

Trustee Elections 2021

Personal Statement of Jeff Hughes

I am a befriender for the St Helens and District Dyslexia Association (SHADDA) and am the [Northwest region](#) LDAs' [representative](#) on the BDA's [Local Associations Board](#) (LAB). I am a [Registered Practitioner Psychologist in Private Practice](#) and wear many 'hats' as a [teacher](#), psychologist, [company director](#), [trainer](#), [therapist](#), [Assistive Technologist](#) and parent. My company, Box42 Ltd, which trades as psychologist.uk, is an Organisational member of the BDA. I have been actively involved with the BDA, locally and nationally, since the early 1990s and have supported the BDA as a volunteer, through my Local Dyslexia Association, the LAB and other Committees and initiatives for many years.

While the demand for help grows rapidly as more people become aware of difficulties faced in education, the workplace and the community, there has been a decline in the numbers of Local Dyslexia Associations. Meeting the need for information and support must be met with professional services on the national stage as well as locally through the involvement of volunteers. Continuing action needs to be taken to reinforce and build our grass-roots membership and integrate everyone into the wider activities of the BDA.

Recent events and the massive changes we currently are seeing mean that we cannot avoid seeking and embracing new routes to greater individual and group involvement and the dissemination of information, advice and support. Each part of the BDA family must support, and be supported by, the whole organisation, contributing and receiving in fair and effective ways. However, as the long-term future of the BDA and its membership has to be through our younger members, we, the "old guard" need to prioritise our efforts on ensuring the Association will have the structures and resources needed to recruit, support and promote our younger generations, who will be our future!

I believe it is essential that the collective experience of Trustees and other volunteers must be more effectively harnessed. I have been a Trustee for over three years and feel that I have only really recently been able, following changes in BDA's management, to begin to offer my direct support in significant parts of the BDA's work. I am now able to work, with BDA staff and others, on initiatives to promote the influence of BDA in developing how the assessment of, and training about, specific learning difficulties is put into practice. Each hard-won step in this process has revealed further areas where BDA's influence has not yet been effective but could deliver great benefits for dyslexics, the BDA and its members.

Should I be re-elected to the Trustee Board, I will continue to champion the needs of local membership and activities in whichever "traditional" or alternative formats work best. I will also continue to promote the BDA as a necessary and vital organisation which can lead in initiatives that deliver help to dyslexics through vibrant, relevant and enthusiastically delivered professional, political, practical and personalised programmes of activities and initiatives involving all sections of our members and of wider society.

10 February 2021