contact For families with disabled children

# Associate Skills Profile

| Areas of expertise | Associate name: | Carol Foyle | Catherine Ratcliffe | Fazilla Amide | Gail Bedding | Jacqueline Wye | John Wilson | Kate Rowe |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Starting up a new forum/forum development: | Group development, governance, policies and procedures | √ | √ | | | √ | √ | |
| | Legal structures | √ | √ | | | √ | √ | |
| | Group dynamics and relationship development | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | | √ |
| | Volunteer and member recruitment | √ | √ | √ | | √ | | |
| | Meeting facilitation | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | | √ |
| | Roles and responsibilities | √ | √ | √ | | √ | √ | √ |
| | Parent representative development and training | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | | |
| | Leadership | √ | √ | √ | | √ | | √ |
| Organisational development: | Business planning | √ | | | | √ | √ | |
| | Action planning | √ | √ | | √ | √ | | √ |
| | Fundraising | √ | | | | √ | √ | |
| | Grant and Bids | √ | √ | | | √ | √ | |
| | Finance and Bookkeeping | | | | | √ | √ | |
| | Human Resources | | √ | | | | | |
| | Employing people | | | | | | √ | |
| | Organisational health check | √ | | | | √ | √ | |
| | IT and technical | | | | | √ | | |
| Comms and PR | Communications | √ | √ | √ | | √ | | |
| | Public Relations | √ | | | | √ | | |
| | Marketing | | √ | | | √ | | |
| | Social media | | √ | | | √ | | |
| | Publications | | | | | √ | | |
| | Copy writing | | | | | | | |
| | Editing | | | | | | | |
| | Film making | | | | | | | |
| Training: | Workshops and training | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | | √ |
| | Facilitation | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | | √ |
| SEND landscape: | SEND landscape and policy | √ | √ | | | √ | | |
| | SEND Law | | √ | | | | | |
| | Health landscape and structures | | | √ | √ | | | |
| | Local authority structure and practice | √ | √ | | | √ | | |
| Relationships: | Conflict management and de-escalation | √ | √ | | | √ | | √ |
| | Mediation | √ | √ | | | √ | | |
| | Working with partners | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | | √ |
| | Co-production | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | | √ |
| | Solution focused approaches | √ | √ | | | √ | | |
| Diversity: | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion | | √ | √ | | √ | | |
| Investigative: | Fraud awareness and investigation | √ | √ | | | √ | √ | |
| | Complaints handling and investigation | √ | √ | | | √ | √ | |
| | Appeals process and experience of conducting appeals | √ | √ | | | | | |
| | Report writing | | √ | | | √ | √ | |

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# Associate Skills Profile

| Areas of expertise | Associate name: | Kath Bromfield | Katie Clarke | Lara O'Connell | Laura Burling | Lucy Smith | Ruth Hobbs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Starting up a new forum/forum development: | Group development, governance, policies and procedures | | | | √ | √ | √ |
| | Legal structures | | | | | | √ |
| | Group dynamics and relationship development | √ | √ | | √ | √ | |
| | Volunteer and member recruitment | | √ | | √ | | √ |
| | Meeting facilitation | √ | √ | | √ | √ | |
| | Roles and responsibilities | | | | √ | | √ |
| | Parent representative development and training | √ | √ | | √ | | √ |
| | Leadership | √ | √ | | √ | √ | √ |
| Organisational development: | Business planning | | | | √ | √ | √ |
| | Action planning | √ | | | √ | √ | √ |
| | Fundraising | | | | | | |
| | Grant and Bids | | | | √ | | |
| | Finance and Bookkeeping | | | | | | √ |
| | Human Resources | | | | √ | | |
| | Employing people | | | | | | |
| | Organisational health check | | | | √ | | √ |
| | IT and technical | | | | | | √ |
| Comms and PR | Communications | √ | √ | | √ | √ | √ |
| | Public Relations | √ | | | | √ | |
| | Marketing | | | | | √ | √ |
| | Social media | | √ | | | √ | |
| | Publications | | | | | √ | √ |
| | Copy writing | | | | | | |
| | Editing | | | | | | |
| | Film making | | | | | | |
| Training: | Workshops and training | √ | √ | | √ | √ | √ |
| | Facilitation | √ | √ | | √ | √ | √ |
| SEND landscape: | SEND landscape and policy | √ | | | √ | | √ |
| | SEND Law | | | | | | √ |
| | Health landscape and structures | | √ | | √ | | √ |
| | Local authority structure and practice | √ | √ | | √ | | √ |
| Relationships: | Conflict management and de-escalation | √ | | | √ | | |
| | Mediation | √ | | | √ | | |
| | Working with partners | √ | √ | | √ | √ | √ |
| | Co-production | √ | √ | | √ | | √ |
| | Solution focused approaches | √ | √ | | √ | √ | √ |
| Diversity: | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion | √ | √ | | √ | √ | |
| Investigative: | Fraud awareness and investigation | | | | | √ | √ |
| | Complaints handling and investigation | | | | | | √ |
| | Appeals process and experience of conducting appeals | | | | | | |
| | Report writing | | | | | | √ |

