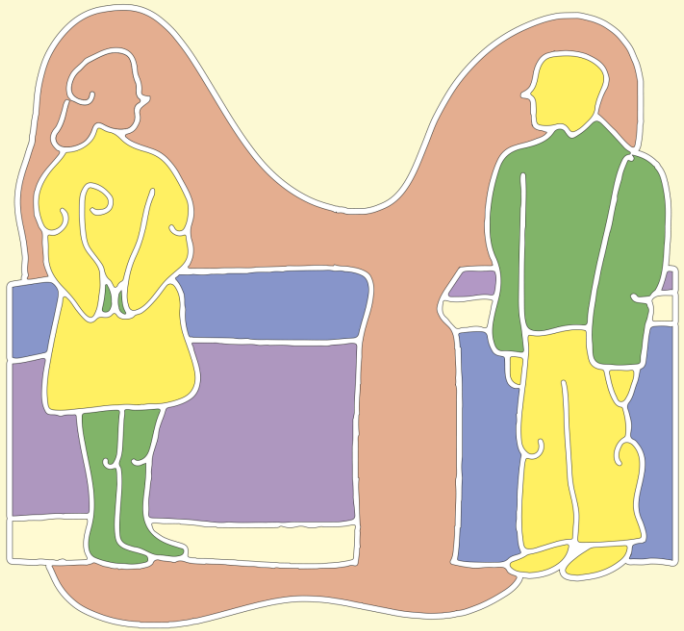
CASS
Community Advice & Support Service

Trustee recruitment pack 2026

www.cassplus.org

17 North Hill, Plymouth, PL4 8JY
Registered charity no: 1160513

Welcome from the chair



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to CASSPLUS and to thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee for our charity. We're based inside the Courts in Exeter, Newton Abbot, Plymouth, Bodmin and Truro. We give free, confidential, practical help and emotional support for anyone going through court and into life beyond. We are free, and independent of the justice system.

People often arrive at court alone, feeling powerless, trapped and terrified. We sit down and listen. We build trust and use our knowledge and connections to find solutions to complicated situations. We guide towards positive change and stay by their side for as long as they want us.

We welcome anyone who is passionate about our mission and wants to contribute to a friendly and collaborative team of trustees, volunteers and staff.

Becoming a trustee is intrinsically rewarding. It is a voluntary role, but one that can bring great satisfaction as you see your work on the Board benefitting so many people, not just our clients but also our staff and volunteers.

Louise Clements, Chair of the Trustees

CASS
Community Advice & Support Service

Our vision is for

Advice and support to be available in every court, ensuring effective community networks for all court users across the UK.

Our mission is to

Improve wellbeing in our communities by giving advice and support to people experiencing the Justice System.

Our beliefs

Because we are independent and based inside the Magistrates' Courts…

1. We believe we can reduce the risk of re-offending.

2. We believe that with the right support and opportunities, people can reach their potential.

3. We believe that we can shape attitudes by sharing our understanding of the Justice System.

4. We believe that strong, connected, inclusive communities foster a safer society.

Our values & behaviour

Humanity first
People are not numbers. We combine empathy, compassion and knowledge to guide each person towards a positive future.

Supportive
We actively listen so that each person gets tailored support at court and into life beyond.

Creative problem-solving
We use our extensive networks and experience of the Justice System to work with others to find solutions.

Helpful
We're ready and willing to help anyone. We can stay by their side for as long as they want us.

Determined
We never give up. We advocate for people and encourage them to find their own voice.

What we do

The Justice System does not always address the root causes of crime or family breakdown. Many people in the courts face complex challenges like mental health issues, substance misuse, debt, housing insecurity, and trauma - often without legal representation or support. The result is a system where people feel powerless, overwhelmed, and alone. We work primarily in the Magistrates' Courts in Devon and Cornwall and we can reduce the risk of people re-offending by working with our partners to find solutions to complicated situations.

More recently, we have received funding to support people who do not have legal representation and are appearing in the family courts. Facing this experience without legal representation is often highly stressful and traumatising. We don't give legal advice but we can get access to answers and give people the emotional support they need.

Who we work with

We work with anyone who needs advice and support through court, whether they are an offender, a victim, a family member, a parent or simply a friend of someone who is appearing in court.

We believe that with the right emotional and practical life-changing opportunities and support, anyone can reach their potential, resulting in safer communities where everyone can thrive. We are the lynchpin in a huge chain. We decrease demand on the Justice System and other services by working with:

