



Recruitment Pack

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Registered Charity No. 1157870



Thank you for showing an interest in applying for the post of Chief Executive of Bridge for Young People (BfYP).

We hope that this recruitment pack inspires you, explaining the purposes and context in which BfYP operates with young people, and the role of the CEO within the organisation.

The contents are arranged as follows:

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Welcome and Introduction from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in the Chief Executive Officer position at Bridge For Young People. It is with great enthusiasm that I introduce this opportunity to lead an organisation dedicated to unlocking the potential of young people leaving care, championing their development and driving lasting change.

I am passionate about our work having been a Trustee for 8 years and seeing for myself the difference our specialist staff and facilities have made to the lives of disadvantaged care leavers and young homeless people. I continue to be excited about the future and I believe our new CEO will play a pivotal role in achieving our strategic goals. We are seeking a dynamic leader with forward thinking skills and the dedication and true belief in the ethos of the charity and the services we offer.

Bridge For Young People has over 18 years of experience in delivering effective services to young people in need. Established as a charity by retiring foster parents, Patsy and John Stone, the charity has provided a safe, secure and stimulating environment for young people at risk of becoming homeless or entering the youth offending system.

We are dedicated to motivating our young residents as they build life skills, realise opportunities and develop the capacity to learn, work and participate in society as mature and responsible individuals. Our service has been identified as being effective in reducing homelessness by empowering individuals and promoting their wellbeing.

Our mission reflects the following statement “Every child and young person should have the right to become a happy, confident and successful adult”.

As Chair, I am privileged to lead a board of skilled and experienced Trustees and together with the CEO, we set the strategic direction for BfYP, we guard the purpose and values for BFYP and manage and balance organisational risk and opportunity. Following our latest venture, we have doubled in size and the CEO will ensure that the charity continues to bring the needs and perspectives of care-experienced young people to the fore of the community, in order to increase funding and opportunity for further development.

If you are ready to make a difference and contribute to our continued success, I encourage you to apply.

Anna Savage
Chair of Trustees



Overview from the outgoing Chief Executive

Dear Applicant

The last 6 and a half years at Bridge for Young people have been the most rewarding of my career.

Bridge for Young People doesn't just provide 16-25 year old care leavers and homeless with accommodation and support, it provides them with a future they can look forward to, beyond a life in care.

My time at the charity has been fast paced and challenging at times as the charity has grown in number of properties, services, employees, income and reputation. It is now a regulated service and is the only Ofsted Registered provider of Supported Housing in West Berkshire for 16 and 17 year old care leavers.

The highlight of my time has been the two year project of growth; the conversion and opening of Wessex House in April 2025. Not just providing an extra home for our young people, but also seven move-on flats. A year has now passed and Bridge for Young People is ready for its next challenge. A new Alumni, a skills centre, opening a new home in a neighbouring county, are all under consideration.

The staff team at Bridge for Young People are second to none. All go above and beyond for our young people and each other. During the period of growth and change over the last year, staff have had to adapt to new systems, processes and ways of working. The team have approached this with resilience, openness and a real commitment to making things better. Above all, the team are fun to be around and will support the new CEO in any way they can.

Lastly, but not least ... the Trustees. I have been supported during my time by passionate and enthusiastic Trustees. There when I need them, but also knowing the difference between the governance and organisational role. They will support the new CEO, but will let them get on with the job.

I recommend this role to you. The staff and young people are what makes this charity special. You will get so much joy from the young people's successes as they grow and shine, and your staff will be with you through the challenges.

Yours,

Tracy Underwood
CEO



BfYP for Young People: Past and Present



Patsy and John Stone founded the charity in 2008. As retired foster carers, they wanted to prevent disadvantaged children and young people from becoming homeless. They set out to fill a gap in vital provision for care leavers, by creating a pathway to independence for all those who want and need the charity's support.



When the Charity was first established, it was known as Children First West Berkshire and then Young People & Children First. It is now trading as Bridge for Young People (BfYP).

Our first house was provided by Greenham Trust and named Cornerstone for two reasons. Firstly, to symbolise that the house was intended as “the first of many” and secondly, ‘Stone’ is the surname of our founders Patsy and John, who spearheaded the charity. Foster carers named the house in recognition of the sterling contribution made by Patsy and John to make this charity a reality.