# Associate Pen Pictures

**Associate Name: Carol Susan Foyle**

**Home region:** South East London
**Travel Range:** Happy to travel via public transport

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** Carol has 46 years professional experience of working with children, young people and adults with SEND and disabilities and their families. She has worked with in all sectors latterly spending 22 years as the strategic leader for a number of complex services for children and young people with disabilities and their families. Carol has always been passionate about the work she does. The ability to be flexible and effect change in a way that empowers individuals' families and teams to realise potential and achieve outstanding outcomes is key to the approach she applies to her work. Carol has extensive experience of leading and facilitating teams, listening, consulting, and networking with people in all settings and backgrounds. She has a particular interest in working with families, change management, from an organisational, personal and family perspective. Carol can look at a situation and think about solutions, often through creative thinking to solve a problem in an innovative way. Carol is trained in systemic therapy change for organisations and individuals along with being a trainer mediator.

Carol's personal situations and experiences have informed her ability to know what to ask and why but only in that her experience is her own lived experience! There remains the need to ensure we can gain further insight, understanding and feedback from people from all backgrounds and in all situations. No one size fits all and we need to be creative and flexible when thinking about engaging with and involving people. Carol has many years' experience of being on various management committees and Boards within the NHS and the voluntary sector and as a Chair of Governors for a Queens Park Federation in Westminster within the maintained sector. Carol is a trained mediator and has experience of setting up services from early years to adults and for families. She has been responsible for CQC and Ofsted registered settings along developing volunteer schemes with parent champions, providing training and workshops in various areas over the years. Since retiring Carol has spent much of her time supporting Parent Forums to refresh and set up again and providing support to Local Authorities and Health organisations to understand and engage with the true meaning of Co-Production and what effective partnerships look like.

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**Associate Name: Catherine Ratcliffe**

**Home region:** Yorkshire
**Travel Range:** 100 miles

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** Catherine Ratcliffe has dedicated 38 years to working across two local authority areas, beginning her career in social care before moving into education, where she found her true professional passion. Prior to retirement, she held the role of Strategic Lead within Children's Services, overseeing SEND teams, developing parenting services, and leading a wide range of initiatives designed to improve outcomes for children and families.

Since 2012, Catherine has worked as a Contact Associate, collaborating with 44 different Parent Carer Forums across the country. Through this extensive experience, she has gained a deep understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and impact of effective parent participation and co-production.

Catherine currently serves as Chair of the Board of Directors for Genuine Partnerships, alongside her roles as trustee for her local Parent Carer Forum and Chair of a school governing body. Her leadership experience, combined with the insight gained from working alongside numerous forums, enables her to provide practical and strategic support to emerging Parent Carer Forums. She is particularly skilled in helping new forums establish strong governance structures, develop sustainable foundations, and build meaningful partnerships with local services and communities.

**Associate Name: Fazilla Amide**

**Home region:** London
**Travel Range:** No face to face support

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** I've been part of a forum since 2012 and chair for 8 years. I've successfully developed our forum to grow from 4 parents (only 1 active) to 10 active parent carers and successfully succession planned so there was a chair in waiting for me to hand over to. My background is in Human Resources, leadership, and management development training, having delivered training for over 30 years and parent carer training since 2008. I regularly run leadership and parent participation courses as well.

Between 2017 and 2022 I was one of the leads of the London Region of the NNPCF. So, I am fully aware of all the challenges our forums face.

I've also worked with LA, Education and Social Care leads as a consultant and was a CEO of a Healthwatch. I am currently working within NHS England so am also familiar with the health care system.



