



Registered Charity 1040560

Chair

Job Purpose : To provide strategic leadership to the Friends of The Connection, ensuring that it is a dynamic organisation, devoted to building up its membership, raising money and increasing public awareness of the work of The Connection.

Information about The Friends

The Friends of The Connection is an independent charity which is run by volunteers with the support of a part time administrator. The charity is dedicated to supporting the work of The Connection at St Martin's with homeless and vulnerable people in central London. The money we raise goes to The Connection with very little spent on administration. Our current membership is about 900 individuals registered as Friends living in the UK and abroad. Of these around 600 are regular donors. On average over the past five years, Friends have contributed around £350,000 every year to the work of The Connection, including legacies.

Friends pay an annual subscription and most supplement this with donations. Periodically there are special appeals to the Friends for specific requirements. From time to time the Friends hold fundraising events in central London. Some Friends undertake fundraising events individually. Friends are kept informed of the work of The Connection and the activities of the Friends through three newsletters each year, and periodic email news updates, and through a developing social media presence. Friends also provide volunteers to The Connection to assist with its fundraising activity.

There is an annual Friends Day, that includes the Annual General Meeting, where formal business is brief and the main activity is informing the Friends about developments in relation to the work of The Connection. There is a small Friends' committee who oversees the running of the charity. The Connection provides the Friends with office space and every day running of the office is managed by a paid part-time Administrator who works closely with the fundraising team of The Connection. Committee members, including the Chair, are elected by the Friends' AGM, and are the Trustees of the charity. All committee members are Friends. Formally, the Friends is independent both of The Connection and of the St Martin-in-the Fields Church.

Since 2019, there has been an agreement to align the work of The Friends and the Connection Fundraising and Communications Team much closer together. This is achieving some aims, but there is more work to be done to agree how best the two organisations can work together.

The new Chair will be expected to take the lead in these continuing discussions recognising the role that the Friends can play in raising awareness of The Connection, generating income from an increased membership and through fundraising activities at a local and community level.

A key aspect of the role will be considering how to attract new Friends, especially younger people, either organically or via targeted routes. The Friends wishes to increase the amount of money it raises for The Connection and also to heighten awareness of the work of The Connection. Discussions are taking place between both charities as to how this can best be achieved. The new Chair will play a key role in those discussions.

More information about The Connection can be found at www.connection-at-stmartins.org.uk

Responsibilities of the Chair

- Lead on discussions with The Connection on how the Friends can actively support The Connection's strategy through increased fundraising activities, direct support where possible, and awareness raising at a local and community level.
- Lead the Committee's consideration of innovative ways to increase the membership of the Friends of The Connection, especially younger people, and raise donation income from members.
- Consider how the Friends can develop its social media presence in order to attract newer and younger members.
- Encourage and support the work of the Friends' Office
- Chair the Friends' Committee and the AGM (Friends' Day)
- Oversee and contribute to articles in Friends' news.
- Maintain regular contact with the Chair and Chief Executive of The Connection, and as appropriate represent the Friends Committee at The Connection's annual Trustees' Away Day

Attributes and Skills required

- Excellent communicator.
- Real interest in and commitment to the work of The Connection and how the Friends support this
- Innovative thinker in relation to what the Friends might achieve
- Experienced at executive/non-executive level.
- Excellent networking and facilitation skills
- Enjoy working as part of a team and have respect for colleagues.

Desirable skills

- Fundraising experience.
- General understanding of homelessness in London.
- Awareness of charity governance and regulatory requirements.

Time Required

We are looking for a person who has enough time to give leadership to the Friends. Regular commitments are broadly the following, but some flexibility may be required to meet any issues which may arise:

- Chairing meetings of the Friends' Trustees. There are usually 4 or 5 committee meetings during the year; some in person and some remote. Currently, meetings last about 2 hours.
- Regular contact with the CEO of the Connection/ Connection trustees and other key staff as and when required.
- Chairing Friends' Day and the AGM.
- Regular contact with the Charity Administrator and other trustees.

Rewards

This is a voluntary role. There is no monetary reward, other than expenses.