



CONNECT 2 PURPOSE TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 22.03.2024- 21.03.2025



Charity Number: 1190770
www.connecttopurpose.co.uk

Welcome to our Annual Report

Connect to Purpose is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation founded on 9 August 2020 by Georgina Saralis, Ali Grafton and Neil Clark. Our work is rooted in the belief that every young person deserves the opportunity to thrive, and that families flourish when they are supported, connected and empowered.

Our Charitable Objects

1. **To promote for the benefit of the public the preservation and protection of the historic buildings from which the charity operates**, in particular by implementing a programme of renovation and subsequent maintenance to sustain the building for the public.
2. **To advance in life and relieve the needs of young people in the UK** through:
 - a. the provision of recreation and leisure activities in the interests of social welfare, designed to improve their conditions of life;
 - b. advancing education;
 - c. providing support and activities which develop their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society.

Our Values

Identity and heritage

Nature and nurture

Spiritual and personal growth

Love and compassion

These values guide every aspect of our work with young people, families and communities.

Structure and Governance

Connect to Purpose is governed by its constitution as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The charity was founded by three trustees who previously worked together to pioneer an outstanding alternative provision for disengaged young people aged 8–18, with a strong emphasis on supporting families beyond the school gates.

Our Trustees

Georgina Saralis (PGCE, M.Ed)

Former Regional Executive Headteacher at Compass Community, with extensive experience in residential, fostering and educational services for children in care. Georgina has completed a placement as a trainee Family Therapist with Oxford NHS Trust CAMHS, volunteered with Eikon and Home-Start, and is now in her second year as a Family Support volunteer with Hampshire Children's Services. She currently works as a SEN teacher in Farnborough, where she is preparing to pilot our first Family Hub and deliver the Parent CONNECT Programme.

Neil Clark (B.A. Hons Oxon)

A retired headteacher with over 40 years' experience, including 17 years leading Trelors, a nationally acclaimed specialist school for disabled children.

Ali Grafton

A Senior Paediatric Occupational Therapist with extensive experience supporting children and young people

with additional needs, working closely with local authorities and statutory services. The trustees share a deep commitment to improving the life chances of young people and their families, grounded in the belief that every child matters.

Governance and Leadership Development

Additional trustees may be appointed by resolution at a trustees' meeting. We are committed to ensuring that young people aged 16–25 are represented on our board and play an active role in shaping the charity's leadership.

We currently have two volunteers:

- **Jonathan Pine**, retired bank manager and farm owner
- **Joe Johnson**, former student and now a filmmaker

We are committed to equality, inclusion and diversity, and aim for leadership that reflects the communities we serve, including individuals from marginalised groups such as women, BAME communities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, disabled people, care-experienced young people, and those with lived experience of socio-economic disadvantage.

All trustees receive training appropriate to their role. Those working directly with beneficiaries undertake safeguarding training and are registered on the DBS Update Service.

We also have three trained facilitators for the CONNECT Programme: **Bernadette Davis**, **Emillia Dolton** and **Lisa Hicks**, each bringing experience from social care and mental health settings.

Activities

The trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when planning and delivering the charity's work.

Connect to Purpose supports young people aged 8–25 who feel their lives are not moving in the direction they hope for themselves. Our aim is to help them thrive with joy, purpose and confidence, rather than simply cope or survive.

We focus on young people who are struggling to succeed in the education system — those vulnerable to low attainment, disengagement, persistent absence or exclusion. These young people often face significant barriers, including family stress, bereavement, trauma, financial hardship, caring responsibilities, or the challenges of special educational needs.

We also work to support families at risk of breakdown and to reduce the number of children entering care, including supporting care leavers aged 16–25 as they transition into adulthood. Our work is currently focused in areas of high deprivation in Hampshire, including Gosport and Havant.

Evidence That Drives Us

- An estimated 1.4 million UK families are living in relationships described as “distressed” (Relate).
- In 2022/23, approximately 107,000 children were looked after in the UK, with numbers rising year on year (NSPCC).
- Exclusions and suspensions increased in the 2022/23 academic year, including among children under six (DfE).
- One in five children and young people in England had a probable mental disorder in 2023 (NHS England).
- There was a 7% increase in 10–14-year-olds entering the youth justice system for the first time in 2022–23.