**Associate Name: Gail Bedding**

**Home region:** Isle of Wight/South East
**Travel Range:** Happy to travel anywhere if accommodation is available

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** Involved as CEO of PCF for many years, SE NNPCF Rep and NNPCF Rep I understand how hard it can be making a difference and the importance of relationship building internally and externally. Other areas of knowledge and delivery: Expert Parent Programme Transition into Adulthood for Complex Health YP and other versions Together for Short Lives Family expert The Healthy Parent Carer Programme for Exeter University Contact's Co-Production, Resilience, Health, Parent Rep training workshops and happy to put together anything that might help! Recently was the Project Manager for the DfE funded EYs Project and then Business Development Manager for Contact but going back to Freelance is where my strengths and passion lie. Now that I am an Empty Nester, I'm happy to travel and make a difference wherever I am needed.

**Associate Name: Jacqueline Ann Wye**

**Home region:** Essex/London
**Travel Range:** 2/3 hours when return home same day, but any distance if overnight stay or a longer piece of work that requires intensive support over 2/3 days.

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** Historically a Social Worker, Team Manager and then Service Lead within Family Support, I now work with CONTACT as one of their experienced Associates. Over the past 10 years I have used my skills to support the important and sometimes difficult work that Parent Carer Forums undertake. Working with both emerging and longer standing forums across the country with the challenges they face and supporting them to get the best possible outcomes for SEND families. When working with emerging forums, I have extensive experience in:

- Forming a committed group
- Support with Grant applications
- Initial planning
- Early event planning
- Developing Roles/Responsibilities – what roles, who does what, when, how

- Building parent/carer membership – how to do this and how to make maximum use of networks
- How to harness views/experiences of SEND parent/carers so they have a platform to have their say and you have information needed to inform improvements in SEND service design/delivery
- Working productively with key partners (Local Authority, Health and other SEND groups)
- Getting infrastructure right (Policies/websites/social media/Banking/Financial monitoring/marketing/advertising)
- Team building/training workshops

For Existing Forums, I have extensive experience in:

- Conflict Resolution – Within the management group, from parent/carers members or when working with key partners.
- Grant Applications and financial management
- Conference or large event management
- Regrouping when key members leave or when moving on
- In finding a 'Support Partner' or when becoming self-sufficient I hope I can be of service to your forum.



**Associate Name: John Wilson**

**Travel Range:** No face-to-face support

**Brief precis of Associate experience**: I have over 25 years' experience of supporting Voluntary and volunteer led organisations, including 10 years working in early years and commissioning for Leeds City Council and before that the pre-school learning alliance. I am currently the Chief Officer of Community Matters and their current lead on organizational governance and development.



**Associate Name: Kate Rowe**

**Home region:** South West
**Travel Range:** Preferably there and back in a day, no more than around 2.5 hours travel each way

Brief precis of Associate experience: Kate is a facilitator, leader & manager, with over 30 years' experience of working in community settings, who continues to find creative & positive ways to help people find a voice. Her interest in Parent Carer Forums is rooted in a strong belief that meaningful relationship-based co-production is the key to improving public services. Kate brings her skills as an active listener, a clear communicator, and an enabling facilitator.

She knows that groups form and re-form again & again while they try to achieve their aims, and that conflict is a normal, intrinsic aspect of teamwork. She is able to provide support and challenge to groups where conflict has become a barrier to their work. Kate offers her extensive experience of leading teams in outcomes-based work planning and developing straightforward monitoring tools and evaluation methods. Kate has worked for national & local charities, borough councils and neighbourhood renewal companies, as well as delivering training & facilitation services as a self-employed consultant. She has delivered services to adults (e.g. neighbour mediation; learning ambassadors; singing for health and wellbeing,) and children (e.g. family group conferencing; supervised contact; youth information café). Kate has a degree in Peace Studies with Conflict Resolution, PGC in Psychotherapy Theory, Level 6 in Leadership & Management, and a Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults.



**Associate Name: Kath Bromfield**

**Home region:** North West
**Travel Range:** Happy to travel anywhere as long as paid for time

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** I am a passionate associate working widely within the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) sector, a former teacher with 20 years experience of PCF's and NNPCF. I am committed to honest conversations defined by a commitment to authentic ways of working together around co-production and systemic change. I firmly believe that the most impactful local services are those designed in equal partnership with the children young people, their families in both individual and strategic voice.

Throughout the last 20 years I have worked in a solution focused way whilst being intentionally disruptive within conversations to ensure genuine relationships exist. I work as an independent chair, a skilled facilitator in training and hold relationships and trust at the heart of everything. I believe person-centred approaches can work within a system to ensure that both strategic and individual lived experience can be used as data to triangulate commissioning.



