



# Chief Executive Officer Recruitment Pack

Your journey with Devon's  
mental health charity starts here.



Registered charity number: 235434

Registered address: X Centre, Commercial Road Exeter, Devon, EX2 4AD

# Contents

1. A welcome from our Chair
2. About Us
3. Our Vision, Mission & Values
4. Our History
5. Summary of Services
6. Our Impact
7. Our organisation
8. Looking forward
9. Funding and partnerships
10. Chief Executive Role
11. How to apply



# A welcome from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in Step One Charity and in the exciting opportunity to be our next Chief Executive Officer.

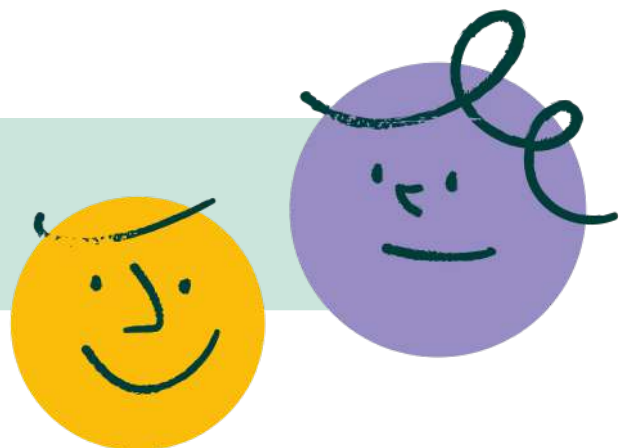
We are a £3m income charity with a dedicated team of over 120 employees, delivering a range of specialist mental health and wellbeing services across Devon. Our work is purposeful, people-focused, and impactful - and we are proud to support individuals in building the skills, confidence and resilience they need to live more independently.

I have recently joined Step One as Chair of Trustees and feel privileged to be part of an organisation with such a meaningful mission. As an experienced Chair and Trustee, I am looking forward to working closely with our new Chief Executive and the wider Step One team to strengthen our position in Devon, not only as a standalone organisation, but also as a valued and collaborative system partner.

Our next CEO will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of Step One. This includes leading the review of our organisational strategy, ensuring long-term financial sustainability, and maintaining the high standards and outcomes that our service users rely on. Together, we will build on strong foundations and lead Step One into its next chapter with confidence and ambition.

This pack is designed to give you information about the organisation, as well as what we are looking for in terms of a new Chief Executive. If you have the expertise and passion to work collaboratively with a dedicated team and are keen to be part of the success and lead us into our centenary, please do get in touch with Anna at Public Leaders Appointments.

**Jacqui Lyttle**  
Chair of Trustees



# 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 more than 1,000 individuals each year.**

## Our Vision, Mission & Values

### Vision

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

### 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.

### 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-centered 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 History



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, supported 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.

# 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**

Our supported living houses provide a safe and supportive environment for people with mental health concerns and/or autism spectrum conditions to live more independently.

## **Community enabling support**

Our one-to-one support service provides 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**

Free group-based wellbeing sessions including in-person and online courses, workshops, peer support groups and activities.

## **Wellbeing@Work**

A new workplace training service offering evidence-based workshops and bespoke programmes focused on mental well-being and inclusivity to empower organisations to create psychologically safe and thriving workplaces, driving long-term sustainable success and healthier teams.

## **Devon Mental Health Alliance**

Step One is one of five 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.



# Our Impact: A Year in Numbers

**27**

people

were supported to live independently through our supported living houses.

**19**

patients

with complex mental health needs were expertly cared for at Cypress Hospital, with an average stay of 166 days.

**3,300**

sessions

were provided by Step One Recovery Practitioners and supported 392 individuals.

**647**

people

received group-based mental health support through BeWell@StepOne and delivered 451 sessions.

**54**

individuals

were supported 1:1 to thrive in their communities.



We are proud of the impact that we have on people's lives. Every year we publish an impact report that highlights the incredible achievements of our staff and the people we support - you can read our 2024 Impact Report [here](#).

