



CRISIS RESPONSE DOGS

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Between

Cariad Pet Therapy

and

Local Authority in Wales

1. Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out the terms of collaboration between Cariad Pet Therapy and *Local Authority in Wales* for the coordination and delivery of crisis response dog support within the Authority's area of responsibility.

The purpose of this partnership is to provide structured emotional support, comfort, and community reassurance following traumatic incidents, emergencies, or critical events. Crisis response dog teams can assist individuals and groups affected by crisis situations, including members of the public, emergency service personnel, and Authority staff.

2. Scope

This MOU applies to all deployments and visits involving Cariad Pet Therapy's registered crisis response dogs and their accredited handlers operating under the Authority's request, authorisation, or cooperation.

It outlines mutual responsibilities, communication protocols, and operational standards to ensure safe, ethical, and effective support in crisis and post-crisis contexts.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Crisis Response Dog Organisation will:

Ensure all crisis response dogs are:

- Fully assessed, trained, and accredited to operate in high-stress and unpredictable environments

- In good physical health, fully vaccinated, microchipped, and regularly health-checked
- Covered by comprehensive public liability and indemnity insurance

Ensure all handlers:

- Hold enhanced DBS clearance and have received relevant safeguarding, trauma-informed, crisis response dog and mental health first aid training
- Are competent in professional conduct within sensitive and emergency settings
- Always carry valid identification and accreditation issued by Cariat Pet Therapy

Provide:

- Risk assessments and operational guidelines for each deployment
- Debrief reports or summaries as appropriate after each engagement
- Immediate notification of any incidents, injuries, or welfare concerns involving dogs, handlers, or participants

Coordinate with the Authority and relevant agencies (e.g., emergency services, public health, or community resilience teams) to ensure integrated and safe deployment.

3.2 The Local Authority will:

- Identify and authorise appropriate situations for crisis response dog deployment, in consultation with Cariat Pet Therapy.
- Facilitate communication between Cariat Pet Therapy and relevant departments or partner agencies.
- Provide suitable and safe environments for visits, including appropriate supervision and welfare facilities where necessary.
- Ensure relevant staff are briefed on the purpose, boundaries, and procedures of the crisis response dog programme.
- Support incident management, reporting, and evaluation processes consistent with existing emergency planning and health and safety procedures.

4. Safeguarding, Welfare, and Ethics

Both parties are committed to the highest standards of safeguarding for all individuals, including children, vulnerable adults, and staff, as well as ensuring the welfare of the dogs and volunteers involved.

All activities will be undertaken in line with:

- The Animal Welfare Act 2006
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Relevant safeguarding policies and procedures of both the Authority and Cariat Pet Therapy

Crisis response dog visits will not replace professional therapeutic or clinical intervention but will complement post-incident support and community resilience measures.

5. Insurance and Liability

Each party shall maintain its own insurance appropriate to its role and responsibilities under this MOU.

Neither party shall accept liability for loss, damage, or injury caused by the other party's negligence or failure to comply with this agreement.

6. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Both parties agree to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR when handling any personal or sensitive information shared before, during, or after deployments.

Information relating to individuals affected by crisis events will be treated in strict confidence and shared only on a need-to-know basis.

7. Communication and Coordination

All requests for deployment will be made through agreed points of contact within both the Authority and Cariat Pet Therapy.

The parties will maintain clear lines of communication before, during, and after each engagement to ensure coordinated and safe activity.

8. Duration, Review, and Termination

This MOU shall commence on April 1st, 2026, and remain in force for a period of 12 months, unless terminated earlier by either party with written notice.

The MOU will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose, reflects evolving best practice in crisis response, and aligns with any updated legislation or policy.

9. Status of this Agreement

This Memorandum of Understanding is not legally binding but represents a formal expression of mutual intent to cooperate in providing safe, ethical, and effective crisis response dog support within the Authority's jurisdiction.

10. Signatories

Signed for and on behalf of:

Cariad Pet Therapy

Signature:

Name: Robert Thomas

Position: Founder, CEO Cariad Pet Therapy

Date:

Local Authority in Wales

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date: