**Changing Lives Charity**

**Chair of Trustees**

**June 2023**

Dear Applicant,

**Chief Executive Officer**

Thank you for considering applying for the post of Chief Executive Officer in Changing Lives Charity. For the Trustees of Changing Lives, the step of making this appointment represents a significant milestone and the completion of a major transition for this young charity established in 2015.

The objective of ensuring a sustainable future for the Charity with an effective executive team and a diverse, non-executive board was set in 2019 and despite the strong headwinds of Covid-19, the Trustee Board has remained committed to the course towards this aim.

We are a Christian organisation, which for the Trustees means listening to and following the call of God on our lives as we play our part in meeting the needs of those affected by trauma. It also means relying on His provision through prayer and of working closely with the churches in the town of Clevedon and in due course, throughout North Somerset.

The Trustees have expressed a strong and consistent vision of an integrated provision for our beneficiaries of the Charity and the Executive Summary of our recently completed Business & Investment Plan, sets out the Vision, Mission, Value and Objectives in a concise form for your information as you consider your next step.

If this Vision, Mission, and Values inspires you and the challenges we face do not daunt you, we sincerely hope that you will complete the application and journey with us through the selection process and potentially, beyond to establish a strong, Kingdom-based partnership.

**Ian Burnham, Trustee and Interim CEO**

This is a full-time position with a salary in the range £40,000 to £42,500 pa. Full details including how to apply, are obtainable from https://www.changinglives.org.uk/changing-lives-employment-opportunities

Closing date for applications is 1700hrs on 16 June 2023. The selection interviews will be held on 27 June at Andrew House, Victoria Road, Clevedon BS21 7RU.

Changing Lives Charity is a Christian organisation committed to equality of access and opportunity. An Occupational Requirement exists for the postholder to be a Christian in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

**Changing Lives Charity**

**Business & Investment Plan 2021-24**

10 December 2021

**Executive Summary**

**VISION: Helping people find freedom and wholeness**

**MISSION:**

* 1. Offering a **warm welcome** and **unconditional** **acceptance**

*Equipped to help those who have experienced trauma, we will listen with compassion and without judgement to your story, gently suggesting how we can help support your plan for your recovery.*

* 1. Believing you can **break** **the cycle**

*We will help you honestly express your hopes for the future, supporting you to become more courageous to change your thinking and giving space to dream how things might be suggesting how we can help support your plan for your recovery.*

* 1. Equipping you to **take responsibility** for making **informed choices**

*Giving time and encouragement, with your input at each step, we will help you to develop and implement a plan to nurture your growth through education, training, and meaningful employment under the guidance of our experienced and caring staff.*

* 1. Helping **release your potential**

*Exploring your gifts and hidden talents, we will support your decisions enabling you to flourish, regaining a sense of purpose, peace and wellbeing.*

Playing our part in **changing the lives of others**

*Your qualification to help others is simply to be 1 step further along the journey! An important quality of Changing Lives is the way we serve one another, re-investing in the community and adding to our shared life through our own stories.*

**VALUES :**

We believe that every person is **unique** and **really matters**

We are being shaped by the **compassionate love of God**

We are committed to **walking together**, **sharing hope** and **building community**

