



# Chair and Trustee Recruitment

September 2024



## A welcome from our Chair

I'm delighted that you're interested in joining Step One's Board of Trustees. As the current Chair, I can tell you firsthand what a rewarding experience it's been. I hope you find this pack helpful in supporting your decision.

Having served as Chair for the past 7 years, I am due to step down from the role in March 2025. This means we are now looking for a new Chair to lead the Board into the future, as well as new trustees to grow and strengthen the Board.

It has been a huge privilege to serve as Chair. While it can be hard work, it is fulfilling to know that the Board's efforts make a real difference to the lives of our beneficiaries. I particularly enjoy working closely with the Chief Executive, offering guidance and support from my own work experience, and meeting with staff and service users to hear first-hand how Step One impacts their lives.

I have also felt so well supported by a wonderful and diverse team of Trustees, who each in their own way contribute their expertise to Board decision making and are always willing to go the extra mile.

The past 7 years, especially through challenges like the Covid pandemic, have required adaptability and resilience. During this time, we have made significant progress. With a solid foundation, a clear 5-year strategy, and a talented Senior Leadership Team, Step One is well-positioned for its next chapter. This is an exciting time to join our growing charity!

If you are inspired by what you read and can offer the skills and experience needed to strengthen our Board, we would be delighted to hear from you.

**Sue Sutherland OBE**  
Chair of Trustees



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# About us

Step One is a registered charity with over 85 years' experience supporting people across Devon facing challenges with their mental health, learning disabilities and neurodiversity.

As a unique provider in the region, we offer a comprehensive range of mental health support services. Our holistic approach considers each individual as a whole, addressing the wider factors that could be affecting their mental health, their ability to work, or opportunities to be part of their community.

Motivated by seeing people progress, **Step One makes a real difference in the lives of up to 800 people per year.**

## Our mission

We support people to build a pathway to independence, live a fulfilling life and reach their own potential through a range of specialist mental health and wellbeing services.



## Our vision

A society that values mental health and wellbeing and where everyone can thrive in their local community.



# Our values

## Valuing everyone

We give people the space and support they need to reach their full potential. This means creating an environment where everyone feels valued and appreciated. We always start with the person's situation and needs, building from there with energy. We ensure everyone has a voice.

## Being compassionate

We have a genuine ability to listen and understand how people feel and we use that ability to support them with kindness and compassion.

## Being adaptable

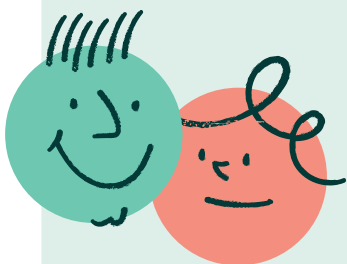
We are courageous and adaptable in our pursuit to improve access and the quality of our people-centred services, continuously learning, innovating, and persevering when faced with challenges. We feel safe to raise issues and work in an environment where we learn from our mistakes.

## Making a difference

We are committed to continuously improving and developing our specialist services, ensuring they are fit for purpose and making a positive difference to people. Our dedication extends to making an impact by advocating for those in need, being trauma-informed and engaging with our community.

## Working together

We collaborate well with each other and partner organisations, ensuring that everyone has the information they need to support people effectively.



Our values apply to both staff and the people who come to us for support. We are committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to reach their full potential.

# Our history

## Step One: A legacy of empowering lives (1937 - Present)

1937

Dame Georgiana Buller DBE founds St Loye's College in Exeter, a facility dedicated to supporting people with disabilities.



1946

Her Majesty The Queen becomes Patron of St Loye's College.



1946 - 2008

Over the decades, the college adapted its name (to St Loye's Foundation) and how it supported people, providing residential training and tuition in a variety of areas.



2015

St Loye's Foundation merges with Community Care Trust, expanding services and expertise in mental health support.

2017

The merged charity rebrands as Step One Charity.



Today

**Step One's journey continues.** Building on Dame Georgiana Buller's legacy, we empower people with mental health challenges, learning disabilities, and neurodiversity to reach their full potential. Through **inpatient rehabilitation at our specialist hospital, supportive living housing, tailored community support, and BeWell@StepOne's online and in-person resources**, we offer a comprehensive range of support services to help people in Devon thrive.

Learn more about our history.

# Summary of our services

## **Cypress Hospital** - Intensive inpatient rehabilitation

Supporting recovery and providing rehabilitation by delivering the Intensive Inpatient component of the care pathway to people with complex mental health recovery needs living in southern and western Devon.

## **Supported living housing**

Safe and supportive environments for people with mental health concerns and/or autism spectrum conditions to live more independently.

## **Community enabling support**

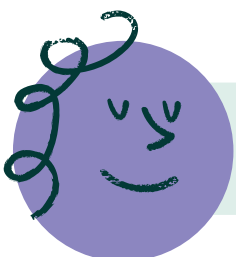
One-to-one support service providing Individually tailored support to people with mental health issues, autism spectrum conditions, or learning disabilities, helping them to live more independently in their communities.

