

# Meet a Trustee

## Robert Watson, Vice-Chair of ACAT

Interviewed by Alison Jenaway

AJ. I am keen to make the Trustees of ACAT more visible and accessible to the membership and, as part of that effort, I hope to have an article in each issue of Reformulation which introduces one of the trustees to you all.

Trustees of ACAT are elected each year at the AGM by the membership and are unpaid volunteers (though travel expenses can be paid). Their role is to make sure that the funds of the charity are spent appropriately and are used to further the aims of the charity. At the moment, the commitment required is attendance at three board meetings a year, in London (from 1.30pm to 5pm), to take part in decision making. There is usually an additional trustees Awayday once a year to focus more on long term strategy for ACAT. It is also hoped that trustees will bring certain skills to projects that the board wish to take forward, and this may involve an additional time commitment.

In this issue, I am introducing Robert Watson, who has been Vice-Chair of ACAT since 2014.

AJ. How did you discover CAT?

RW. My father, Jim Watson, gave CAT a home at Guy's Hospital in the 1980s when he was Professor of Psychiatry and he always spoke highly of Tony Ryle and CAT. He encouraged my interest in it when I was studying Psychology and after I qualified as a Clinical Psychologist.

AJ. What is your day job?

RW. I have been in private practice since 2009 although now living in Spain my day job is learning Spanish at school!

AJ. Who has had the biggest influence on you in your CAT journey?

RW. Hilary Beard and Deidre Haslam.

AJ. What made you want to become a trustee?

RW. Hilary Beard encouraged me and I was keen to have some organisational management experience plus I wanted to help make CAT more accessible and successful, and build its presence in the NHS and beyond.

AJ. What are the best bits of being a Trustee so far?

RW. Being part of the 2017 joint ACAT/ICATA Conference Committee was a very rewarding experience. Working with capable and skilled colleagues has been enriching.

AJ. What have you found most difficult?

RW. Understandably in a role like this you do not always agree with all the decisions made or the strategic directions taken but we are able to voice our opinions and perspectives openly and I think this makes for good decision making for the most part.

AJ. What are you hoping to achieve through being a Trustee?

RW. I would hope that CAT can continue to increase its presence in the NHS and it would be good if we can feature more robustly in the NICE guidelines than we do now. I would also like to see continued increases in membership numbers and a more interactive relationship between ACAT



and its membership. I also think we need to stop relating to CBT as if it were our enemy. In my experience all the CBT therapists I ever met only had good things to say about CAT.

AJ. What should ACAT do if it were given a million pounds to spend?

Run some RCTs.

AJ. Where would you most like to be right now?

RW. In Spain on a beach – hold on a minute I'm here already.

Alison Jenaway is a consultant psychiatrist in psychotherapy, CAT therapist and supervisor and currently Chair of ACAT. If you are interested in the possibility of becoming a Trustee of ACAT, and perhaps sitting in as an observer at one of the Trustee meetings, then do contact Alison at [alisonjenaway@gmail.com](mailto:alisonjenaway@gmail.com)