**OBJECTIVES**

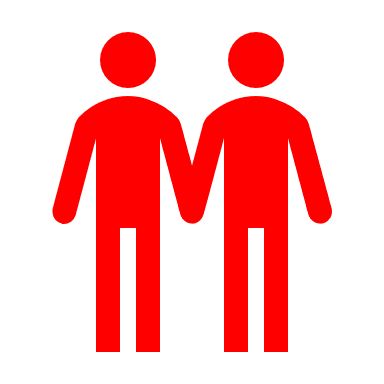
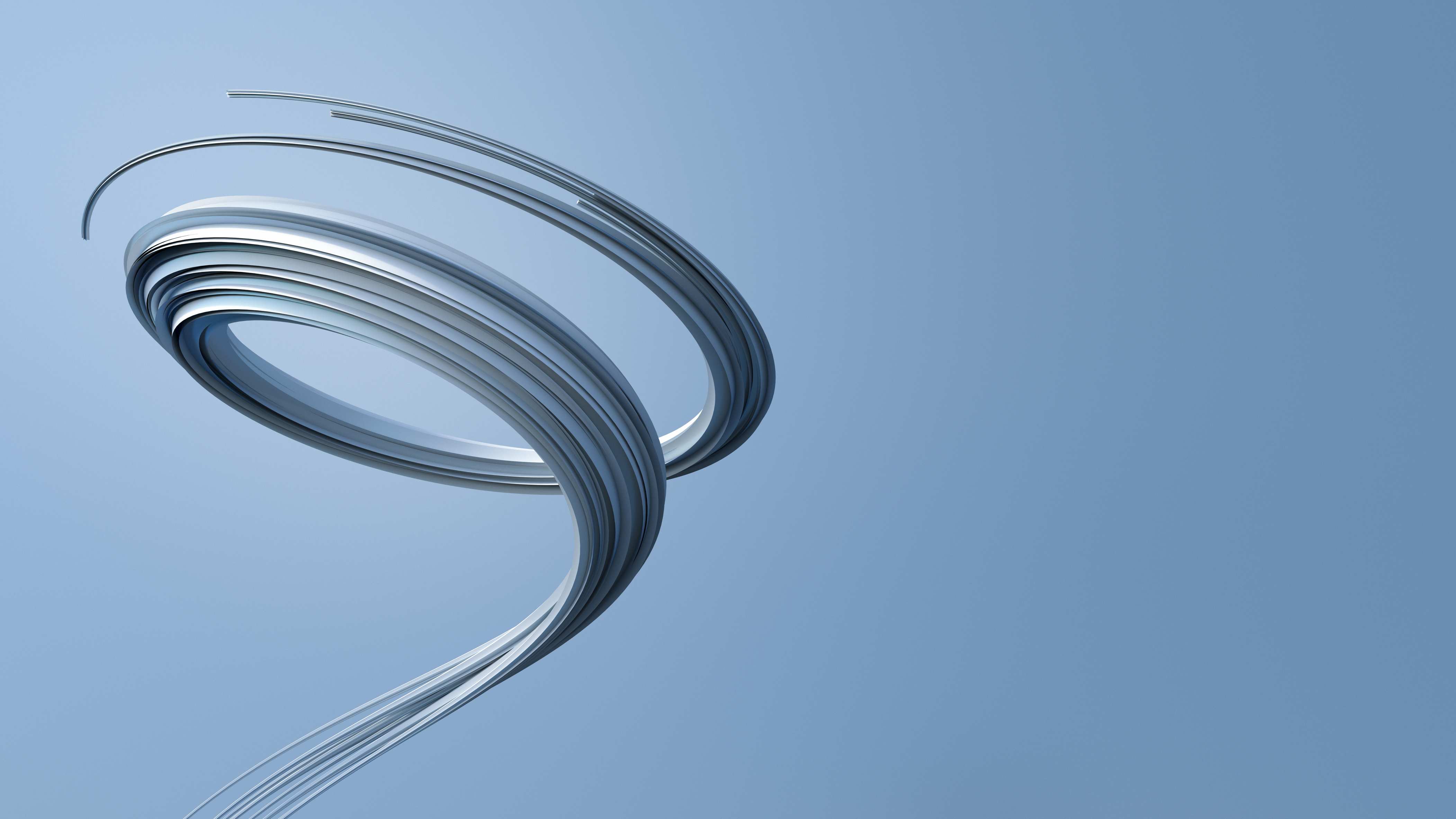
Changing Lives Charity will fulfil its Mission to those who have experienced trauma through the provision of 4 integrated elements:

**Volunteer Plus (V+):** a programme offering a comprehensive suite of explicitly therapeutic components including a structured programme of Education, Training, and Employment, a trauma-informed psychological assessment, individual counselling and / or groupwork, The Life Course, providing skills for self-care and living independently / interdependently, Healthy Lifestyles practice; helping to develop a well-rounded or balanced lifestyle with each participant having assigned a Mentor.

**Andrew House:** a therapeutic community for those who require a safe home to stay whilst participating in Volunteer+.

**Social Enterprise:** an established re-use business activity as the host organisation for Volunteer+ and a contributor to the financial wellbeing of the Charity.

**Community Hub:** a vision for **a place of hope, hospitality, wellbeing, and service for the people of Clevedon.**



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**BECOMING A TRAUMA-INFORMED SERVICE**

We have chosen to focus on working with trauma survivors in recognition of the significance of trauma in most if not all the stories of vulnerable people. Whether our beneficiaries are ex-offenders, ex-homeless or recovering addicts the most likely source of their behaviour and presenting challenges is some form of trauma.

To become a fully trauma-informed organisation and service we will adopt the approach of the Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) Trauma Working Group’s Principles, Knowledge and Skills Framework and Implementation Toolkit first published in March 2021

The Framework recognises that the development of trauma-informed approaches in support services is a fundamental step towards creating more effective, compassionate solutions for every person. The Charity has adopted, for the time being, the Working Group’s definition of trauma as follows:

*Individual trauma results from an event, series of events or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, emotional, or spiritual wellbeing.*

**VOLUNTEER PLUS PROGRAMME**

All elements of Volunteer Plus are therapeutic, and this approach underpins all we do. Therapeutic components are expressed explicitly in the following elements:

**Education, Training, and Employment**: to gain and develop skills and attitudes that will improve their employability. Employment contributes to wellbeing creating opportunities for growth, self-determination, and resilience. We view volunteering as a steppingstone towards paid employment.

