



## Family Support Link

Support for families across  
Northamptonshire affected  
by someone else's drug or alcohol use.

Charity No:- 1196808



# Trustee Candidate Information



# Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee at Family Support Link. Our vision is of a world without harm from the use of substances, where families and communities are resilient and stigma-free, and children and young people are happy and nurtured. To this end, we have been providing group and 1:1 support to families/friends affected by substance use within Northamptonshire since 2007, in addition to education and advocacy with other organisations.

Our clients have always sat at the heart of what we do: they are the reason we exist and are fundamental to everything. We were set up by someone who could not find the support she needed and wanted to offer it to others. We have family members who have become volunteers and then staff or trustees, and our clients' voice influences everything: from client consultation days, to feedback that we bring to team meetings, to client surveys, to us requesting input within 1:1 and group sessions.

Over the last few years, we have seen significant change and growth as an organisation. We have changed our charity structure to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), refreshed our vision, mission and values, and expanded our support to take a more holistic, whole family approach.

We would like three people to join our Trustee Board to offer strategic support to the organisation as we move forwards. Specific skills and experience we are seeking include governance, leadership, HR, law, finance, fundraising or lived experience.

We are also interested in hearing from candidates who have other useful skills and experiences, including health inequalities, health and social care, local authority, criminal justice and marketing. We are always keen to add further diversity, perspective and experience to our team and you do not have to have been a trustee before. Trustees need to be over 16 years old, and we have a strong preference for those based in Northamptonshire.

We hope that this information will give you a good overview of the role and responsibilities of a Trustee, but if you would like to talk through any aspects of the role then please do get in touch. I very much look forward to receiving your application.

**Julia Feazey**  
**Chair of Trustees, Family Support Link**

# About us



# About us

**Vision:** Our vision is of a world without harm from the use of substances, where families and communities are resilient and stigma-free, and children and young people are happy and nurtured.

**Mission:** Our mission is to empower families and communities harmed by the use of substances to regain control and lead happier, healthier lives.

**Values:** When undertaking our work we strive to be a safe space: non-judgemental, respectful, empathetic, confidential, flexible, inclusive and accessible to all.

## Aims and Objectives

1

Improve the lives and wellbeing of families and friends harmed by the use of substances.

- a. Maintain and develop existing 1:1, telephone, in person and online group support for families and friends, and parents who use substances, including flexible and whole family options.
- b. Identify unmet peer support needs and develop services to fill the gaps.
- c. Maintain and develop whole family, adult and children and young people focussed events and activities including social and wellbeing opportunities.
- d. Develop flexible and inclusive opportunities for support and information, targeting communities with specific barriers, including culturally sensitive options.
- e. Advocate for families and friends in contact with external organisations to minimise the impact of other underlying problems on their lives.
- f. Develop bereavement support options to fill the gaps between the organisation and other services.

2

Ensure our clients voices are heard.

- a. Improve opportunities for clients to provide internal feedback, using a co-production approach where possible.
- b. Create a group of families and friends who are able and willing to tell their experiences with/to external organisations, communities, political figures and the media amplifying those who are less represented in our client group.
- c. Create a bank of extended case studies and soundbites/voice recordings for use in training sessions, reports, marketing and communications.
- d. Identify and manage opportunities for our clients to tell their story in other services and in social media, community, political and media settings.

3

Increase knowledge and understanding around the impact of substance use on families and friends.

- a. Identify gaps in our knowledge, including cultural understanding, and ensure continuous education and training to fill these.
- b. Review our awareness sessions and training offer to ensure we are using our experience and the voice of families to challenge and inform.
- c. Review our marketing and communications language and strategy to ensure an effective and coherent approach to increasing knowledge and understanding.
- d. Develop opportunities for an increased profile and coverage within the media, the community, social media and politics.

4

Ensure we are a strong and inclusive charity with a clear strategic and financial plan for the future

- a. Develop a staff and volunteer wellbeing strategy to build a resilient and supportive community that feels valued and heard.
- b. Develop a theory of change and a coordinated approach to impact measurement and monitoring, with an annual impact report.
- c. Develop a diverse financial strategy, including engagement with corporate organisations.
- d. Ensure compliance with legal obligations, best practice guidelines and our own constitution, policies and strategies, with continuous review of services, regular audits, clear paperwork and storage, and a business continuity plan.
- e. Ensure robust governance, with strong communications and understanding between trustees and the staff team.
- f. Progress opportunities to increase our influence and voice both locally and nationally.