## **BeWell@StepOne**

BeWell@StepOne offers a variety of group-based mental health and wellbeing support options for people across Devon, including online workshops, in-person courses, support groups, activities, and learning opportunities.

## **Recovery Practitioner support**

Step One is one of 6 charities that collaboratively deliver the VCSE arm of the Community Mental Health Framework. Our Recovery Practitioners work across the eastern and southern localities of Devon to provide psychologically informed interventions to individuals that fall in 'the gap' between primary and secondary services.



[Click here to learn more about each of our services.](#)

# Our year in numbers: 2023 - 2024

**550**

people

received group-based  
**mental health support**  
through BeWell@StepOne

**59**

individuals

were **supported 1:1**  
**to thrive** in their  
communities

**33**

patients

with complex mental  
health needs were  
**expertly cared for**

**16**

people

were supported to **live**  
**independently** through our  
supported living houses

**3,301**

sessions

were provided by  
Step One **Recovery**  
**Practitioners**

**10+**

partnerships

were developed to  
expand our services and  
**enhance our support**

## Our recent impact:

- **We opened** our first fully staffed, 24-hour supported living facility, offering more people in Devon the chance to live independent lives with confidence.
- **We expanded** our BeWell@StepOne reach, now delivering in-person, group-based support sessions in Exeter, leading to a thriving weekly craft group and popular yoga wellbeing sessions.
- **We launched** our new branding which has led to a 100% increase in website users and a 51% increase in social media followers compared to the previous year.
- **We filled a critical gap** in regional long-term recovery services for those living with complex mental health needs.



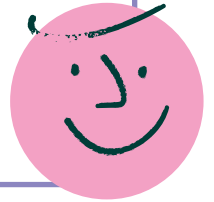
**Read our latest impact report.**



# Our year in voices

## Cypress Hospital Service User

“I was cared for with great kindness. My quality of life improved and I will live a better life as a result.”



## Community Support Service User

“If I hadn’t had the support that I have had I would not be sat here talking to you. Step One helped me get my diagnosis and medication, disability benefits, CBT, helped me get out of the YMCA and into my previous flat and now into my new flat. I would not have been able to do those without enabling support.”



## BeWell@StepOne Service User

“The group gives me a reason to go out and something to look forward to.”



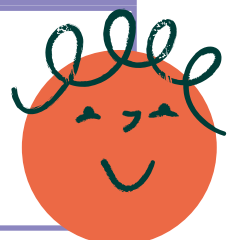
## CF03 Service User

“CF03 gave me hope for life beyond the gate. For the first time I have motivation and self-reliance for my future which they have helped to develop through their humanity.”



## Recovery Practitioner Service User

“My experience has been life-changing. I will forever be thankful for the kind, knowledgeable, personal support I have received.”



[Explore Step One case studies.](#)

# Looking forward

While the broader financial landscape, both regionally and within our sector, presents significant challenges, it also offers exciting opportunities for growth and innovation.

Our Senior Leadership Team has crafted a bold and forward-looking 5-Year Strategy, supported by a rigorous financial plan, that ensures we are well-prepared to navigate these challenges and achieve sustainable progress.

This strategy is further reinforced by a strong governance framework, positioning Step One to thrive in a complex environment and accomplish its long-term objectives with confidence.



Our plan focuses on securing and expanding core services, driving new business growth, and diversifying our client base. We've already launched several exciting initiatives, including our first 24-hour supported living property and a shared headquarters and service delivery space, with more developments to come!

# Funding and partnerships

Our income is broadly derived from two sources: commissioned services and trusts, grants and fundraising. Both are essential for us to deliver life-changing support to the people that we service in our local community:

## Commissioned services

The services that we provide at Cypress Hospital, our supported living houses and in the community are commissioned through local statutory partners. These partnerships are essential because they enable a whole system approach to service delivery which integrates care across various sectors, including healthcare, social services, education, and voluntary organisations like ours, aiming for a collaborative, person-centred model.

## Trusts, grants and fundraising

These are the lifeblood of our work, essential to delivering free support beyond our commissioned services. Our flagship initiative, BeWell@StepOne, offers a diverse range of services, including group-based wellbeing programs, workshops, wellbeing walks, yoga, online support, and more. As we continue to expand this vital service, securing funding through trusts, grants, and fundraising is a top priority in our 5-Year Plan, ensuring we can reach more individuals and provide the support they need.



## Recent partnerships

A key part of our growth strategy is developing new partnerships. One of our most exciting recent collaborations has been with **John Lewis Exeter** for new Every Step Counts challenge, a new community-based initiative to raise awareness and funds for BeWell@StepOne. Another crucial partnership has been with the **NHS** to deliver the HOPE (Helping Overcome Problems Effectively) course, a programme designed to support individuals to manage their long-term health conditions, with a focus on mental health recovery and resilience-building.