In 2025 the charity gave Cornerstone back to Greenham Trust and opened Wessex House. The charity now has three houses and seven flats, accommodating 19 young people at any one time.



Patsy and John remain dedicated to the charity and we keep them up-to-date with our progress. They continue to act as supporters and ambassadors joining us at various events and social gatherings throughout the year.

Vision, Mission, Values & Charitable Objects

Our vision: BfYP wants to see a world where every child leaving care has the opportunity to have a safe place to live. Within this secure home BfYP's young residents receive the guidance and support they need to 'bridge' the critical gap between foster care and independent living. We want every young person to develop the life skills, coping strategies and confidence they need to achieve their full potential.

Our mission: Every child and young adult should have the right to be happy, healthy, safe, and successful. We support Foster Care Leavers as they transition from being teenagers to being independent adults. We ensure they have all the right building blocks in place to go confidently and positively into adult life so they can reach their potential, not hindered by their troubled start. Above all, we prevent disadvantaged children and young people being homeless.

Our values

Trust and compassion

We nurture meaningful relationships through honesty, transparency and integrity, offering non-judgemental support, empathy and respect for every person's story.

Empowerment

We believe every voice matters. We create an environment where people feel safe to speak up, are heard and respected, and feel able to shape their own lives.

Responsibility

We take ownership of our actions, behaviour and commitments, act with professionalism and prioritise respect, safety and the wellbeing of everyone.

Equality and inclusion

We welcome diversity, challenge stigma, advocate for fair treatment and ensure everyone feels valued and supported.

Resilience and hope

We learn, adapt and overcome setbacks through reflection, patience and understanding. We are optimists offering encouragement and support, celebrating achievements both large and small as we build the confidence, skills and belief in a better future.

Charitable Objects: "to advance in life and relieve the needs of young people through:

- the provision of recreational and leisure time activities provided in the interest of social welfare designed to improve their conditions of life;
- providing support and activities which develop their skills capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as mature and responsible individuals"



The situation for care leavers in the UK

Why and when to bridge the gap?

In most cases, children go into care as a result of abuse and/or neglect. When they come into care they are often distressed and traumatised; half of these young people are suffering from mental health problems. Foster care doesn't suit every young person, so some children in care leave their foster home early. For those who do stay in care, they often do not get the support, stability and development they desperately need and there is poor preparation for adulthood.

The statistics for England speak for themselves

Out of the 12 million children living in England, just under 400,000 are known to the care system at any one time. The outcome for young people in care is extremely poor:

- Over 12% of children in care have 3 or more foster care placements per year
- Only 14% obtain at least 5 good GCSEs compared with 65% in general
- 28% have a statement of special needs (10 times the proportion of children in general)
- 33% end up not in education
- Almost half of female children who leave care, become mothers within 18 to 24 months of leaving care. These children then end up in care
- About 45 % of young people in custody have been in care
- For 19 to 21 year olds 29% were in education (6% higher education, 22% education other than higher education); 41% were not in education, employment or training (NEET), compared to around 12% of all young people aged 19 to 21.

When young people arrive at BfYP

- They may have low self-esteem and difficulty in forming attachments and sustaining close relationships
- They may be uneducated, untrained, unqualified and unable to equip themselves effectively to contribute to their own personal fulfilment. Many have poor health and emotional wellbeing
- They may exhibit destructive or anti-social behaviour
- Some may have recognised mental health problems and/or emotional and behavioural issues, such as self-harming or a history of suicide attempt
- Critically, most of these young people may have exceptionally poor motivation, poor educational performance as a result of cognitive damage and many have learning difficulties that have not been identified previously e.g. dyslexia
- Many are unemployed in any capacity (paid or volunteering) and are living entirely on state benefits
- Some already have a criminal record
- Few have life skills
- All are vulnerable and emotionally insecure.

BfYP's Response

Our service is to provide 'a bridge to independence' for care leavers and homeless young people (age 16-25) by offering a safe, comfortable home, tailored support and access to opportunities any young person should expect.