# Our families

People with drug and alcohol issues have networks of families and friends who feel the impact, whether they have become estranged or continue to provide vital support. This is an incredibly marginalised group and includes: grandparents, parents, partners, siblings, friends and children. Both our adult and children/young people (CYP) clients are from some of the most chaotic families in Northamptonshire, presenting with multiple complications and hardships. Every day we see first-hand the complex and severe impacts that they have to endure, including:-

**Adults:** social isolation, stress, mental ill health, physical ill health, domestic violence, debt, unstable housing.

**Children:** emotional, cognitive, behavioural, other psychological problems, neglect, separation, exposure to criminal or inappropriate behaviour, interrupted education and socialisation, poor educational attainment.

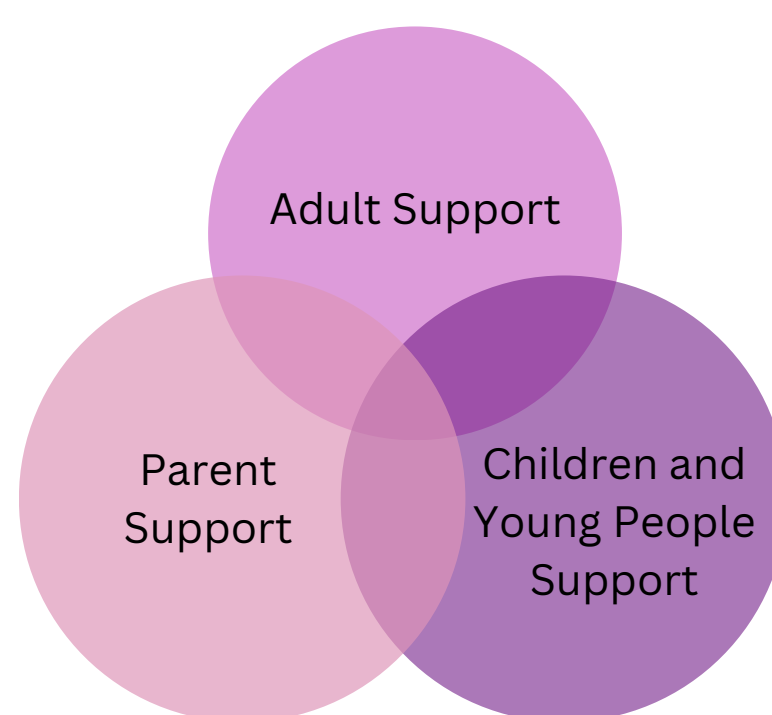
Indeed, according to the UKDPC the cost of the harms experienced by families as a result of their relative's drug use amounts to £1.8 billion per year.<sup>[1]</sup> However, due to the stigma and shame associated with drug and alcohol use, and their focus on their loved one and their support needs, their own problems are often hidden.

When the drug or alcohol user is a parent, then the pressures of parenting can also bring particular challenges, which can have a significant impact on their children's lives. When they enter the treatment system they currently receive no support for navigating the often stressful world of being a parent, despite their complex needs. There is often a history of failed interventions, with very little trust in services and the system, chaotic home lives and significant unresolved childhood trauma in their own past, alongside poor emotional regulation and poor emotional availability for their children. For many of these parents they have a strong desire to be a good parent to their children, but have very low self esteem, and little confidence in their abilities, or examples of good parental role models. Without appropriate support around their parenting, emotional regulation and and inter-family communication, there are significant risks of their children experiencing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's), including child abuse.

[1] Adult family members and carers of dependent drug users: prevalence, social cost, resource savings and treatment responses, 2009

# Our support

We support adults and children/young people over the age of 5 harmed by someone else's use of substances, along with support for parents who use substances themselves. Adults are supported via the validated 5-Step model in 1:1 and group sessions, with a social group and wellbeing activities, alongside a telephone helpline. Children and Young People over the age of 5 are supported holistically in schools via 1:1 sessions, and via events and activities in school holidays. Parents are supported via 1:1 and group sessions using the Parents under Pressure programme, an intensive evidence-based intervention aimed at families with complex needs. Whole family work in the form of family sessions enables us to build communication and connection and gives voice to those who are feeling unheard and invisible. We also provide education and build understanding across agencies and communities. Our new outreach work addresses health inequalities by working with communities that wouldn't normally come forward to access our services. We are building trust and understanding to develop forms of support that meet their needs. Our work aims to improve the health and wellbeing of the families with whom we work. Annually, we work with around 300 adult family members, 200 children and young people, and 70 parents. We support families to set boundaries, develop safety plans, increase their understanding of addiction, build communication across the family, reduce their stress and anxiety, connect with others who understand, reducing the stigma and isolation that they feel, increase emotional regulation, and reduce the risk of child abuse and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's).



Those who access our support tell us that they feel less isolated, have greater self-esteem and are less stressed, with better physical and mental health, improved emotional regulation and healthier coping mechanisms. An evaluation of our adult service showed highly significant improvements on stress, strain, coping strategies, the family burden and mental wellbeing. We can even plot these improvements over time to track the continued positive impact beyond exiting our service through the knowledge and support gained through our interventions.