**We also have case studies demonstrating the real difference our work has made to people, you can read these [here](#).**



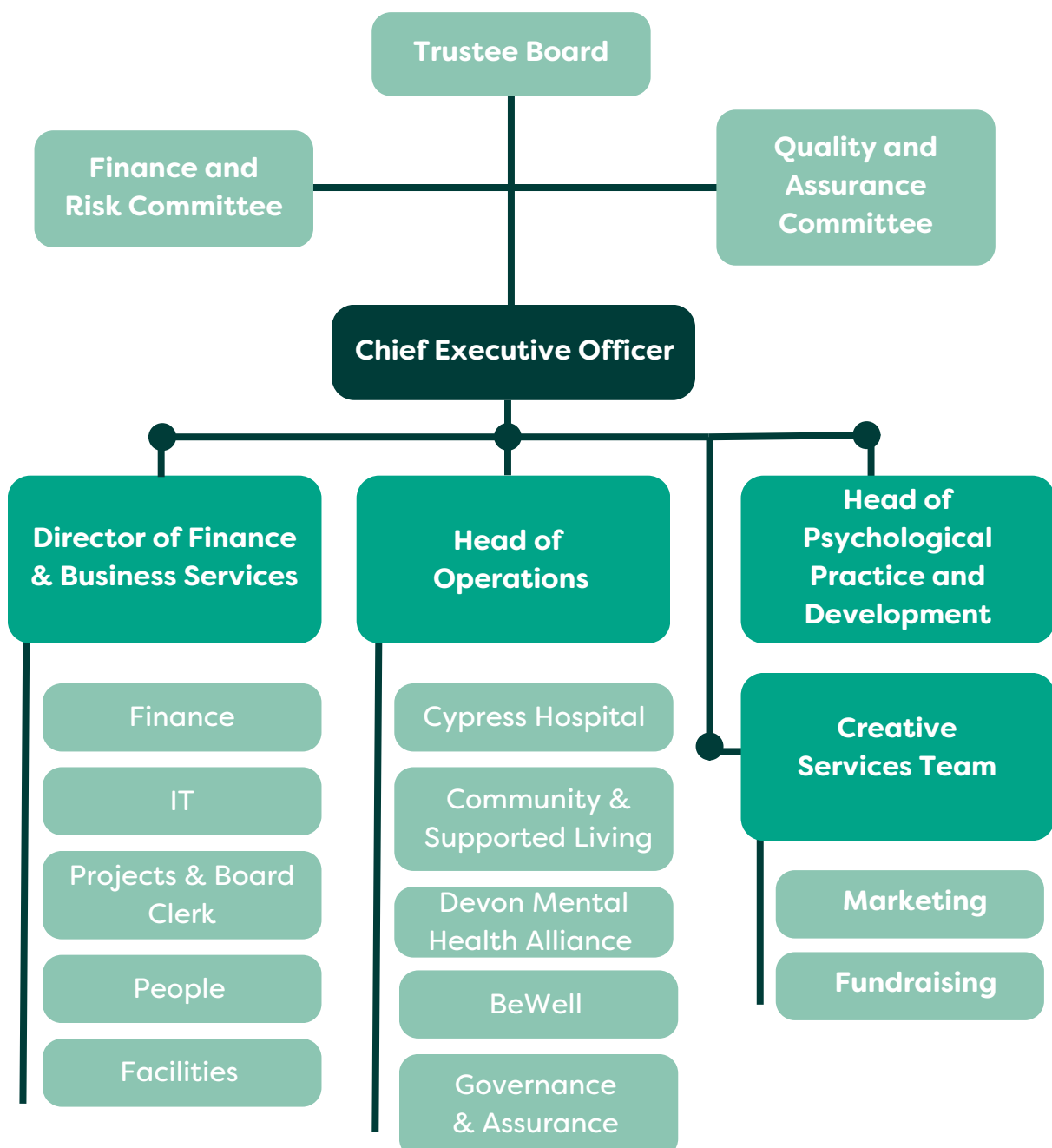
# Our organisation

Step One is based on 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.

The Senior Leadership Team is led by the Chief Executive, and are responsible for the day to day running of the charity, while the Trustees provide strategic oversight and governance.

Click [here](#) to see the full job description and person specification for the Chief Executive Officer role.

[Read more about our SLT and Trustees here.](#)





# Looking forward

Reflecting the challenging environment in which Step One Charity is operating, with a reduction in the availability of public funding at the same time as costs are increasing and the mental health needs of the people in Devon continue to grow, the charity is currently embarking on a review of the 5-Year Plan. The strategic plan was prepared in 2023/24 and focuses on securing and expanding core services and driving new business growth.

There are exciting opportunities for growth and innovation, ensuring the charity is in the best position to secure new and extensions of current contracts, and adapting as the needs of its users and commissioning bodies change.

