

National Director Recruitment

Information for Candidates



LINKING LIVES UK

*Improving quality of life
through friendship*

www.linkinglives.uk

From our Founder & National Director

Did you know that...

If no action is taken, 2 million people aged 50+ in England could frequently feel lonely by 2025/26?

Evidence shows that loneliness and isolation harm quality of life, along with biological, physical, and mental health?

Loneliness increases the risk of death by 26%^[1], and social isolation raises the risk of stroke or heart disease by 30%?

At Linking Lives UK, we are passionate about addressing these alarming statistics within the context of our work as a national Christian charity. We believe that the church, and individual Christians, have a distinctive and effective role to play in responding positively to these issues. There are many ways in which we can all develop more connected communities and foster closer relationships particularly with those who are most on the margins of society.

If you share this passion and have the skills and experience required to take on the role of National Director as we enter our exciting next phase, we would love to hear from you. We are keen to explore innovative ways of continuing our mission in conjunction with our active Board of Trustees and committed, experienced and enthusiastic operational team.

If you would like to have an informal conversation about this exciting opportunity, please email Jeremy Sharpe on jeremy@linkinglives.uk or phone 07970 100131.

{1} National Library of Medicine



Jeremy Sharpe

About Linking Lives UK

Driven by a passion for promoting friendship, Linking Lives UK is dedicated to reducing loneliness and social isolation, particularly among older people. Each year, our volunteers and partner organisations help over 800 older adults across the UK.

As a Christian charity we believe that the church has a vital and distinctive part to play in this important mission. The charity was set up in 2016 and has, since then, adapted and developed while remaining focused on our core mission.

We work towards achieving our aims in three primary ways:

Inspiring Individuals

This takes place through regular webinars called the 'Power of One', focusing on ways in which we can all make a positive, practical difference to the lives of those around us.

Equipping volunteers

We now operate regular training courses which 'upskill' volunteers operating in community spaces such as drop-in centres, community cafes, and warm spaces. These popular 'Good Conversations' courses are run online at least twice a month and have so far attracted over 500 volunteers. We also run occasional sessions on various other subjects including 'Loneliness and Mental Health' as well as annual conferences.

Supporting Churches

We support churches and Christian organisations to address loneliness in their local communities through the setting up of our tried and tested 'Two's Company Befriending' model. This provides a framework to set up and run local schemes which enable volunteers to visit or call those most in need of company on a regular basis. It includes a recently developed chaplaincy element focusing on spiritual engagement in some settings.

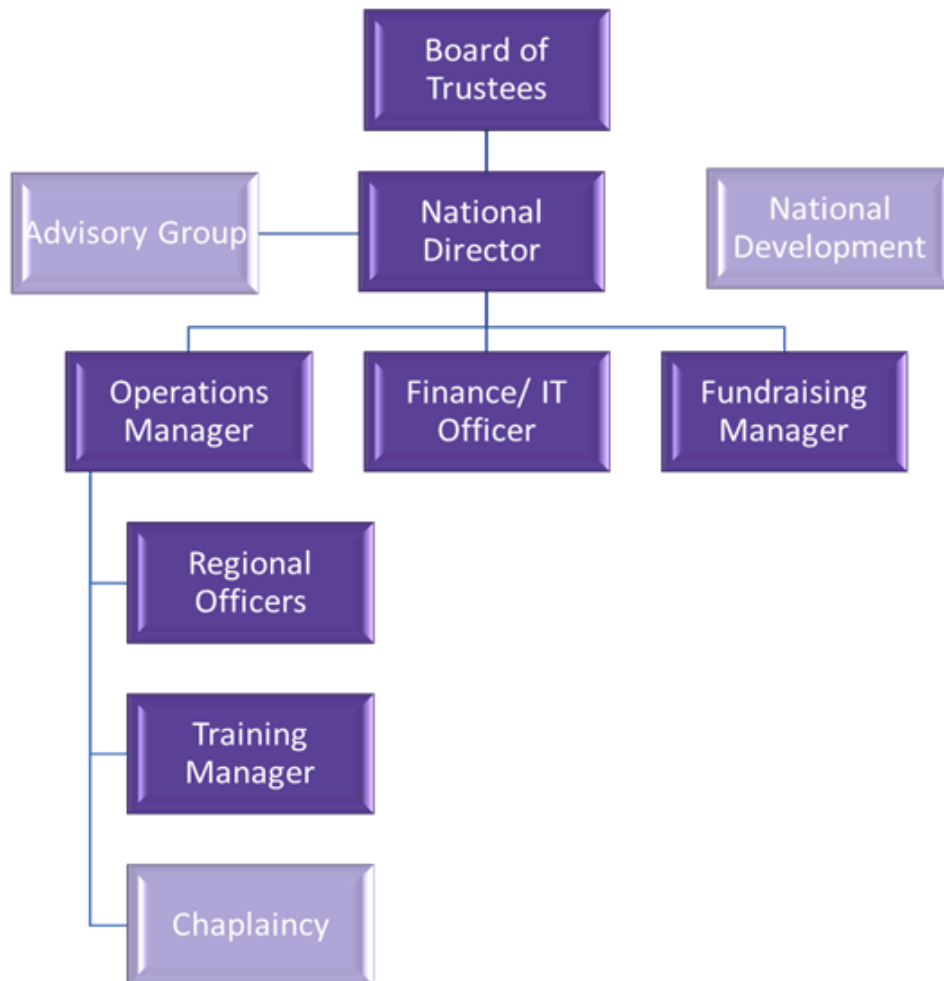
We are now in the process of developing further exciting new resources which complement our existing services. Our '**Re-Connect**' project enables existing befriending schemes to provide an additional short-term support over 6 months to enable those who have been temporarily housebound to re-engage with their community though agreeing a series of agreed targets. Our '**Going Deeper**' project operates in community settings and uses resources such as 'Table Talk' cards as a way to enhance and strengthen dialogue in a way that leads to improved self-esteem and improved relationships.