A young person in our service will receive tailored, strength based, specialised support whilst living in a BfYP housing project. This is provided by support workers, a live in supervisor and volunteers. This support is carried out in partnership with relevant professionals, as determined by a young person's needs.

BfYP works closely with:

- Social Services
- Mental Health Teams, including CAMHS
- Eating Disorder Teams
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- GPs
- Talking Therapies and private therapists
- Department of Works and Pensions
- Job Centre
- Berkshire Training Consortium
- Housing Associations
- Schools and colleges.

Referrals to the service come from local councils from West Berkshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. West Berkshire young people are given priority and our housing projects are located in Thatcham and Newbury. Referrals mainly come from local authority social services and homelessness services. Direct referrals are also received from families, health professionals, educational bodies and young people themselves.

Support to young people will include:

- Work and learning opportunities
- Life skills
- Practical skills
- Social skills
- Emotional support.

Support staff provide in-depth support and work persistently and patiently with the young people to help them find and secure work and learning opportunities. This is alongside practical and life skills such as healthy living, cooking, money management, DIY and housekeeping.

The relationship between a young person and the support workers is key to success. BfYP provides social activities and mini breaks to increase confidence, secure relationships and provide opportunities young people may not have had in childhood.

These activities include:

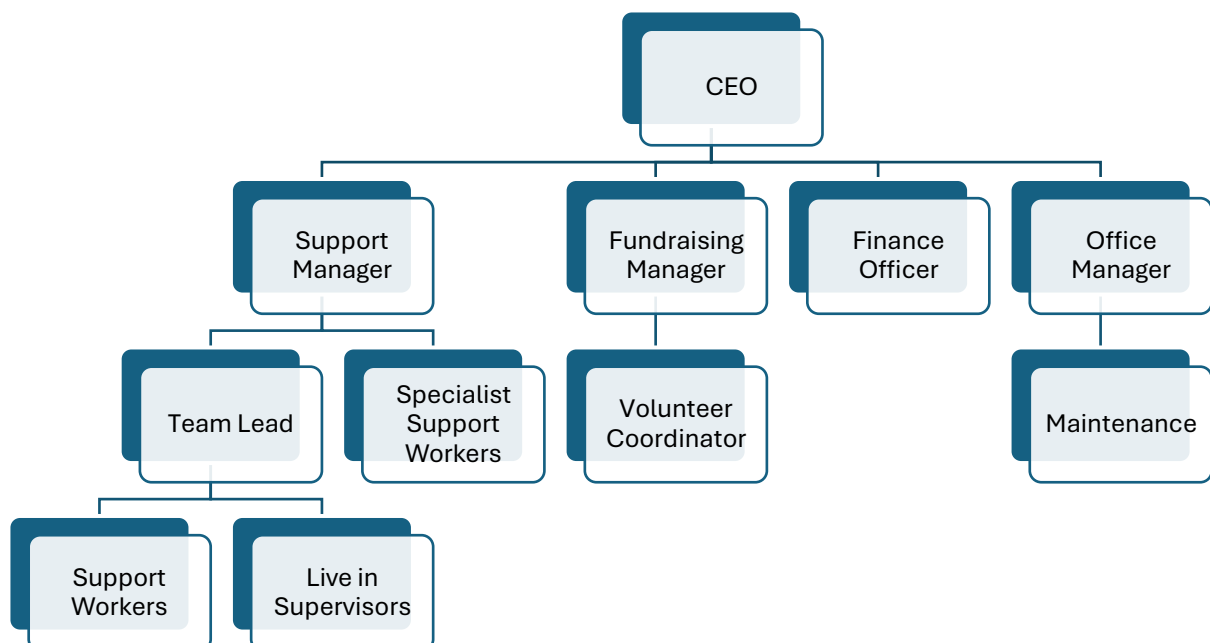
- Kayaking
- Snooker
- Camping
- Boat trips
- Picnics
- Dog walking
- Paint balling
- Beach trips.



When a young person arrives at BfYP a robust support plan is put in place, crafted with the young person and using the Lief CRM. This plan will include SMART actions and is reviewed regularly with the young person celebrating success on their journey to independence.