The charity has recently opened their first 24 hour supported living property in Newton Abbott and will be opening a fifth supported living house this summer. In April, the charity launched a new Wellbeing@Work service. This service seeks to support organisations to build inclusive, mentally healthy workplaces where people can thrive. It offers evidence-based workshops and bespoke programmes tailored to meet specific needs. Revenue generated will be reinvested into our charitable services, ensuring long-term sustainability and broader community support.



## Our Priorities to 2026

### Cypress Hospital

- Develop systems to better measure and track positive outcomes for patients.
- Integrate Cypress as part of the wider Devon bed strategy and system approach through completing a successful 'test of change'.
- Explore pilot options to utilise remaining bed capacity.

### BeWell@StepOne

- Deliver new strategy whilst maintaining current provision through increased volunteer capacity.

### Wellbeing@Work

- Deliver and expand bespoke commercial training and education programmes in the community.

### Community Services

- Develop and deliver self-funded enabling offer.
- Increase Community Enabling support hours.

### Supported Living

- Achieve and maintain full occupancy across our supported living service.
- Introduce Goal Based Outcomes to drive progression through our services with positive outcomes.

### Devon Mental Health Alliance

- Continue to focus on initiatives to enable a reduction in the number of people waiting for support.
- Deliver new Drop-In group activity to elevate Alliance offer across the county.

### Psychologically Informed Environment

- Create a specialised community-based service offer that compliments statutory provision.
- Expand new service concept into a tangible, deliverable accommodation-based service model.



# Funding and partnerships

Our income is broadly derived from two sources - commissioned services 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.

## Fundraising

Fundraising is essential to delivering free support beyond our commissioned services. Our flagship initiative, BeWell@StepOne, offers a diverse range of services, including group-based wellbeing programmes, 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 our 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.

# The Chief Executive Officer Role

As our current Chief Executive steps down, we are looking to recruit a successor who will deliver our strategy for growth and service development, while leading in a kind and compassionate way.

## What is the role?

We are offering an exceptional opportunity for an experienced CEO or someone experienced at senior leadership level to drive forward Step One's ambition for sustainable growth of its mental health and wellbeing services. They will act as the lead advocate externally, providing focus to fundraising activities, and securing strong relationships.

The CEO will successfully build, motivate, inspire and empower high performing teams and ensure the charity's values sit at the heart of everything it does.

## Job purpose

As the face of the organisation, the Chief Executive's overall responsibility is to promote the vision, mission, values and goals of Step One Charity through providing strategic leadership, building relationships with key stakeholders, developing partnerships, and delivering the organisation's objectives within strategic, operational and financial plans as agreed by the Board.

You will ensure that Step One Charity develops its position and reputation, and that the charity is managed effectively, demonstrating sound governance, financial and people leadership, and compliance with relevant legislation. It is important that you naturally lead with a style that reflects our charity's values.

**“With support from Step One, I have taken away so much information such as understanding my mental health and learning loads of techniques and tools to manage my wellbeing.”**

**- Service User**

## We're looking for someone with the following qualities:

### Attitude and Values

- Commitment to Step One's vision, mission, values and ambition.
- The commitment to support the development of others through empowerment and to encourage team working across the service.
- Confident in ability to cope with complex demands calmly and decisively.
- Leads in a way that role models the organisational values and evokes respect from others.



### Competencies

- Experience at senior leadership level within a charity, public healthcare or housing organisation.
- Excellent communication skills with the ability to listen, inform, engage, and influence a wide range of internal and external decision makers, policy, opinion formers and potential donors.
- Exceptional organisational and planning skills.
- Excellent strategist - able to turn visionary thinking into clear plans which can be clearly understood and executed.
- Significant financial and commercial acumen, with an entrepreneurial approach.
- Ability to establish, develop and maintain positive relationships with key stakeholders, partners, funders and supporters.
- A deep understanding of governance and significant experience of working effectively with a Board of Trustees.
- Understanding and appreciation of how to engage and motivate a dispersed geographic workforce and volunteers.





