

Chief Executive Officer Aldingbourne Trust



Dear Applicant

I am delighted that you are interested in applying for the role of Chief Executive of The Aldingbourne Trust. After years of visionary leadership and dedication, our inspirational CEO Sue Livett will be stepping down next year, leaving behind a powerful legacy of inclusion, innovation and impact. Her presence, skills and experience will be greatly missed. However, we are now looking forward to appointing a successor to take the Trust to its next phase, to continue to develop our fantastic services and enterprises, using the principles and dynamism we thrive on.

The Trust was founded in 1978: its intention to support people to live good lives based on the experience of people and families who wanted to offer greater opportunities and choices for people with learning disabilities and autism. Our commitment continues to people living good lives. Based on what we hear, our approach is much valued today, bringing connection, involvement and belonging to the people we support.

There are different strands in our organisation to show leadership of and commitment to:

Our support function, which ranges from low level/drop in support through to 24 hours a day support on site, including personal care. Some of our services are registered with the Care Quality Commission.

Our enterprises, which create opportunities for people we support to work, train and learn in our cafes, creative spaces, horticultural and wood recycling businesses. These range from locations in Bognor to MAKE in Portsmouth.

Our Country Centre, which is a tourist attraction as well as home to some of the enterprises described above. This, by its very nature, is concerned with developing and attracting visitors, being truly commercial in its activities and looking to increase income to support the Trust's activities. The Centre looks to attract families with young children for the most part but there is potential for the site to offer more.

The culture at Aldingbourne across its staff, Board and volunteers is one of passion, energy and a desire to innovate and be creative. The 'Aldingbourne Way' is a term that describes the above with our aim to achieve high levels of engagement and empowerment from the people who work here. We currently have c300 employees plus a strong and committed team of volunteers. It is a truly fulfilling and inspiring organisation to be part of

Of course there are challenges: we face rising demand for social care, funding pressures and the remodelling of the NHS and local government all have and will have an impact. We are mindful that we have income generating sources with the Country Centre, our enterprises in Bognor and Portsmouth and some very successful fundraising initiatives. All of which allows us to invest in the people we support and

for them to be an integral part of those enterprises. We are mindful that social care is a difficult employment market and we strive to be the preferred employer in the sector in the area and have evidence that we are, but it's an ongoing focus that is required to maintain that status. We are looking at developing careers as opposed to offering jobs, to develop and maintain leading edge people practices and to involve our people in our organisational development.

I am especially interested in thinking about and discussing our future as an organisation. Should we be looking to grow and if so, in what areas and direction, is our business model in need of change, are our relationships with stakeholders and partners as successful as we would wish them to be.

This role is a fantastic opportunity for the right person. We are looking for someone who is creative, innovative, strategic and a great networker across a range of contacts. We believe in challenging the status quo when we need to and this is the role to achieve that, and more, successfully. The people we support are the reason why we are all here and this role is pivotal to achieving the goals we share for everyone to live a good life.

I hope that you are interested in applying for this fantastic, sometimes challenging and always crucial role. I look forward to hearing from you.

Emma Lochhead – Chair



We are a registered charity, established in 1978 by parents of people with a learning disability who wanted their children to have purpose and enjoy their lives. We work across West Sussex and in Portsmouth.

We employ 291 staff and we have 280 volunteers.

Our mission: to support people to develop and live the lives they choose.

Our vision:

What matters to the people we support?

Social Care Future poses this question:

#socialcarefuture

We agree!

“Don't we all want to live in the place we call home with the people and things that we love, in communities where we look out for one another, doing the things that matter to us?”

Our 6 key values are:

1. **Collaboration:** we know we don't have all the answers ourselves, we work across Aldingbourne, with families, carers and partners locally and nationally to make the most of what we have together.
2. **Efficiency:** demand continues to increase, ongoing economic conditions mean we must spend and use our resources wisely.
3. **Enterprise:** we are serious about social enterprise because it provides new opportunities for learning, being part of and supporting local communities and reducing our reliance on state funding.