Throughout a young person's time at BfYP, move on options are discussed and planned for, preparing a young person for future independence.

The Organisation



Our CEO is currently the Registered Manager and is supported by a management team comprising the:

- Support Services Manager
- Fundraising Manager
- Office Manager
- Finance Officer.

As well as the Management Team, the core team of full and part-time staff includes:

- Team Leader
- Specialist Support Workers
- Support Workers (evening, weekend and overnight)
- Property Caretakers
- Live-in Supervisors
- Bank Staff (when required).

BfYP also recruits, trains and supervises a number of skilled volunteers. There are volunteers who are tutors, assisting with for example, English Language and Maths, to enable the young people to pass their GCSE's, nurture and develop interview skills, help with CV writing, assisting them to develop their careers, cooking, crafts and participate in exercise outdoors. BfYP also recruits volunteers for house maintenance, administration and fundraising. We have in post a paid part-time Volunteer Co-ordinator.

"It's a huge privilege to be working with such an inspirational, forward-thinking charity, who have the potential to impact the lives of so many more young vulnerable people as the programme expands."

(Volunteer)

Job Description & Person Specification

Job Title:	Chief Executive Officer
Salary:	£58,000 - £63,000
Hours & Term	Permanent, full-time, 40 hours per week Occasional weekend or evening working may be required
Based:	Office based in Newbury, Berkshire
Responsible to:	The Board of Trustees
Benefits	• 33 days annual leave which includes Bank Holidays • Pension contribution • Commitment to continuous professional development

Job Purpose

1. To lead the charity to achieve its vision and long-term strategic plan
2. To ensure outstanding provision of BfYP services to young people within the Ofsted Supported Housing Inspection Framework
3. To build and maintain BfYP's reputation with stakeholders, partners, funders, and local media
4. Together with the Chair, enable the Board of Trustees to fulfil its Governance duties and responsibilities

Job Activities

1. **Leading the charity to achieve its vision and long-term strategic plan**

Leadership

- To lead, inspire and motivate BfYP's staff and volunteers
- To assist the Board and its Sub Committees in agreeing BfYP's values, ethos, vision and strategy
- To develop the work of the charity to deliver the agreed strategy in accordance with its values and ethos
- To develop an organisation that is constantly seeking ways to learn and to improve its services, its knowledge and its approach
- To develop and maintain an environment that attracts and retains the best staff, maximising their capability and performance
- To develop strategic business plans and secure the Board's support for such plans.

Management

- To ensure the charity has an appropriate and effective management structure and efficient systems to carry out its business and fulfil its strategic priorities
- To identify appropriate methods for monitoring the performance of the charity against its strategy, and the annual budget as approved by the Board
- To ensure that the charity is aware of best practice in all aspects of its work

and that it constantly works to achieve this within the constraints of the resources available

- To ensure that BfYP fulfils all its legal, statutory and regulatory responsibilities
- To ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for all young people, staff and volunteers by enforcing policies and procedures, and monitoring the progress of direct reports in achieving safeguarding objectives
- To line manage, support and develop direct reports and any outsourced professional contracts
- To ensure all properties are of a good standard and that the security of properties is maintained at all times.

Finance and risk

- To take a leading role in the evolution and development of a business model that can ensure robust financial and operational health for the organisation
- To be responsible overall for BfYP's financial health; to work closely with the Treasurer (Trustee) and the Finance Officer
- To ensure that financial resources are secured to meet the current and future needs of the charity and its long-term sustainability
- To ensure that the major risks to which BfYP is exposed are reviewed regularly by the Board and senior staff, actions are taken to mitigate these risks, and a risk analysis is carried out when taking on new work or proposing new work to the Board
- To work closely with the Fundraising Manager, to ensure that the organisation diversifies its sources of income.

2. To ensure outstanding provision of BfYP services to young people within the Ofsted Supported Housing Inspection Framework

- Working with the Support Services Manager, to ensure that BfYP provides an excellent service to all the young people it supports
- To foster good communications with beneficiaries including ensuring there are mechanisms for listening to the views of current and future beneficiaries on their needs, how well BfYP is performing and areas for future development
- To oversee BfYP's property, its maintenance and development, negotiating with property owners and their agents as appropriate
- Take all necessary steps to meet the regulatory requirements of Ofsted and other relevant regulators
- To ensure the highest standards of safeguarding of young people, staff and volunteers and security of property at all times
- To ensure professional expertise is developed within the BfYP's team.