# Chief Executive Officer

<b>Job Title</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Salary</b>	£80,000 per annum – with flexibility for an exceptional candidate
<b>Location</b>	Hybrid, with the X Centre, Exeter, as main base but expected travel to other locations Hybrid policy of minimum 2 days a week onsite
<b>Responsible to</b>	Chair of Trustees
<b>Responsible for</b>	Director of Finance & Business Services Head of Operations Head of Psychological Practice & Development Communications and Fundraising Manager
<b>Hours</b>	37.5 hrs per week although part-time working will be considered
<b>Holiday</b>	35 days including bank holiday (pro rata) with holiday year from April to March
<b>Notice period</b>	1 months' notice during the first six months' probation period. 3 months' notice post probation.

<b>Role summary</b>
<p>The Chief Executive Officer ('CEO') role is to drive forward Step One's ambition for sustainable growth of its mental health and wellbeing services. They will act as the lead advocate externally, providing focus to fundraising activities and securing strong external relationships.</p> <p>The CEO will successfully build, motivate, inspire and empower high performing teams to deliver a sustainable growth and ensure the charity's values sit at the heart of everything it does.</p>

<b>Main purpose</b>
To ensure the success of the charity, delivering high quality outcomes to service users and a financially sustainable future.
To develop close relationships with local commissioning bodies and partner organisations, to ensure renewal of existing contracts and to be best placed to secure the successful award of new contracts.
To help raise the profile of the charity across the local communities and beyond, to support fundraising, delivery, and growth of services.
To build a strong and effective organisation, where service users and colleagues are able to thrive.
<b>Duties and responsibilities</b>
Provide strategic leadership and oversight, ensuring the charity delivers on its mission and values.
Lead the development and updating of strategic plans originally developed in 2023/24, to help shape and deliver a sustainable future for the charity.
Represent the charity externally to partners, donors, supporters, colleagues and wider community, building relationships in the public, private and voluntary sectors that will help to underpin the charity's success.
Promote, encourage and facilitate a positive workplace culture, championing standards of performance and behaviours which reflect the charity's values.
Support and lead the senior leadership team and wider management teams, to ensure a highly effective and strong leadership team.
Line manage the three members of the senior leadership team and the Communications and Fundraising Manager.
Lead the development of income generation across the charity and act as the principal lead for donor development and delivery.
Identify risks and opportunities across the charity's internal and external activities, supporting strategic change and innovation.
Work closely with the Chair of Trustees, the Board and its sub committees, enabling the Trustees to fulfil their responsibilities and ensure effective governance arrangements are in place.
Ensure equality and diversity and wellbeing is actively promoted and supported across the charity.

**Communication and working relationships:**

Trustees and external professional advisors.

All colleagues and service users.

External partners, particularly members of Devon Mental Health Alliance and commissioning bodies.

Donors and supporters.

**Person specification:**

Experienced at senior leadership level within a charity, public healthcare or housing organisation.

Excellent communication skills, and able to adapt style to different audiences.

Exceptional organisation and planning skills.

Proven record of developing visionary thinking into effective delivery and operational plans.

Experience in business development and fundraising.

Financial acumen.

Genuine passion for Step One's mission.

# 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](mailto: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 Chief Executive. We recommend that each document should be no more than 3 pages.

Applications should be sent to [applications@publicleadersappointments.com](mailto:applications@publicleadersappointments.com) with reference 'Step One Charity' by midday Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July.

Following consideration of applications and shortlisting, we will invite selected candidates to undertake an online psychometric profiling exercise prior to meeting with a panel of trustees and members of the senior leadership team for a formal interview. Interviews will take place at our office in Exeter - date to be confirmed.

Please note that Step One is not able to provide sponsorship for roles and applicants must have an existing right to work in the UK.

Step One is committed to safe and fair recruitment, safeguarding and protecting those they care for and support. The successful applicant will need to complete a criminal records self-declaration, a criminal record check (DBS) and two satisfactory references will be needed (including from your most recent employer).

Step One is an equals opportunity employer. This means that whilst seeking employment or during employment within the organisation, we will seek to ensure equality of treatment for all persons regardless of sex, race, age, marital or civil partnership status, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity status.

We are committed to taking positive action as a Disability Confident Employer. If you find you meet the essential criteria in the person specification for a role, and identify yourself as disabled under the Equality Act 2010 definition, you'll be guaranteed a first round interview (with the recruiter).

It is important to note that the Disability Confident Scheme guarantees an interview for candidates who meet the minimum criteria and tell us that they'd like to be considered under the scheme. The selection decision at interview will be based on the most suitable candidate, regardless of any protected characteristic.





# Step One

A brighter path to wellbeing

