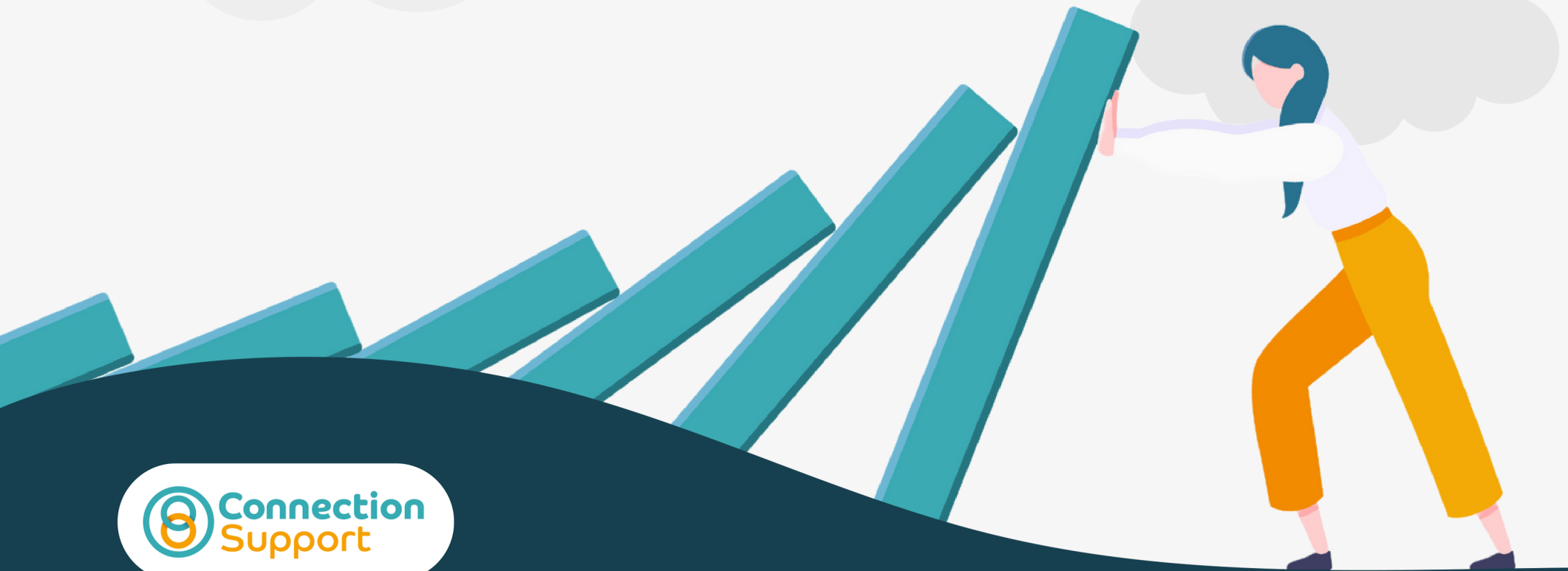


Prevention First: Connection Support's Strategy 2024 - 2027



Our vision for 2027 is to be a thought-leader in the prevention of homelessness and mental ill-health, spearheading innovative services that prevent crises from happening, whilst being there to offer client-centred support when they do.

Whether it's due to homelessness or poor mental health, the number of people experiencing a crisis is on the rise, and the origins of these crises often stem from childhood.

But we're here to turn things around.

Connection Support began with five people who believed they could make a difference by delivering an excellent homelessness prevention service in Oxfordshire. **They were proved right.** They went on to secure additional contracts to deliver a range of similar services, all with the aim of empowering people so that they can effectively manage a crisis and build resilience for the future.

We know that demand for support with homelessness and mental health is increasing all the time, and the clients becoming even more complex, so over the next three years, our core work will still meet the current need that we see around us. However, as we move forward, we'll also focus more on taking the battle against homelessness and poor mental health to its source, building on our legacy of working in a preventative way by putting prevention first. This means that each of the crisis services we provide will have a preventative approach woven in, enabling people to build resilience to avoid future emergencies so that they don't return through a revolving door.

Our passion to increase the positive impact we have on people's lives cannot be delivered without additional financial resource, so we'll be focussing more of our efforts into generating fundraised income. Whilst our core work will still be to deliver statutory services, we'll use this additional fundraised income to design innovative projects that meet the needs in society which existing services aren't currently able to meet. We'll strive to identify new opportunities so that we can avoid turning people away when their work is nearly finished. **We'll be here to provide needs-based, not time-based support.**

Our team are at the core of everything we do – without them, our support services would cease to exist. It's because of their expertise, compassion, and unwavering commitment to helping people that we're able to support our clients achieve incredible milestones. That's why we're investing into our staff so that we can be an even-better employer, building on our success as one of the best charities to work for.¹

We believe in a future where people are free from crisis, and effective prevention is the key. But for the times when crises do happen, we'll be there to help every step of the way.

