



Solving Homelessness & Achieving Independence

Board of Trustees Recruitment Pack

Trustee with Homelessness Experience

October 2024



Invitation from the Board



Hi, we're Emma and Richard, Joint Chairs of the Board, and we'd like to welcome you to Connection Support. Our staff and volunteers are dedicated to improving the lives of the people we support, through services like homelessness and housing, mental health, family support, young peoples' support, and refugee resettlement.

We are looking for a new Trustee to join our Board, who is committed to helping us deliver our mission and who shares our values. In particular, we're looking for candidates with expertise or lived experience in Homelessness.

This is an exciting time for Connection Support, having launched our new [three-year strategy: Prevention First](#). Our vision for 2027 is to be a thought-leader in the prevention of homelessness and mental ill-health, spearheading innovative services that prevent crises from happening, whilst being there to offer client-centred support when they do.

[The Board](#) is made up of a brilliant group of people with lots of different backgrounds, skills and perspectives. We are actively seeking to increase the diversity of our Board and welcome applications from people from minority ethnic backgrounds, all gender groups and/or with a disability. You might have worked for a charity or organisation helping people out of homelessness, or you might have first-hand experience of being homeless yourself.

Our Board meets every two months. However, there are Finance, Development and Remuneration subgroups that meet between Board meetings, and opportunities to contribute towards these as well.

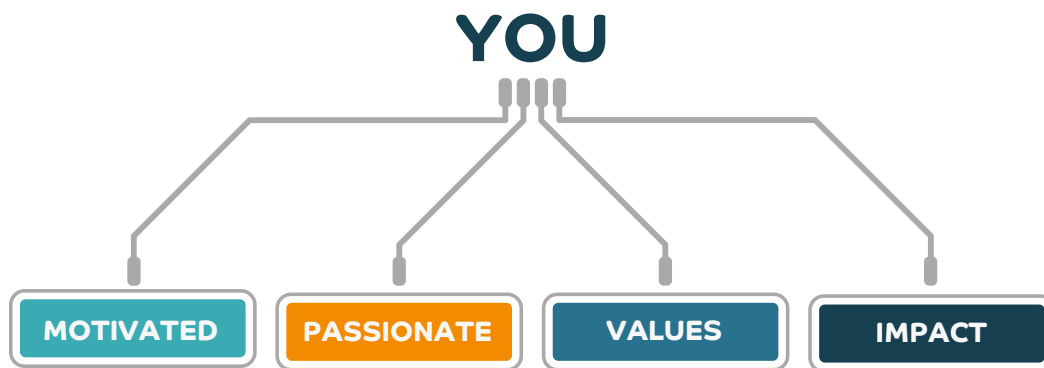
If you are interested in applying and want to find out more, please feel free to email, Emma Duke, at emma@emmadukepr.com, Richard Allman, at rallm@btinternet.com or our Chief Executive, Chris Keating at chriskeating@connectionsupport.org.uk to book an informal chat. We look forward to receiving your application and hopefully welcoming you to our friendly Team here at Connection Support.



Who Are We Looking For?

Connection Support are seeking a Trustee that will support us in our vision of being a thought-leader in the prevention of homelessness, mental ill-health, and leading innovative services that prevent crises from happening.

Our ideal Trustee will be passionate and motivated by the impact they can have by being part of Connection Support, and their personal values will align with ours.



The Trustee will support the board, the CEO and wider senior team with advice, guidance and sharing their experiences specifically related to:

- Making our services as effective as they can be.
- Developing and maintaining relationships.
- Help us bid for homelessness contracts and funding.
- Advising on potential strategies/ideas that support us to grow in the sector.
- Look at ways to engage people to grow our reputation and services in this area.

Our ideal Trustee will have the following specific expertise:

- Experience of homelessness. You might have experienced this personally, supported people through volunteering, or professionally.
- Knowledge of the issues impacting people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Awareness of homelessness projects and interventions.
- Able to connect with and listen to people.

They will also have the ability to:

- Be a problem solver
- Focus on our clients and achieving great outcomes for them.
- Manage risks safely.
- Represent the organisation in different forums.



About Connection Support

Connection Support was established 29 years ago in Oxford to provide floating support to residents who were at risk of homelessness. Nowadays our support reaches across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. We support 5,000 clients per year, employ 200 staff, and have over 150 active volunteers, and our annual turnover has grown to £9m.

We exist to help people to change their lives by providing a range of specialist support services. Our support covers homelessness and housing, mental health, family support, young peoples' support and refugee resettlement.

At Connection Support, our team of staff members and volunteers work alongside people to overcome life's challenges. We do this through our values of empowerment, collaboration, compassion and taking a personalised approach in all aspects of our work. Our approach focuses on the individual and aims to help people take control of their situation by building confidence, exploring resources and developing skills. So that people who are facing significant challenges can overcome them, achieve independence, live safe and fulfilling lives and be active and valued members of the communities in which they live.