Evidence That Motivates Us

“A loving family is worth more than money and will give you guidance, support, love and advice.”

Boy, 11 (The Big Ask, The Big Answer, 2021)

“Where children do not live with their immediate family, they care about having a happy home. If they were unhappy at home, they were nine times more likely to be unhappy with life overall.”

The Big Ask, The Big Answer, 2021

Importance of the Work We Do

We provide long-term, relational support for young people and their families at times of crisis — support that is increasingly difficult to access through overstretched statutory services. While national policy is moving toward the creation of family hubs, our approach addresses the deeper, underlying circumstances that shape a young person’s life trajectory.

COVID-19 intensified the need for this work. Although children were less affected physically, the psychosocial impact was profound. Many young people report heightened anxiety, loss of motivation and increased emotional distress.

Our core objective is to provide developmental, relational and family-centred support that strengthens young people’s skills, confidence and sense of belonging, helping families stay together and thrive wherever possible.

Activities and Achievements (2024/25)

This year, Connect to Purpose has strengthened its commitment to supporting young people by bringing our work directly into school communities. In response to the growing pressures facing children and families, we have focused on creating safe, relational spaces within schools where young people can build confidence, develop emotional and social skills, and access supportive activities designed to improve their overall wellbeing and participation in daily life. This early, school-based work enables us to identify families who may benefit from deeper developmental opportunities, forming a natural pathway into the recreational and educational retreat programmes we will deliver from our restored heritage properties. By meeting young people where they are and offering practical, strengths-based support, we continue to advance their skills, capacities and life chances while preserving our long-term vision for the buildings that anchor our charitable purpose.

Our Three Core Activities

1. The Family Hub

The Family Therapy Hub is our frontline, school-based offer, designed to strengthen family relationships, build confidence, and improve young people’s engagement in education and daily life. Working in partnership with schools and community settings, we create safe, relational spaces where young people and their caregivers can access supportive activities, develop social and emotional skills, and receive practical guidance that helps improve their conditions of life. This work aligns directly with our charitable purpose of advancing education, improving wellbeing through social-welfare activities, and developing young people’s skills and capacities to participate fully in society.

2. The CONNECT Programme

CONNECT is our structured, evidence-based programme for parents and carers of teenagers who are finding family life challenging. The programme strengthens parent–teen relationships by helping caregivers understand adolescent development, build connection, and develop new ways of responding to difficult behaviour. CONNECT is delivered in small groups over ten weekly sessions, each lasting 90

minutes and led by two trained facilitators. Parents explore new perspectives on communication, boundaries and emotional regulation through discussion, role-plays and practical exercises. The programme offers caregivers a supportive space to reflect, learn and build confidence in their parenting approach. CONNECT is designed to help parents feel more equipped to support their teenagers through periods of emotional intensity, social difficulties or behavioural challenges. The focus is on strengthening relationships, increasing understanding, and expanding the choices parents have in responding to everyday struggles.

The programme aligns with our charitable purpose by improving family relationships, enhancing wellbeing through social-welfare activities, and developing the skills and capacities of caregivers so that young people can participate more fully in education, family life and their wider community.

3. Countryside Retreats

What makes us unique is our intention to deliver transformative, developmental support through countryside retreats for young people and their families. These retreats provide time and space for rest, reflection and renewal, away from the pressures of daily life. Families are welcomed into a peaceful sanctuary where they can tell their stories, be heard, express their needs and recognise their own strengths and capacity to move forward.

We operate from heritage properties of cultural importance to the local community, sustained by social enterprise led by young adults. This model connects heritage with young people and their families, fostering belonging, inclusion and social wellbeing. By locating our retreats in heritage settings, cultural heritage becomes a meaningful part of each family's experience, encouraging connection with local history, identity and community.

Retreat activities include creative arts, outdoor pursuits, education, life-skills sessions, and opportunities to participate in the preservation of the heritage home and gardens. These purposeful activities strengthen family relationships, build capability, and support young people to re-engage with education and wider society. The retreat venue also provides opportunities for volunteering, community engagement and local employment, giving the heritage home ongoing social and economic value.

An integral part of this vision is our Supported Independent Rural Living (S.I.R.L.) project, offering transition, housing, education and employment pathways for disadvantaged young adults aged 16–25. Through this, young people can access training, apprenticeships, leadership opportunities and supported rural living as they move into adulthood.

Activities to Date

Since our founding, Connect to Purpose has focused on developing a heritage-based model of support for young people and their families. Our early work centred on identifying and securing a suitable historic property to restore as a retreat venue. This began with our first major project: an attempt to purchase and renovate Plas Llanmihangel, a C12th manor house of significant cultural importance. Although the property was ultimately sold before funds could be raised, the campaign strengthened our public profile, expanded our networks, and deepened our understanding of heritage restoration, community engagement and social investment.

Following this, we reviewed our strategy and refined our identity, including a change of name to Connect to Purpose to reflect our broader vision. We continued to explore potential retreat venues and invested in strengthening our digital presence, supported by the Heritage Trust Network's Digital Heroes programme. This enabled us to redesign our website, improve accessibility for donors and volunteers, and communicate our mission more effectively.

Over the past two years, we have focused on developing the skills, knowledge and partnerships needed to deliver our programmes. This has included training in retreat facilitation, family support, and multidisciplinary practice with children and young people. We have also begun building capacity to deliver

the Parents/Carers CONNECT Programme, an evidence-based approach designed to strengthen parent-teen relationships. Engagement with schools, local authorities and community partners has helped us lay the groundwork for future delivery, both as outreach and as part of our retreat offer.

Alongside this, we have continued to explore potential heritage properties suitable for our long-term retreat vision, including a recent site visit in the Brecon Beacons. Each stage of this journey has contributed to the development of a robust, values-driven model that integrates heritage, community, education and family development forming the foundation for the work we are now undertaking.

Future Plans

Over the coming year, Connect to Purpose will continue developing its three-strand model of support for young people and their families. Our priority is to strengthen our school-based Family Hub work, deepening partnerships with local schools and community organisations to ensure young people can access relational, developmental support at the earliest opportunity. We will also expand the CONNECT Programme, building our capacity to deliver both parent/carer groups and youth-focused sessions as part of our outreach offer.

Alongside this, we will continue exploring suitable heritage properties that can serve as long-term retreat venues. Our aim is to secure a site that enables us to integrate heritage, nature, recreation and family development in a way that reflects our values and charitable purpose. We will also continue building relationships with local authorities, funders and community partners to support the sustainability of this vision.

Our focus remains on creating meaningful, strengths-based opportunities for young people to develop their skills, confidence and sense of belonging, while preserving and celebrating heritage spaces that can be shared with the wider community. Each step we take is designed to move us closer to delivering restorative, educational and socially-beneficial retreats that bring families together and support young people to thrive.

Financial Review

For the financial year ending **21 March 2025**, Connect to Purpose received:

- **Unrestricted income:** £0
- **Restricted income:** £0
- **Total income for the year:** £0
- **Total expenditure:** £0
- **Surplus for the year:** £0

As of 21 January 2026, the balance of our bank account is £1,041.49, which includes:

- £693.24 raised in our 2021 crowdfunding campaign
- £348.25 donated directly via the Connect to Purpose website during the 2023/24 financial year.

The trustees continue to manage funds prudently, ensuring that all income is directed toward the development of our charitable activities.

Reserves Policy

Given the early stage of the charity's development, the trustees aim to build modest reserves to ensure financial stability and support future programme delivery. All funds are currently held for the purpose of developing our Family Hub, CONNECT Programme and retreat model.

Risk Management

The trustees regularly review risks associated with governance, finance, safeguarding, and programme delivery. Key risks include:

- securing sustainable funding
- identifying a suitable heritage property
- maintaining volunteer and trustee capacity
- ensuring safeguarding compliance

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and financial statements in accordance

with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards. They are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, safeguarding the assets of the charity, and ensuring compliance with charity law.

Approval

This report was approved by the trustees of Connect to Purpose on **[insert date]**.

Signed:

Date: 19th January 2026

On behalf of the Board of Trustees

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'G Saralis', written in a cursive style.

Georgina Saralis

Chair of Trustees