Clients say they know more about drugs and alcohol and understand how to better manage their situation, enabling them to improve fractured family relationships and, where appropriate, provide effective support to their loved one. They have a better understanding of risks surrounding drug and alcohol use, and how to best ensure the safety of themselves and other family members. As the weeks progress, we see them develop the resilience to better adapt to changes in their circumstances, and the strength to regain an element of control over their lives. Their ability to cope with life on a day-to-day basis is improved, enabling them to fully take part in education and employment. They are empowered to take an active role in their community, and in some cases speak more openly, challenging the stigma surrounding drug and alcohol use and giving their community strength through their voice and participation.

# About the role





# Trustee role

## Strategic Leadership

*Provide strategic leadership to the charity and its Board, ensuring that Family Support Link can maximise its impact for the families it serves.*

- As a Trustee, fulfil your responsibilities for the effective strategic leadership of the charity and help ensure that the Board develops the right skills, knowledge and culture to support the charity effectively.
- Ensure Family Support link is a prominent part of the Northamptonshire landscape of support for families and children, and substance misuse, and is at the forefront of policy and practice affecting families impacted by substance use.
- Understand and promote equity, equality, diversity and inclusion and help advance our commitment to progress further.
- Build effective relationships with other trustees and staff to provide challenge, support and counsel to the charity in achieving the organisation's mission.
- Utilise your specialist skills, knowledge and experience to provide insight, advice and guidance on key issues.

## Governance

*Support the board in ensuring that it fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation.*

- Work with the Chair of Trustees and other trustees to support the Board to fulfil its duties and responsibilities to ensure the sound health of the charity, with robust systems in place to ensure financial accountability and integrity.
- Ensure a healthy culture of challenge, scrutiny and support among the Board, that governance arrangements and meetings are working effectively.
- Ensure that the Board regularly reviews major risks and associated opportunities and satisfies itself that robust systems are in place including in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

## Relationships

*Optimise relationships between Family Support Link and our stakeholders as required, to advance the impact Family Support Link can have for families.*

- Act as a trusted ambassador for the charity, with external stakeholders and influencers including representing the charity at events and in generating income as required.
- Build strong and trusted relationships with strategic partners and funders that can support greater impact for families.
- Be prepared to act as a spokesperson for the charity and to act as senior point of deferral for problem-solving and disputes.

# What we're looking for

Family Support Link is looking for three people 16 or over to join our Board of Trustees to offer strategic support and guidance. We are particularly interested in people with experience in one or more of the following areas:

- **Governance**
- **Leadership**
- **HR**
- **Law**
- **Financial Management**
- **Fundraising**
- **Lived experience**

We are also interested in hearing from candidates who have other useful skills and experiences, including health inequalities, health and social care, local authority, criminal justice and marketing. We are always keen to add further diversity, perspective and experience to our team and you do not have to have been a trustee before, but we do have a strong preference for those based in Northamptonshire.

## **Skills and attributes**

Candidates should be able to demonstrate many of the following attributes:

- Sound judgement and integrity; demonstrates capacity for self-reflection and is a clear and independent strategic thinker with a willingness to speak their mind.
- Highly effective relationship and alliance building abilities and comfortable with an ambassadorial role – with the ability to inspire and motivate staff, volunteers and stakeholders and bring people together.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills with high emotional intelligence and a respectful approach.
- Insightful on, and committed to inclusion, someone who can act as an ambassador for diversity across the organisation and a deep personal commitment to supporting families of every kind in all communities with the different issues they face.
- Team player who enjoys working with others and fosters a collaborative culture,.
- An interest in good governance and the support of Board leadership and management
- The ability to participate effectively in meetings to hold to account the organisation's senior management team and other Board colleagues, and the ability to balance conflicting factors and make objective decisions.
- Willing to commit the time and effort necessary to do the role, and to think creatively about ways that they can support the organisation.



# Terms of Appointment

## Time Commitment

- Around 2 hours per month
- This includes quarterly Board Meetings, usually held remotely in the evening from 6-7.30pm, plus additional specialist meetings for areas of particular interest.
- The initial year will also include some additional time spent on training, which can be arranged flexibly around your schedule.
- We encourage all Board Members to visit the office, shadow groups and sessions where possible and meet members of staff to get a deeper understanding of the organisation.

## Remuneration

The role is voluntary. All reasonable expenses incurred in fulfilling your duties will be reimbursed.