# Join our board

Step One is led by a team of experienced and dedicated professionals who are passionate about empowering people with mental health challenges, learning disabilities and neurodiversity to reach their full potential.

Our Senior Leadership Team is responsible for the day to day running of the charity, while our Trustees provide strategic oversight and [governance](#). [Read more about our SLT and Trustees here.](#)

Our Board currently consists of 9 dedicated trustees who bring a diverse range of experience, skills, and backgrounds. We're committed to effective succession planning to ensure a smooth transition of leadership and maintain the continuity of our [governance](#). As part of this process, we're actively seeking new trustees to join our Board and replace those who may be stepping down in the coming years. Our goal is to maintain a balanced Board that reflects the communities we serve and guide Step One into the future.

[Advice and guidance for Trustees.](#)

[Find out more about NCVO here.](#)

**We have identified priority areas to complement our existing strengths.** In our Chair, we are seeking someone who ideally brings experience in Chairing in a similar capacity. This could be a charity or Public Sector Board, or who brings significant experience as a charity Trustee with Committee chair experience. In addition, as Chair or a new Trustee, you may bring experience in one (or more) of these areas:

- Clinical background with an emphasis on mental health
- NHS commissioning
- Finance and / or investment management
- Legal
- Property acquisition or management (commercial or domestic)
- Commercial expertise and acumen

We welcome interest from people with lived experience of mental health challenges, learning disabilities, or neurodiversity, and we encourage applicants from diverse backgrounds to better reflect the communities we serve.



[Click here to explore the Step One Chair of Trustees Role Profile](#)

[Click here to explore the Step One Trustee Role Profile](#)

# Appointment of Trustees

- Appointment of new trustees is agreed by the Board and can happen at any Board meeting following a successful recruitment process.
- The appointment will be registered with Companies House and the Charity Commission with effect from the relevant Board meeting date. The appointment will be ratified at the next Annual General Meeting (usually Sept/Oct).
- Full details relating to the tenure and termination of appointment are set out in the Memoranda and Articles of Association. In summary, one third of the board members will be due to retire at each AGM. So, a typical appointment should be expected to last for a 3-year term. However, any retiring trustees may put themselves forward for re-appointment for another term. A maximum of 3 terms can be served by any Trustee.
- Trustees may resign at any time by giving notice to the Chair Appointments may be terminated by the Board for failure to attend meetings or in other exceptional circumstances

The average time commitment for our Chair is an average of 22–30 hours per month and for Trustees an average of 10–15 hours per month. This includes preparation for and attendance at Board meetings (3pm–5pm) which currently take place at the X Centre, Exeter. Our preference is in-person meetings, although we can accommodate remote on occasion. We also encourage Trustees to spend time in our services, with our teams and join us at key events. We hold a strategy day once a year in Exeter.

We have 3 Committees; Finance and Audit, Quality and Improvement and Nominations Committee. Trustees are expected to sit on one Committee (online or hybrid) and our Chair and Vice Chair sit across all three between them. Board and committee meeting dates are set annually for the following calendar year and are shared with Trustees at the December Board meeting.

## Expenses

The role of a Trustee is unremunerated, however you can claim for travel costs to attend Board and committee meetings.

## What's in it for you?

In addition to using your significant skills, abilities and passion to work alongside enthusiastic trustees and employees who are committed to our mission, being a trustee can also bring personal and professional benefits. These include learning about the management and strategic decision-making of a charity and working with a diverse group of people with the same common goal.

# How to apply

If you are interested in this opportunity, we encourage confidential conversations with our recruitment partner **Anna Jay, MD of Public Leaders Appointments** in advance of your application. You can contact Anna at: **anna@publicleadersappointments.com** or **07904 236 348**.

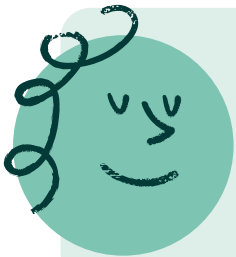
Your application should consist of a CV supported by a covering letter outlining your motivations for applying and highlighting how your skills, knowledge and experience meet the requirements of our new trustees. We recommend that each document should be no more than 3 pages.

**Applications should be sent to Anna with reference 'Step One' by midday Friday 25th October 2024.**

Following consideration of applications and shortlisting, we will invite selected candidates to meet with our chief executive, staff and a panel of trustees for a formal interview. Interviews will take place during the first or second week in November 2024.

If successful, we will carry out the required checks on you being a 'fit and suitable' person as a trustee. Prospective trustees should be aware that the charity will need to carry out due diligence, including a DBS check, to check eligibility before appointment.

Thank you for your interest!



## Find out more

If you would like to learn more about Step One, please visit our website where you will find lots more information: **[www.steponecharity.co.uk](http://www.steponecharity.co.uk)**



Stay connected with us:



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Exeter, EX2 4AD

Registered charity number: 235434