**Psychotherapeutic input:** to deal with the long-term effects arising from their experiences. This will include trauma-informed assessment and counselling (1:1 and / or groupwork).

**The Life Course:** to learn self-care, manage unhelpful thinking patterns, build, and maintain healthy relationships and live both independently and interdependently.

**Healthy Lifestyles Practice:** to develop a ‘well-rounded or balanced lifestyle’ providing opportunities for growth, balance, and personal resilience.

**Mentoring:** to help take personal responsibility and develop their potential, skills, attitude, and behaviour to become the person they were made to be.

**ANDREW HOUSE as a Therapeutic Community**

The purpose of Andrew House is to provide a safe and welcoming home for up to 10 men who are experiencing the effects of trauma and are currently unable to live independently and express a desire to change by accessing Andrew House and the Volunteer Plus programme.

The House will be established as a therapeutic community, meaning a shared home in which the community itself, through self-help and mutual support is the principal means for promoting personal change. In a therapeutic community residents and staff participate in the management and operation of the community, contributing to a psychologically and physically safe learning environment where change can occur.

Changing Lives will employ several staff supported by trained volunteers to provide 24/7 cover. A ‘senior resident’ will live as a member of the community and provide oversight and support when staff / volunteers are absent. The senior resident will have lived experience of trauma and, in due course it is hoped that this person would be drawn from amongst the residents.

It is planned for the House to be prepared for welcoming its first residents in May 2022. There remain two critical steps to achieve this; the appointment of the Community Leader to complete the necessary planning and preparation for the opening of the House and securing from North Somerset Council SEA Status[[1]](#footnote-1) and the enhanced level of Housing Benefit to support the tenancy management function.

**BUSINESS ACTIVITY**

The purpose of the business activity (or social enterprise) is, in order of priority, to provide a ‘real-life’ commercial activity in which the participants of (V+) are meaningfully engaged, to contribute to the financial wellbeing of the Charity, to providing goods and services that are useful to the community and have a positive impact on the environment and to have a positive impact on the life of Clevedon.

Following a major restructure in 2020, the business is stable showing encouraging signs of growth in most areas. Equipping (middle) managers with information and the skills to make decisions is bearing fruit. Improving the profile of the Charity and communicating the purpose of the trading activity which is largely reliant on donations of items for sale are key parts of the next steps.

The success of the business is dependent on melding the efforts of the paid employees, well-meaning volunteers, and V+ participants. The complexity of this task will be a focus for the senior management in the coming period. Ensuring a modest and reliable positive financial contribution is essential to the success of the Charity’s business model.

**COMMUNITY HUB**

The Charity has a vision to create **a centrepiece for the town of Clevedon; a place of hope, hospitality, wellbeing, and service for those who live here. The space will include**

* **a high-quality, reasonably priced, community café using locally sourced produce and products**
* **places providing the opportunity to build relationships and share stories**
* **artisan craft workshops and displays**
* **opportunities to learn new skills**
* **space to showcase the repaired, upcycled and re-purposed furniture and homeware for which Changing Lives is already well known.**

**We also imagine access nearby to an area in which to grow flowers, vegetables, and herbs to support the café and enhance the environment of the Hub.**

**We plan to have people available to engage with those who are drawn to the Hub to create relationships and make lasting connections that will hopefully lead to the meeting of need and the healing of mind, body, and spirit.**

**The next stage of its development will require investment to appoint an architect to help facilitate a stakeholder visioning exercise providing information to allow the aspiration to be expressed in a tangible form based on an agreed project scope. Seeking a suitable property in Clevedon will also form part of the next stage as will the preparation of an outline cost plan for the project**.

**Summary of progress since completion of the Business & Investment Plan**

The appointment of a new Trustee, Dr Jenny Schaefer, was confirmed by the Board on 27 Jan 22. Dr Schaefer is a GP at the Broadmead Medical Centre with responsibility for the Outreach Alcohol Clinics in Bristol as part of the NHS Homeless Health Service serving Bristol, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire.

The appointment of Marsha Miles Consultancy as professional Fundraiser with a target of raising sufficient revenue to fully implement the B&IP was made on 1 April 2023

In Feb 22, the Special Exempt Status application for Andrew House was made. Recognition of this status for the service planned to be offered in the therapeutic community to be based in the House will enable the residents to claim Housing Benefit at an enhanced rate derived from the operating costs of the service. Achieving this status and the settlement of an appropriate level of HB is a vital step in implementing the residential service.

The position of Community Leader for Andrew House was advertised in Dec 21 and the appointee, Jess Crossley, commenced employment with the Charity on 01 Mar 22. We are very pleased with this outcome and the timing demonstrates the Trustees’ commitment to deliver this essential component of the V+ programme.

1. Specified Exempt Status enabling NSC to grant Housing Benefit commensurate with the needs of the residents. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)