We are also pro-actively developing our work in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland following a three-year strategic grant to expand our work in these countries.

We aim to ensure that all of our work leads to a reduction in loneliness and social isolation among older people either through home-based befriending relationships, community settings or informally through individual daily interactions.

Our Team

We currently have a team of five committed trustees with a wide variety of experience and expertise in the charity, health, faith and corporate sectors. Our Advisory Group which includes representatives from a wide variety of sectors and organisations works with the National Director to consider new ideas and reflect on any challenges. Our passionate operational team of six is based across the UK and ensure the effective day to day running of the charity including regional development, training, partnership development and administration.



Our Values

As a Christian charity, we believe that God's ideal is for us to live connected to others. The first thing that God said was not good was 'for man to be alone' (Genesis 2:18). Our strapline summarises our core focus at every level of the charity:

"Improving quality of life through friendship"

Our values reflect our belief that relationships are key to addressing loneliness:

Hope

We want to serve those who are most alone and to bring hope

Value

We particularly value one to one relationships

Love

At the heart of everything we do is the love of Jesus

Trust

We want to build mutually beneficial relationships of trust

Value

We deeply value understanding everyone's story acknowledging that we are all equal



Job Details

Position: National Director

Location: Across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Based at: Flexible and remote working is offered to all staff

Employed by: Linking Lives UK

Responsible to: Chair of Trustees

Hours of Work: 24 hours per week

Salary: £25,500 - £27,000 (£42,500 - £45,000 FTE)

Annual Leave: 25 days FTE (plus bank holidays)

Pension: 3% employer contribution (following probation)

Probation: 6 months



Job Description

As National Director at Linking Lives UK, you will be guiding all aspects of the charity's mission and objectives. In conjunction with our experienced Board of Trustees, you will take a lead in our exciting work to address loneliness and social isolation among older people by building partnerships, key relationships and formulating our ongoing strategy.

What you will be working on:

Strategic planning and direction

- You will lead on the formation of short, medium and long-term strategic objectives (in liaison with the Board of Trustees and wider operational team), at this key stage in our development.
- You will build on existing initiatives in the process of implementing the future strategy of the charity whilst ensuring that all stakeholders and partners are informed about changes and developments.

Partnership development and collaboration

You will pro-actively build partnerships with strategic organisations on a national, regional and local level in line with our strategic objectives. This will include:

- Building relationships with organisations interested in setting up befriending schemes, and engaging in training or webinars.
- Developing more general mutually beneficial strategic partnerships in line with agreed objectives.
- Maintaining strong relationships with funding partners ensuring that relevant targets are met, and timely reports submitted.
- Maintaining and developing collaborations with other key bodies including Good Faith Partnership, Christians Together Against Loneliness, Together Network, Churches Together in England & Wales and national multi-agency groups such as APPG's and Loneliness Champions Network.