4. **Influence:** autistic people and people with learning disabilities are often affected by change which are made without their knowledge or involvement. For people to be citizens we need time to explain and arrange access to information and activities.
5. **Innovation:** the world is constantly changing. We want to close gaps in need and be aware of how innovation can be used to do things better.
6. **Proving:** people with disabilities can and do make a big contribution to society. The value of providing support is important and we will always focus on how we can make a big difference.

We apply these values in our actions and the way we do things across Aldingbourne, part of our 'Aldingbourne Way':-



Our income sources:

- Commissioned contracts.
- Grants.
- Rental income on lease arrangements – homes for people we support.
- Social enterprises.
- Fundraising.

Please see our financial statements



We offer support to over 1,700 people across West Sussex and in Portsmouth, including:-

People being offered a range of opportunities – to learn, develop and thrive.

These include social enterprises and activities in locations which are well used and valued by local communities.

We use social enterprises as a way of attracting public visitors and customers while these enterprises provide training, development and positive experiences to support people with disabilities.

Our main site, at the Aldingbourne Country Centre, near Fontwell, (between Chichester and Arundel) is next to the South Downs National Park and attracts over 80,000 visitors a year. The site has an award-winning Quarry Building, with conference facilities, a café, shop, an open farm, children's play areas, maze, woodland walk, plants and recycled wood for sale. We hold popular events for our target customers of families with young children.

In Portsmouth we manage two cafes in much loved community bases.

People living in their own homes. Some of our support includes people's homes where staff are available 24 hours a day.

We provide outreach support and venue based support for activities, information, advice and guidance.

We are registered with the Care Quality Commission and currently have 'Good' ratings.

People getting and keeping paid and voluntary work. We are the lead provider in a consortium which provides supported employment to people across West Sussex. We've supported over 2,000 people into paid and voluntary work.



Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Reports to: Chair of Trustees

Click [here](#) for an Org Chart

Role Purpose

To provide overall strategic leadership of the Aldingbourne Trust, ensuring delivery of our mission, financial sustainability, growth and impact. The CEO will inspire, influence and lead in partnership with Board of Trustees, funders, stakeholders, and communities. They will act as the lead ambassador for Aldingbourne, safeguarding our reputation, championing inclusion, and driving innovation and growth in social care and enterprise. The people we support will be at the heart of our strategy and actively involved in shaping decisions.

Key Responsibilities

1. Strategic & Visionary Leadership

- Lead the development and implementation of our long-term vision and strategy.
- Drive innovation, influence social care policy, ensure insight into influences and opportunities for Aldingbourne and adapt to external change.
- Embed a culture of continuous learning and improvement.
- Ensure the impact of our work is measured and shared to drive improvement & influence policy.
- Provide systems leadership across social care and related sectors, working collaboratively with commissioners, health partners, local authorities and community organisations to co-create solutions that improve outcomes beyond our charity's boundaries.

2. Financial & Commercial Leadership

- Hold accountability for a £8.5m turnover, ensuring sustainability, resilience, value for money and growth.
- Lead income diversification (contracts, fundraising, trading, partnerships).
- Ensure robust risk, financial and performance management systems.

3. Governance & Board Relations

- Work collaboratively with the Board and Chair to ensure effective governance and strategic oversight, fostering mutual trust and accountability between the Board and the executive team

- Provide Trustees with accurate and timely information to enable decision-making.
- Ensure compliance with the Charity Commission, Companies House, Ofsted/CQC and all statutory requirements.

4. Stakeholder Influence & Representation

- Act as our lead ambassador with commissioners, policymakers, media, donors and communities.
- Build strong partnerships and advocate for rights, inclusion and social justice.
- Elevate our influence at local, regional and national levels.

