



Charity Mentors Sussex

Newsletter Summer 2026

Supporting Charities Across Sussex

Charity Mentors Sussex is a volunteer-led initiative connecting experienced professionals with charity leaders across Sussex. We provide free mentoring, strategic guidance, and practical support to help local organisations strengthen governance, improve sustainability, and grow with confidence.



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

A Message from Chantal Wilson

Chantal Wilson
CHAIRMAN, CHARITY MENTORS SUSSEX



Our journey began around 2015 when the then Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, Sir Peter Field, wanted to offer free mentoring to the many small charities doing vital work across East Sussex, Brighton & Hove. I became one of the first mentors, supporting groups from a swimming charity to a local broadcasting station. A few years later I was invited to join the board as a trustee – a role I was delighted to accept.

“I am passionate about what Charity Mentors Sussex does and saw becoming a trustee as a way of extending my support.”

I am the retired Deputy Lieutenant of East Sussex and have served as Chairman of Wealden District Council, as a school governor, and was a trustee of Action in rural Sussex. I currently chair Crowborough Community Association and am a trustee of the Friends of Sussex Hospices. I run a small architectural practice with my husband – and we are trying very hard to retire!

Meet Our New Mentor - Nev Jefferies

We are delighted to welcome Nev, who brings over 30 years of senior experience in humanitarian, charity, and international development work - including leadership roles with the British Red Cross, International Committee of the Red Cross, and Department for International Development (DFID). His expertise includes:

- Humanitarian Adviser for DFID
- Head of International Tracing Services, British Red Cross
- Senior Coordination Adviser, United Nations in Lebanon
- Strategic consultant for resilience and disaster preparedness

Mentoring in Action



Autism Support Crawley

Autism Support Crawley is a parent and carer-led charity providing peer support, training, and information for unpaid carers of autistic people across Sussex. Chair Maria Cook worked with mentor Nev Jefferies over six monthly sessions, covering governance, compliance, capacity building, and restructuring – resulting in a practical five-point action plan for the next 12 months.

“An excellent match.” – Maria Cook, Chair, Autism Support Crawley

GET INVOLVED

Could You Become a Mentor?

If you have professional experience and a willingness to share it, becoming a mentor with Charity Mentors Sussex could be one of the most rewarding things you do. Our mentors come from a wide range of backgrounds – charity leadership, governance, finance, HR, fundraising, legal, communications, and the public sector – and what unites them is a genuine desire to support the voluntary sector in Sussex.

Mentoring is entirely voluntary, flexible, and designed to fit around your existing commitments. We look for people who are experienced in their field, able to commit to a series of sessions over several months, and comfortable working with small organisations facing real resource constraints. No formal mentoring qualifications are needed – just good listening skills and a willingness to help.

"Mentoring has reminded me why I got into my field in the first place. The people running these charities are remarkable."

If you are interested, we would love to hear from you.

REQUEST MENTORING

Could Your Organisation Benefit From Mentoring?

Running a charity or community group is rewarding, but the day-to-day pressures can leave little time to think strategically. Our free mentoring service is available to charities and voluntary organisations of all sizes across Sussex. Whether you are facing governance challenges, planning for growth, reviewing strategy, or managing organisational change, we can match you with a mentor whose experience fits your needs.

After an initial conversation, we arrange a series of typically four to six confidential sessions over three to six months – in person, by phone, or online. The service is completely free. Our mentors give their time voluntarily because they believe in the work charities do across Sussex.

"We had been going round in circles on the same issues for over a year. Within three sessions our mentor had helped us see exactly what needed to change. It was transformative."

**To find out more or to request support, please email
info@charitymentors-sussex.org.uk**