Marketing and Profile-Raising

You will lead on our marketing and profile-raising strategy along with key members of our existing team. This will include:

- Carrying out presentations, talks, workshops and seminars at key events about issues relating to loneliness and social isolation and our role in responding to these issues.
- Participating in media interviews and writing articles and blogs
- Ensuring effective management of the website, social media accounts and production of regular newsletters.
- Overseeing the running of our Annual Conference in conjunction with relevant team members, providing an ideal opportunity to raise awareness of loneliness and social isolation and the work of the charity itself.

Team Management

You will be responsible for general human resource management of the wider team including:

- Recruitment of new staff or contractors
- Line management and performance reviews of all team members (see Team Structure for direct reports)
- Ensuring ongoing professional development and training of all team members
- Actively participate in prayer and worship, whether individual, small group or corporately, as an expression of your own personal faith and in line with Linking Lives stated objective of the advancement of the Christian faith.
- Overseeing all aspects of staff management, including recruitment, training, performance evaluations

Financial Oversight and Management

In conjunction with the Finance Trustee and Finance Manager, you will oversee the financial management of the charity. This will include:

- Compiling and reviewing annual budgets, management reports and cashflow projections
- Maintaining full control and understanding of our financial status
- Developing stable & diverse income streams

Governance

In liaison with our Board of Trustees, you will ensure operational compliance with charity regulations and the charity's Memoranda and Articles. This will include:

- Compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- You will coordinate the production and dissemination of our statutory annual report and accounts and Impact Report
- Liaising with our Advisory Group on a regular basis in relation to current new ideas, challenges, or issues.
- Maintaining and developing the values, culture and Christian ethos of the charity at all times ensuring that these are understood and carried out at all levels of the charity.

The candidate must be also able to give both verbal assent to and practical demonstration of Linking Lives charitable purpose of the promotion of the Christian faith and Core Values.



Skills & Experience Required

Essential

Desirable

Experience

- Proven leadership experience, including the ability to manage, motivate, and develop a diverse team of professionals and volunteers and delivering against ambitious objectives.
- Strong track record in strategic planning, operational management, and ensuring service delivery aligns with organisational objectives.
- Understanding of financial management principles and experience in budget oversight, risks, contingencies and resource allocation to support organisational objectives.
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to produce and oversee the production of high-quality reports and presentations.
- Fundraising experience focused on trusts, foundations and other sources.
- Working in a Christian/ charity sector environment.
- Supporting a trustee board or similar governance structure and knowledge of legal and regulatory requirements relevant to the charity sector.
- Developing and implementing innovative strategies responding to key health or social issues.
- Leading or participating in collaborative projects across organisations or sectors, demonstrating the ability to work effectively in partnership.
- Commitment to personal and professional development, with a track record of seeking learning opportunities to enhance leadership and operational skills.
- Overseeing quality assuring processes and/or impact measurement.



Skills & Experience Required	Essential	Desirable
<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of national secular and faith-based social action/ community initiatives • The Christian faith sector including awareness of broad Christian theologies and denominational distinctives, infrastructure organisations and national/ regional charities. 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	
<p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An excellent relationship-builder, including the development of relationships with senior stakeholders within charities, faith groups and/or government) • Strong line management skills, including evidence of managing and developing teams and nurturing senior leaders. • Strong interpersonal skills, with experience of managing diverse stakeholders. • Computer literate with experience of Word, Excel and Office 365 • Tact and diplomacy • Good, independent judgment • An ability to think creatively and a willingness to speak your mind • Leading change management processes. 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>

Skills & Experience Required	Essential	Desirable
<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment to extending your knowledge and understanding of the work, philosophy and values of Linking Lives UK. • Clear commitment to the work of the charity, its mission and its values. • Clear vision for why you want the role, what you will bring as a leader and your own personal development. • Integrity • Team player 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	

How to apply

To apply for this role, please send your CV along with a letter of no more than two sides explaining your reasons for interest in this position as well as the experience you would bring to the role, using the email below. Please also provide details of two referees. If you would like an informal conversation prior to an application, please call Jeremy Sharpe on 07970 100131.

Closing date: 11.30pm Friday 27th September 2024

Initial interviews: w/b 7th October 2024

Email for applications: recruitment@linkinglives.uk