5. Organisational Leadership & Culture

- Lead, inspire and develop the senior leadership team.
- Champion inclusion, equity, staff wellbeing and a values-based culture.
- Ensure Aldingbourne is a learning organisation, open, adaptable and inclusive.

6. Operational Oversight

- Oversee high quality, safe and compliant service delivery.
- Ensure safeguarding, regulatory standards and quality frameworks are consistently met.
- Support innovation and growth in services and enterprise models.

This job description sets out a summary of the key features of the role. It is not intended to be exhaustive and will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains appropriate for the role

Person Specification

Essential

- Emotionally intelligent and people focused – inspiring trust and commitment while promoting equality, inclusion and diversity. Builds and motivates teams through credibility, reliability, clarity and encouragement. Interpersonal skills and values which support 'The Aldingbourne Way'.
- Proven experience as CEO, Director, or equivalent senior leader in a complex organisation (£5m+ turnover).
- Experience of strategic financial leadership and evidence of income diversification.
- Experience of working effectively with Boards of Trustees/non-executive directors.
- A visible and accessible leader, ability to build trusted relationships internally and externally.
- Experience of driving cultural change, embedding equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Ability to balance commercial acumen with charitable purpose.
- High levels of resilience, political awareness and strategic foresight.

Desirable

- Experience of national-level representation or policy influence.
- CEO/Deputy CEO experience in the voluntary or social care sector.
- Understanding of commissioning, social enterprise, and trading models.
- Knowledge of SEND, disability, or social care regulation (e.g. Ofsted, CQC).
- Experience of community-led development.
- Strong external profile, exceptional communication, influencing, and advocacy skills.

Qualifications

- Degree level desirable.
- Evidence of continuing professional development

This post requires an enhanced DBS check.

- Salary – c95k per annum
- Primary Location – The Aldingbourne Country Centre – Chichester, with time spent at our projects in Bognor and Portsmouth as well as national meetings.
- Flexible working can be considered, with the potential to work condensed hours (work the same hours over fewer days) as well as occasional working from home.
- Annual leave – 30 days + bank holidays
- Paid family care leave: Up to 6 days per annum (pro rata if part-time).
- Life assurance: 2X annual salary as a tax-free lump sum to nominated recipient/s.
- Employee assistance programme (EAP).
- Mental health first aiders.
- Peer support groups including mental health, menopause support, Neurodiversity, and equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).
- Cycle to work scheme.
- Eye care vouchers.
- Discounted gym membership
- 10% staff discount in ACC shop, ACC café, Horticulture, MAKE, and MAKE Café.
- 10% staff discount for on-site children's nursery – run by Seasons.
- £200 refer-a-friend scheme (payable when the new person starts).

How to Apply

VBS (Values Based Search) is acting as an advisor to the Aldingbourne Trust.

An executive search process is being conducted by VBS in addition to the public advert.

The closing date for applications is the 8th December at 9am.

Completed applications should be sent to aldingbourne@vbsearch.co.uk using the reference VBS1031

Applications should consist of:

1. A full CV including the names and addresses of two referees. Referees will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.
2. Please complete a covering letter of no more than 2 sides of A4 which answers the following questions:

- What motivates you to join the Aldingbourne Trust and why will you be successful?
- What will you bring of yourself, your life experience, and your perspective to the Executive Team?
- As a leader, how will you apply the Aldingbourne Trust values (Collaboration, Efficiency, Enterprise, Influence, Innovation, Proving) in everything you do.

3. Please click [here](#) to access and complete our equal opportunities monitoring form.

Should you wish to discuss the role in strict confidence, please contact our advising consultant at VBS – Rob Hilyer on 07952 316 654 or rob.hilyer@vbsearch.co.uk.

Timetable

Closing Date	8 th December
Longlisting	w/c 15 th December
Preliminary Interview with VBS (Teams)	w/c 5 th January
Shortlisting	w/c 12 th January
Informal meetings with CEO and Chair	w/c 19 th January
Final Panel Interviews	w/c 26 th January