## Term

Every trustee must be appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees. Any person retiring as a charity trustee is eligible for reappointment. A charity trustee who has served for three consecutive terms may not be re-appointed for a further consecutive term but after an interval of at least one year may be reappointed for no more than two further consecutive terms

## Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

As a charity, we are on a journey to ensuring that we are serving those who are affected by health inequalities. We are actively seeking diverse talented people from a wide range of backgrounds, and are seeking trustees who will bring to the Board the skills, experience and commitment to drive progress on diversity and inclusion as a feature of our transformation.

## Safeguarding

Family Support Link requires the Chair and all trustees to be committed to promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and takes a serious and proactive commitment to effective safeguarding. Due to the nature of this role a criminal records check will be required should you be offered the position.

# Trustee Agreement and Code of Conduct

**As a trustee of Family Support Link, you would be expected to sign the following Trustee agreement and code of conduct prior to starting as a Trustee:**

I promise to abide by the fundamental values that underpin all activities of this organisation. These are as follows.

*Family Support Link strives to be a safe space: non-judgemental, respectful, empathetic, confidential, flexible, inclusive and accessible to all.*

Additionally, I agree to the following:

## **Strategic Leadership**

- I will take charge of my development as a trustee, engaging in induction, training and development activities and continually seeking ways to improve board governance practice.
- I will strive to identify good candidates for trusteeship and appoint new trustees on the basis of merit.
- I will develop and maintain an up-to-date knowledge of Family Support Link and its environment, support the objects, vision and mission, and act as their champion.

## **Governance**

- I will act within the law, charity regulations, and the organisational constitution, policies and procedures.
- In the boardroom I will strive to embody the principles of leadership in all of my actions, and live up to the trust placed in me by Family Support Link.
- I accept my responsibility to ensure that Family Support Link is well run and will raise issues and questions in an appropriate and sensitive way to ensure that this is the case.
- I will strive to attend all board meetings, giving apologies ahead of time to the Chair if unable to attend, and study the agenda and other papers sent to me in good time prior to the meeting.
- I will honor the authority of the Chair and respect their role as the meeting leader
- I will engage in debate and voting in meetings according to procedure, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others while making my voice heard.
- I will accept a majority board vote on an issue as decisive and final.



# Trustee Agreement and Code of Conduct

## **Relationships**

- I will strive to establish respectful, collegial and courteous relationships, and will respect organisational, board and individual confidentiality.
- I will be mindful of the different roles and responsibilities of trustees and the senior management team, and will challenge and support them to fulfil their roles, whilst also respecting the boundaries between the different positions.
- Where I also volunteer in another role at Family Support Link, or have another relationship with the organisation, I will maintain the separation of my role as a trustee and in my other capacity.
- I will not make public comments about the organisation unless authorised to do so, and any comments that I make will be considered and in line with organisational policy and decisions, whether I make them as an individual or a trustee, even where these do not coincide with my personal views.
- When speaking as a private citizen I will strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation and those who work in it.

## **Personal Interest**

- I will not gain materially or financially from my role as trustee, unless specifically authorised to do so, nor will I permit others to do so as a result of my actions or negligence. I will not accept gifts or hospitality without the prior consent of the Chair.
- I will use organisational resources responsibly, document expenses and seek reimbursement according to procedure.
- I will always strive to act in the best interests of the organisation as a whole and its present and future beneficiaries.
- I will declare any conflict of interest, or any circumstance that might be viewed by others as a conflict of interest, as soon as it arises, and submit to the judgement of the board and do as it requires regarding these.

## **Leaving the Board**

- I understand that a substantial breach of any part of this code may result in my removal from the trustee board.
- Should procedures be put in motion that may result in my being asked to resign from the board, I will be given the opportunity to be heard. In the event that I am asked to resign from the board, I will accept the majority decision of the board and resign at the earliest opportunity.
- Should I resign from the board I will inform the chair in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning, and will also participate in an exit interview.

# How to Apply

We hope you consider making an application. If you have any questions about the positions and would like to have an informal conversation about them, then please contact the Chair of Trustees, Julia Feazey on **[jfeazey-trustee@family-supportlink.co.uk](mailto:jfeazey-trustee@family-supportlink.co.uk)** or the Chief Executive Officer, Kate Peake on **[kpeake@family-supportlink.co.uk](mailto:kpeake@family-supportlink.co.uk)** and we would be happy to arrange a call.

To make an application please provide:

1. **Your CV** – Please provide a summary of your relevant experiences (no more than two sides of A4)
2. **Completed application form** – Email **[kpeake@family-supportlink.co.uk](mailto:kpeake@family-supportlink.co.uk)** to request an application form. Please use this to set out why you are interested in this appointment and highlight the experiences and qualities you believe will help your success in this role.

Please also inform us of three possible dates when you are available for interview in January.

**Closing date: Monday 12th January 2025**

**Interview dates:** Interviews will be held on a rolling basis throughout January

For more information on the charity, please see our website at **<http://familysupportlink.co.uk>**