:	Ballymena rehoming centre

Job Purpose

To implement the delivery of Dogs Trust's public affairs activities at a regional level in the UK, focussing on Northern Ireland.

The Regional Public Affairs Officer – Northern Ireland is responsible for implementing the Public Affairs programme in Northern Ireland, to raise awareness of the charity and our policies and positions amongst key opinion formers. This primarily includes Local Government and the Devolved Parliaments/Assemblies.

The post holder must be able to travel to meetings and events across the UK as required, often overnight, and be willing to work outside regular business hours. An interest and sympathy for the aims of Dogs Trust is essential and the post holder must be comfortable around dogs.

Overview of the Department/Team

The Public Affairs team works across Westminster, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the EU, to ensure the health and welfare of dogs is always taken into consideration by policy makers. In addition to our direct political engagement, we chair the Pet Advertising Advisory Group (PAAG) which aims to combat growing concerns regarding the irresponsible advertising of pets for sale, rehoming, and exchange. We also provide the secretariat for the EU Dog & Cat Alliance, through which we engage with EU policy makers, and call for EU action to build a better Europe for dogs and cats.

Key areas of accountability

To implement Dogs Trust's ambitious public affairs programme in Northern Ireland, under the steer of the Public Affairs Manager and in consultation with the Head of Public Affairs and Veterinary Director. This will include:

- Draft briefings and reports and ensure these are evidence-based.
- Initiate both internal and external research as appropriate to underpin political activities and positions, under guidance set by the Public Affairs Manager.
- Organise and attend political events, such as local government or Parliamentary/Assembly receptions, briefings, drop-in sessions, and other events. Also organise politician and stakeholder visits to Dogs Trust rehoming centres and other Dogs Trust venues/activities as relevant.
- Monitor and initiate relevant activities at a local government and devolved administration level and ensure politicians are briefed on Dogs Trust's positions. Keep

<p>the Public Affairs team and wider Dogs Trust departments briefed on developments as required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the risks or benefits of any planned regulatory or policy changes for Northern Ireland, both in terms of the impact at a regional and wider UK level. Highlight any impact identified to the Public Affairs Manager and help to construct corresponding plans, positions, and messaging. Keep the Public Affairs team and wider Dogs Trust departments briefed on developments as required. • Co-ordinate and produce Dogs Trust's submissions to relevant consultations. Ensure input from other Dogs Trust departments is included as relevant. • Identify opportunities where Public Affairs work can be amplified by media coverage and work with the Communications team to deliver joint messaging. • Proactively create content for the Dogs Trust website and social media channels, briefings, letters, press releases, and other communications. • Develop project plans and lead on the implementation of projects. • Respond to Public Affairs enquiries as required.
<p>To represent Dogs Trust in meetings, stakeholder and sector groups, events, and media interviews Northern Ireland. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain positive relationships with key external stakeholders including local government representatives, parliamentarians, civil servants, and others. • Represent Dogs Trust at external meetings, including meetings with local government representatives, politicians, governments, and other stakeholders. • Represent Dogs Trust at sector and stakeholder groups and ensure our positions are represented in any output from such groups. • Act as a media spokesperson. • Draft and deliver presentations at meetings and events.
Responsible for ensuring expenditure on their areas of responsibility is in line with the annual Public Affairs budget and reporting any discrepancies to the Head of Public Affairs.
Responsible for the accurate processing and storage of data within remit.
Any other reasonable duties as required.

Person Specification
<i>Essential skills, qualifications, experience, and attributes</i>
Educated to degree level or equivalent experience
Experience in political/public affairs and an understanding of the political landscape in the UK is essential. This includes an understanding of Local Government and the Devolved Parliaments/Assemblies.
Excellent organisational skills, the ability to work to tight deadlines and the ability to manage multiple tasks at once.
Positive, flexible, proactive, and creative attitude.
Excellent interpersonal communication skills including active listening, assertiveness, flexibility, influencing and negotiating.
Excellent verbal communication skills, in order to be able to effectively communicate complex positions to policy makers and other stakeholders, and to give presentations and media interviews.
Excellent written English and the ability to draft professional correspondence and communications. Track record of disseminating complex information in a clear and concise manner for written materials and for different audiences.
Ability to work both without supervision and as a member of a team and to develop and maintain effective working relationships throughout the charity, as well as with politicians, civil servants, and other external stakeholders.
Able to travel across the UK and EU as required, often overnight, and be willing to work outside of regular business hours.
An interest and sympathy for the aims of Dogs Trust and an appreciation for dogs is essential.
<i>Desirable skills, qualifications, experience, and attributes</i>
Experience in political campaigning and policy research and development.
Experience in project management.

Experience working with social media.

An understanding of animal welfare.

Demonstrable experience of overseeing the organisation of event management.

Valid manual UK Driving licence.

Additional information

The role is based at Ballymena rehoming centre for two days per week.

The duties in this job description may change from time to time following a review and in discussion between the post holder and Line Manager/Director.