- 3. To build and maintain BfYP's reputation with stakeholders, partners and local media**
 - To develop BfYP's public profile, enhancing the charity's reputation as the go-to trusted and valued partner for local authorities and other agencies, and raising the visibility of challenges and barriers for young people
 - To seek suitable opportunities to extend services and promote the role of the organisation, ensuring BfYP is presented in an appropriate, relevant and professional manner to all its stakeholders
 - To scan the external environment for changes that may affect BfYP, to advise the trustees proactively and to take necessary action.
- 4. Together with the Chair, enable the Board of Trustees to fulfil its governance duties and responsibilities and to ensure the board receives timely advice and appropriate information on all relevant matters**
 - In partnership with the Chair, ensure a positive and constructive working relationship between the Board and the executive to ensure the board can fulfil its role in setting the values, vision, and strategic priorities for the charity to achieve its mission
 - To draw the Board's attention to matters that it should consider and decide upon
 - To ensure that the Board receives all necessary advice, guidance and information on matters relating to current performance, the short and long-term future of the charity, regulatory and legal compliance, and other appropriate issues; making sure that such advice, guidance and information are timely, honest, balanced and relevant and that papers to the board are high quality
 - To assist in the induction of all new Board members
 - To carry out any other responsibilities as may be reasonably required by the Board and which are commensurate with the role.

Person Specification for Chief Executive

Essential

Experience

- At least 2 years' experience at senior management level working in the charity or not for profit sectors or operating an organisation in the care sector
- A track record of building and leading high-performing, diverse teams through an inclusive and empowering leadership style
- Experience of working with active and experienced Board members on charity, not for profit and other Boards, and an understanding of the role of the Chief Executive in effective governance
- Strong and demonstrable experience of strategic thinking and acumen which delivers results

- Experience of working in a regulatory environment, preparing for and taking part in a regulatory inspection
- Strong financial skills, including the ability to analyse budgets and accounts and manage an annual budget of £500,000+
- Proven track record of building effective relationships at senior level with a wide range of individuals and partner organisations including grant making bodies
- Ideally experience of working within a commissioned service.

Skills & Abilities

- Well-developed skills in communicating, presenting, influencing, persuasion, advocacy, networking and negotiation
- Strong intellect and emotional intelligence, with analytical abilities, political awareness and a creative mindset
- Ability to make good decisions and execute them effectively.

Personal attributes & qualities

- Driven by core personal values which accord with BfYP 's and with a passion to transform the life opportunities of young people
- High levels of empathy, humility, honesty, integrity and the ability to generate trust in others
- Have the drive and initiative to take ownership of the performance of the organisation and resilience to manage the challenges that arise
- Personal presence and confidence to be a credible, dynamic and impactful ambassador for BfYP and comfortable as a visible leader
- A track record of commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, valuing differences to make better decisions and deliver better outcomes.

The postholder will need:

- A current driving licence
- Enhanced DBS status
- To be on an on-call rota in the event of 'out of hours' emergencies when needed.

The Application & Selection Process

Please apply with your CV and a covering letter detailing why you would like to work for Bridge for Young People.

Application closing date:	9 am, Monday 26 October
First stage interviews online:	3 and 4 November
Final Interview, in person:	12 and 13 November

Bridge for Young People is an equal opportunities employer and operates an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy. All those invited to interview will have the opportunity to discuss any reasonable adjustments required for interview(s).

Critical requirements accompanying an offer are:

- Two satisfactory references
- Satisfactory Enhanced DBS certificate
- Full driving licence

Bridge for Young People is an organisation engaged in social change and innovation. The role of Chief Executive offers you the opportunity to work with a committed and forward-thinking Board and staff team. In this role, you can make a tangible impact on the lives of young people, our beneficiaries. At a professional level, it offers you the opportunity to shape strategy and operations and see your ideas implemented.

Thank you again for your interest. We hope that this pack will encourage you to apply.