



Operations – Rehoming Centre

Job Title:	Behaviour Officer
Reporting to:	Behaviour Manager
Responsible for:	Design, implementation and review of Behaviour Management Plans (BMPs), behavioural assessment of dogs, and training support for staff, volunteers and adopters.
Location:	Dublin Rehoming Centre (rota-based working including weekends and public holidays)

Job Purpose

To assess, support and improve the behaviour and welfare of dogs in Dogs Trust care by designing and implementing Behaviour Management Plans (BMPs) that increase dogs' chances of successful rehoming.

Behaviour Officers work closely with Dog Welfare Assistants, supervisors, volunteers and adopters to ensure behaviour guidance is applied consistently and safely. They play a key role in coaching others in dog behaviour, supporting rehabilitation of dogs with behavioural needs, and ensuring decisions are informed by accurate behavioural assessment.

Behaviour Officers operate across two competency levels — Skilled and Advanced — reflecting professional development, behavioural expertise and responsibility for complex cases.

This role is shaped by Dogs Trust's design principles:

- **Human-centred:** Clear guidance, supportive coaching and practical learning that enables people to work confidently and safely with dogs.
- **Future-proof:** Evidence-based behaviour practice aligned with evolving welfare standards and professional development pathways.
- **Valued & Valuable:** Recognition of behavioural expertise and its critical role in improving dog welfare and successful rehoming outcomes.

Overview of the Department/Team

Dogs Trust has been working in Ireland since 2005 and believes every dog deserves to live a safe, healthy and happy life. We won't rest until we make Ireland a safe and happy place for dogs, so we never have to let any dog down. Through our national responsible dog ownership campaigns and education programs, we are here for all dogs and the people who love them.

The Operations Department is responsible for achieving the mission of Dogs Trust through the intake, rehabilitation and rehoming of dogs in Ireland, as well as empowering dog owners (customers) by connecting them with other support services. The Operations department is a team of c. 50 employees and a number of volunteers across Dogs Trust's Dublin rehoming

centre and Dogs Trust regional rehoming hubs that successfully help as many dogs as possible. This department comprises over 60% of Dogs Trust staff.

The Operations Department strives to achieve excellence in logistical and rehoming processes as well as our already high canine welfare and customer experience standards.

Behaviour Officers are part of the core Operations team, working alongside Dog Welfare Assistants, Dog Welfare Supervisors, Rehoming Advisors, Ops Training Coordinator and Veterinary colleagues to support dogs' behavioural wellbeing and progression through care.

The role combines behavioural assessment, rehabilitation planning, practical coaching and adopter support.

Key areas of accountability

Behaviour Assessment & Behaviour Management Plans

- Assess dogs' behaviour prior to intake and throughout their stay in the centre.
- Identify behavioural needs and risks in line with Dogs Trust Standard Operating Procedures.
- Design and review Behaviour Management Plans (BMPs) to support welfare and successful rehoming.
- Monitor progress and adjust plans as needed.
- Ensure behavioural observations are accurately recorded.

Behaviour Rehabilitation & Dog Progression

- Support the rehabilitation of dogs with behavioural challenges.
- Provide guidance to Dog Welfare Assistants on implementing training plans.
- Monitor behavioural progress and contribute to decisions regarding dogs' readiness for rehoming.
- Escalate complex behavioural concerns where necessary.

Staff, Volunteer & Adopter Support

- Train and support staff and volunteers in applying behaviour guidance and positive training methods.
- Provide coaching and practical demonstrations to build staff capability.
- Deliver adopter support including:
 - pre-adoption guidance
 - post-adoption advice
 - one-to-one behaviour support sessions where required.
- Conduct home visits where behavioural follow-up is needed.

Behaviour Records & Incident Reporting

- Maintain accurate behaviour and welfare records.
- Ensure incidents and behavioural concerns are documented in line with policy.
- Provide clear behavioural updates to management and the Operations team.

Cross-Team Collaboration

- Work closely with Dog Welfare Supervisors and the Training Coordinator to embed best practice.
- Support Rehoming Advisors with behavioural information relevant to adoption decisions.
- Collaborate with Veterinary colleagues where behavioural and medical needs overlap.

Additional Duties

- Support behaviour-related projects, training initiatives and welfare improvements.
- Contribute to centre-wide discussions on dog welfare and behavioural practice.
- Assist with induction and mentoring of new staff where appropriate.
- Undertake any duties appropriate to the role to support the effective running of the centre.

Competency Expectations by Level

Behaviour Officer – Skilled

- Supports behavioural assessments and implementation of Behaviour Management Plans.
- Provides practical guidance to staff implementing behaviour plans.
- Delivers routine adopter support and training advice.
- Assists in monitoring behavioural progress of dogs.
- Supports behaviour record keeping and incident reporting.
- Developing behavioural assessment skills and professional expertise.

Behaviour Officer – Advanced

- Leads behavioural assessment and design of Behaviour Management Plans.
- Oversees behavioural strategy for complex dogs.
- Provides expert behavioural guidance to staff, volunteers and adopters.
- Contributes to decisions regarding dogs' rehabilitation and rehoming readiness.
- Mentors Skilled Behaviour Officers and supports development of the behaviour team.
- Holds, or is working towards, recognised professional accreditation (e.g. ABT / CAB pathway).

Person Specification

Essential skills, qualifications, experience, and attributes

Strong understanding of dog behaviour, welfare and learning principles.

Experience handling dogs of a wide range of breeds and behavioural characteristics.

Ability to recognise signs of stress, fear or compromised welfare in dogs.

Confidence coaching others in practical dog-handling and training techniques.

Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

Strong organisational and record-keeping skills.

Ability to work both independently and collaboratively.

Commitment to Dogs Trust's aims, values and rehoming standards.

Full, clean manual driving licence.

Desirable Skills / Experience

Qualification in animal behaviour or training.

Experience implementing behaviour modification programmes.

Experience supporting adopters with behaviour advice.

Experience working with volunteers.

Familiarity with digital welfare and behaviour recording systems.

Our values and behaviours

The culture at Dogs Trust is based on our values and behaviours which underpin everything that we do.

We dream big

Thinking boldly – We channel our passion and commitment to be open to new ideas and possibilities, and to be brave enough to generate and try out new ways of working.

Embracing change – We have the courage, imagination and flexibility to focus on what really matters and adapt as needed to turn our dreams into reality.

We're on the ball

Staying curious – We pay attention to what's going on around us and remain open-minded. We learn from others and consider different angles and perspectives.

Focusing on impact – We are passionate about the difference we make. We use our knowledge and experience to plan our work, solve problems effectively and achieve what we set out to do.

We make things happen

Being proactive – We have a positive, can-do attitude. We actively build strong relationships with others to solve problems and create opportunities.

Working together – We are collaborative and inclusive. We create relationships based on kindness, trust and respect to bring out the best in ourselves and others.

Additional information

- 35 hours per week, rota-based including weekends and public holidays.
- Flexibility may be required to support operational needs.
- Emotional resilience to manage the demands of working in a welfare environment.