**Associate Name: Katie Clarke**

**Home region:** Calderdale /Halifax
**Travel Range:** Up to 2 hours' drive 4 hrs train journey

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** As the founder of one of the first parent forums in the country and one of the co-founders of the NNPCF I have over 25 years of experience of working in the field of genuine co-production and listening

to the voices of family members. I know first-hand the joys of juggling of being a parent carer and running a forum. I have 30 years of experience of the voluntary sector and setting up many programmes including award winning projects.

I have been an Associate and trainer/facilitator for Contact for 15 years. During that time I have met and worked across the country with 100s of parents to share with forums on what works, what doesn't and what we can do together to make a difference to families' lives. I have a special interest in reflective working, reaching out to a range of families from different cultures, community development and wellbeing. I have led on and worked alongside many of the Contact trainers in developing and delivering the parent carer workshops, I work in a participative, friendly, fun, welcoming and inclusive way. Looking forward to working with you, learning more about your forum and how I can best support you.

A bit about me – I love walking my dog in our local hills, I am a mum to 6 adult children including two with disabilities, we host refugees in our home, I am a walk leader for our refugee centre, I love films as long as they are not scary or violent, I don't like cold water swimming!



**Associate Name: Lara O'Connell Home region:** South East
**Travel Range:** 7 hours maximum

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** I am a parent carer who has volunteered and worked in parent carer participation since 2010 starting in my local area, then becoming the South East Rep and Participation Lead for NNPCF. I have been a Contact Associate since 2018 and have work in a NHS Mental Health Trust where I have continued to develop person centred approaches. Areas and skills I bring to my role are:

- Developing structures to support working in partnerships
- Impact and Evaluation reports
- Setting up governance of forums, supporting Visions and Aims
- Supporting frameworks around co production
- Co production training for local areas
- Understanding the wider voices of families
- Understanding the role of Equity for parent carer forums
- Facilitating relationships building
- Co-developing and Co-delivering Leadership Training
- Solution Focused Therapy/ Coaching

- My values are being open, honest and transparency.



**Associate Name: Laura Burling**

**Home region:** North West
**Travel Range:** 3 hours maximum

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** I have over 20 years' experience, knowledge and understanding of voice, influence and co-production work, specifically in public services, the voluntary, community, charity and healthcare sector. I am a warm connector, skilled communicator, facilitator, trainer and health coach.

My lived and learnt experiences have given me an affinity to relationship centred practice and evidence-based improvement work. Empowering people and communities to co-produce and facilitate change across services and systems is something I am passionate about.

I had the privilege of being involved in the work of the parent carer participation team at Contact from 2011 to 2018 as a regional adviser and as an associate since 2020. I bring a wealth of skills and experience to parent carer forums, their membership, and wider partners. I deliver bespoke packages of support that assist forums and stakeholders to explore areas of work, including – governance and structures, policies, grant funding, financial management, navigating challenging relationships, stakeholder mapping, communication and engagement strategies, partnership working, volunteer management, future planning, sustainability and much more. I do this through an offer of: Training, Facilitation, Mediation, Coaching, Advice and Consultancy.



**Associate Name: Lucy Smith**

**Home region:** South Gloucestershire
**Travel Range:** Nationwide

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** I have been a social entrepreneur for over 15 years and have created and led multiple CiC's (community interest company) and volunteer organisations. I specialise in managing change and supporting organisations to develop as a team and work together effectively. I have worked across many industries and sectors in roles as an employee, leader, change manager and project manager.

I had a long and exciting career in law enforcement as an investigator and intelligence officer which then led into working as a change manager in transformational change in the Home Office and later in Higher Education.

I am a coach and mentor and am recognised as an expert in neurodiversity in the workplace and raising awareness of digital wellbeing and mental health for young people. I am a parent of two incredible autistic teenagers and have lived experience of EHCPs and CAMHS. I run an award-winning social enterprise (inclusive change at work cic) that is focused on improving employment outcomes for neurodivergent adults which includes a support agency for employed and self-employed people.

**Associate Name: Ruth Hobbs**

**Home region:** South West
**Travel Range:** Anywhere within England

**Brief precis of Associate experience:** During my work with parent carer forums, I have established new forums, and helped forums to develop and grow including getting additional funding. Having run a PCF, myself for over 9 years I have learnt a lot about the day to day running and management of forums. I have worked with a lot of forums to help develop their governance and structures. I have knowledge on how you can effectively use IT solutions to improve the functionality of your forum and reduce workloads. I have experience of running workshops for areas to develop their understanding of coproduction and working in partnership.