We provide flexible and co-created strength-based support and advice to a range of young people, adults and families. Please take a look at the following links to get a flavour of the wide range of support services provided in each area – [Oxfordshire](#), [Buckinghamshire](#) and [Milton Keynes](#).

Our team have extensive knowledge in areas such as housing law, welfare benefits, debts and budgeting, health issues, rights and responsibilities, social care, advocacy and activities that increase health and wellbeing.

We hugely value partnerships and working together with other agencies to achieve the best possible outcomes for people. Over 29 years we have built trusted and positive relationships with statutory and voluntary services, charities and community groups across the area.

OUR IMPACT

Supported nearly

5,000

clients through our services
(FY23/24)

Empowered

1,160

people to develop the skills to no longer need our support

Answered

11,774

calls from people looking for support & guidance



Mission, Vision and Values

The team at Connection Support have recently been on a journey to review and refresh our mission, vision and values; to remind ourselves why we do what we do, the direction we are taking as an organisation, and who we're going to be along the way.

Mission

We work alongside people to overcome life's challenges – we do this to achieve our ultimate goal of solving homelessness and achieving independence.



Vision

- We empower people to change their lives for the better, positively impacting on local communities.
- We are a trustworthy, innovative organisation with good governance and are able to take positive risks.
- We integrate learning and development into everything we do.
- We develop and deliver a broad range of initiatives to empower as many people as we can to live fulfilling and independent lives.
- We gain the trust placed in us by the people we work with, the communities we are part of, and those who fund us.



Values

Our values are not just how we work alongside our clients, but how we work with one another, our partners, and our stakeholders.

- **Empowering** - we enable people to find their strengths and develop resilience.
- **Collaborative** – we involve, challenge and advocate.
- **Compassionate** – we connect with people and don't give up.
- **Personalised** – we believe in finding creative, individual solutions with everybody.



Our Trustees

Connection Support is overseen by a Board of Directors, who are also charity Trustees. [Our Trustees](#) have a diverse range of skills and experience to help shape our strategy.

We are committed to becoming a more diverse and inclusive Board to help widen perspectives and better reflect the diversity in our staff and client groups. Trustees are appointed for a three-year period, in the first instance, but are eligible for re-election after that time. Every two years the Board reviews the skills mix, and in light of this, we are currently recruiting for a Trustee with expertise in Homelessness.



What Do Trustees Do?

As a Trustee, you will play an important role, in providing leadership and direction including taking forward the 2024–2027 strategic plan and demonstrating a commitment to the financial health and viability of the organisation. All our Trustees have legal responsibility for the management and administration of Connection Support, in accordance with the roles and responsibilities of [charity trustees](#).

The anticipated time commitment for a Trustee is up to a day a month, and covers:

- ✓ Preparing for and attending evening board meetings every two months (normally at our Oxford office).
- ✓ Getting involved with one of our sub-committees.
- ✓ Attending staff–board meetings.
- ✓ Helping to support our Senior Leadership Team by providing specific expertise that is relevant to our day-to-day work.

Trustee positions are not remunerated but travel and subsistence expenses are reimbursed.



Additional Information

Previous experience

Previous board/Trustee experience is not necessary as we provide a full induction and we pair each new Trustee with an experienced mentor. A number of training opportunities are circulated to Board members. We make our board meetings a psychologically safe space so that everyone feels welcome, included and comfortable.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity and inclusion in all our services and workplaces. To enhance the diversity of our Board we welcome applications from people who have lived experience of homelessness, from minority ethnic backgrounds, all gender groups and/or with a disability.



Safeguarding

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and expect all Trustees, staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We carefully screen all Trustees - all applicants will be expected to undertake a Disclosure & Barring Service check and attend training.



How to Apply

If you are interested in applying, please submit the following documents to recruitment@connectionsupport.org.uk:

- We want to know why you're interested in becoming a trustee. Please send us a cover letter or email telling us why you want to join the Board of Trustees, and your experience as outlined above.
- If you would like to share your experiences with us in a different way, please let us know and we are happy to support.
- We want to know more about you! Please send us an up to date CV of your career history, key responsibilities and achievements.
- If you do not have a CV, you can send us an email with a summary of your experience.
- We need to know what others say about you. Please send us two professional references (only contacted with prior consent).

If you have any difficulty with references, please contact us and we can discuss alternatives with you.

Interviews will be held as suitable people apply, so we encourage you to apply as soon as possible. We reserve the right to close this advertisement early.

If you are interested in finding out more about the opportunity and would like to discuss the role informally, please email our Chief Executive, Chris Keating at chriskeating@connectionsupport.org.uk or one of our Joint Chairs, Richard Allman at rallm@btinternet.com or Emma Duke at emma@emmadukepr.com

Or further information can be found in our Board of Trustees Recruitment Pack.

To find out more about the Connection Support please [visit our website](#).





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-  **@ConnectionSupport**
-  **Connection Support**
-  **www.connectionsupport.org.uk**

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