¹ In 2023, we were named as one of the best charities to work for in the UK by employee engagement specialist, [Best Companies](#).



We're putting prevention first

Whether it's due to homelessness or poor mental health, the number of people experiencing a crisis is on the rise, and the origins of these crises often stem from childhood. We know that the human and financial cost of the revolving door is intolerable and unnecessary. That's why we're taking the battle against homelessness and poor mental health to its source by putting prevention first.

Quality service delivery

We're dedicated to improving the lives of the people we support, and so to continue meeting the needs of our clients, we're developing new ways to ensure we're always providing the highest level of quality.

Prevention is better than cure

We're seeking opportunities to innovate in the gaps in existing service provision, and fundraise for new services so that we can help more clients pave the way to a crisis-free future.

People, culture and partnership

We're recognised as one of the [best charities](#) to work for, and as our people make us who we are, we're doubling down on our efforts to be an ever-improving employer and partner.





Quality service delivery

Prevention is better than cure

People, culture and partnership

We're dedicated to improving the lives of the people we support, and so to continue meeting the needs of our clients, we're developing new ways to ensure we're always providing the highest level of quality.

- We'll implement a bespoke **quality assurance system** that will identify the areas we excel in and the areas we could develop.
- We'll use the learnings from this quality work to identify best practice and share it across the organisation to ensure that we're delivering the most effective support to our clients all the time.
- We'll design a monitoring system to effectively **measure the impact of our services**, so that we can more effectually demonstrate how we change our clients' lives.
- We'll implement a new database to improve processes, so that we can enable our teams to do their best work and to gather the management information we need to inspire potential funders.
- We'll increase the number of **high-quality properties** we own and manage, so that we can ensure we're able to offer our clients accommodation that is client-centred and psychologically informed.



“

**[The strategy] feels
consistent with our culture
and I'm happy with the
direction it's taking.**

Connection Support Staff

With our renewed focus on prevention, we're seeking opportunities to innovate in the gaps in existing service provision, and fundraise for new services so that we can help more clients pave the way to a crisis-free future.

Focus on prevention

- We'll analyse data from our services to better understand how early intervention can help our clients to improve their lives, particularly in avoiding crises. We'll explore existing prevention approaches and create our **own theory of change**.
- We'll continue to deliver our core services which support people who are in crisis or have ongoing support needs, and train our people to weave our theory of change into our way of working so that we can help to prevent crises from happening in the future.

Innovate in the gaps in provision

- We'll identify gaps in existing service provision and fundraise for services to fill them, enabling us to offer needs-based, not time-based support.
- We'll find opportunities to replicate our existing successful services in new locations.
- We'll always look to partner where possible and ensure that we're not competing with other organisations where high quality services are already provided.



Compelling communication

- We'll build our reputation as a **thought-leader in the prevention of homelessness and mental ill-health**, enabling us to fundraise more effectively to support our plans for growth.
- We'll use the impact evidence from our quality and impact work to not only improve our existing services, but to also **inspire funders to support us**.
- We'll mobilise staff, volunteers, and clients as proactive ambassadors of our work, ensuring that everyone can accurately and consistently describe what we do in an inspiring way.
- We'll **speak out more boldly** on issues affecting the people we support, amplifying their voices to bring attention to the need for services like ours by using their stories as evidence to support our theory of change.



Quality service
delivery

Prevention is
better than cure

People, culture
and partnership



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It would be great to be able to offer needs-based support, not time-based. Sometimes we need extensions, or to do transitional work, or clients end up doing the same work over and over again.

Connection Support Staff



Quality service
delivery

Prevention is better
than cure

People, culture
and partnership

We're recognised as one of the **best charities** to work for, and as our people make us who we are, we're doubling down on our efforts to be an ever-improving employer and partner.

- We'll design and implement a programme to help our staff better understand their role as **ambassadors for Connection Support** and contribute to the success of our fundraising efforts.
- We'll reaffirm our commitment to **pay our team as much as we can afford** to.
- We'll build on the excellent progress we have made in our recruitment process and innovate further to identify new, accessible ways to find and retain great talent.
- We'll continue to invest in learning and development, not just in classroom-based training, but in more mentoring, shadowing, secondments, and other internal knowledge-sharing opportunities, to **nurture a culture of growth and development**.
- We believe that we make the **greatest social impact by working in partnership** with others, so we'll continue to engage with formal partnerships and identify new opportunities to build long-lasting relationships.
- We'll continue to nurture staff-led initiatives, helping to **foster a positive, supportive, and inclusive working environment which is free from discrimination**, so that our people can thrive.
- We'll evolve our values so that they accurately reflect everything we stand for, ensuring they encompass who we are, how we work, and how we connect with others.

“

I had a mountain to climb
and you gave me the hiking
boots and all the equipment
I needed so that I could do
what I once thought was
impossible.

Client



Prevention First: **Connection Support's Strategy** **2024 - 2027**



**Connection
Support**

connectionsupport.org.uk

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