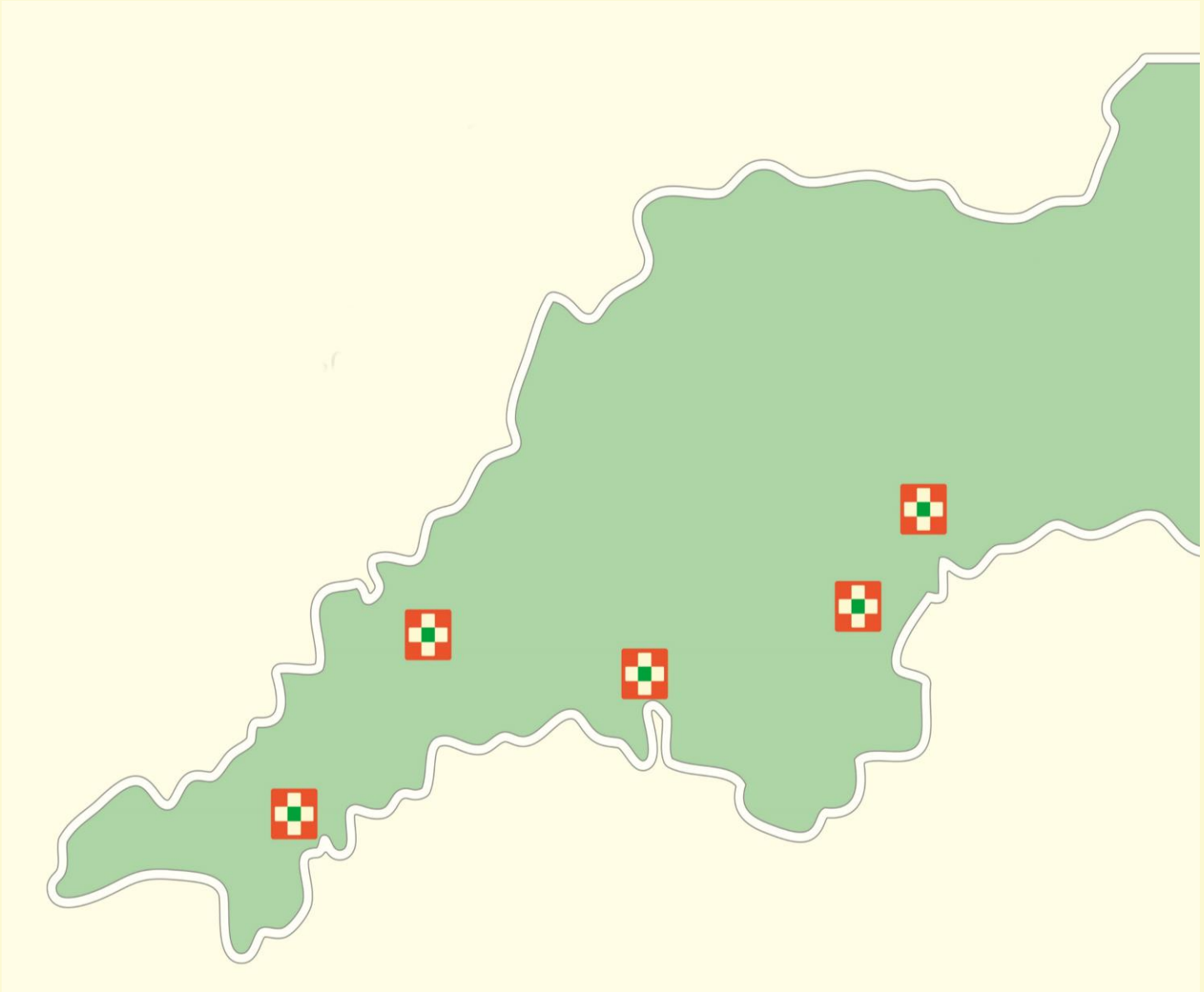
- Magistrates
- Solicitors
- Police
- Probation
- Judges
- CPS
- Ushers
- Court cells
- Social services
- Partner charities and agencies

Free, confidential, practical advice & emotional support & ongoing help through court

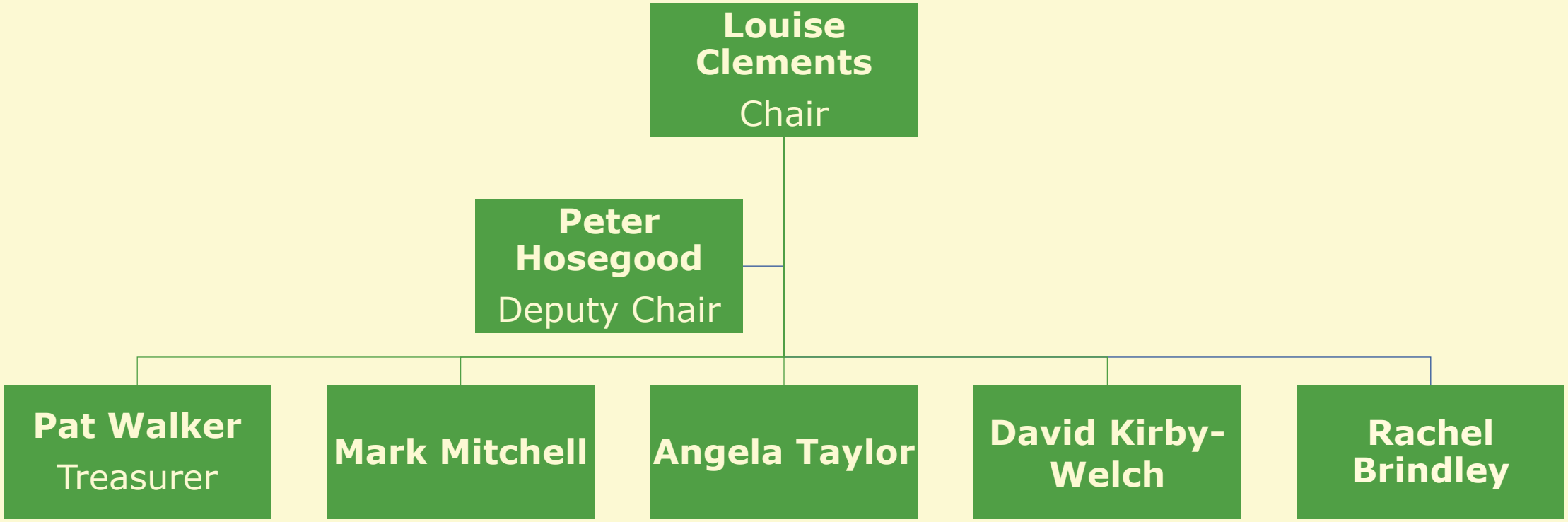
Who we are

CASSPLUS hubs & team

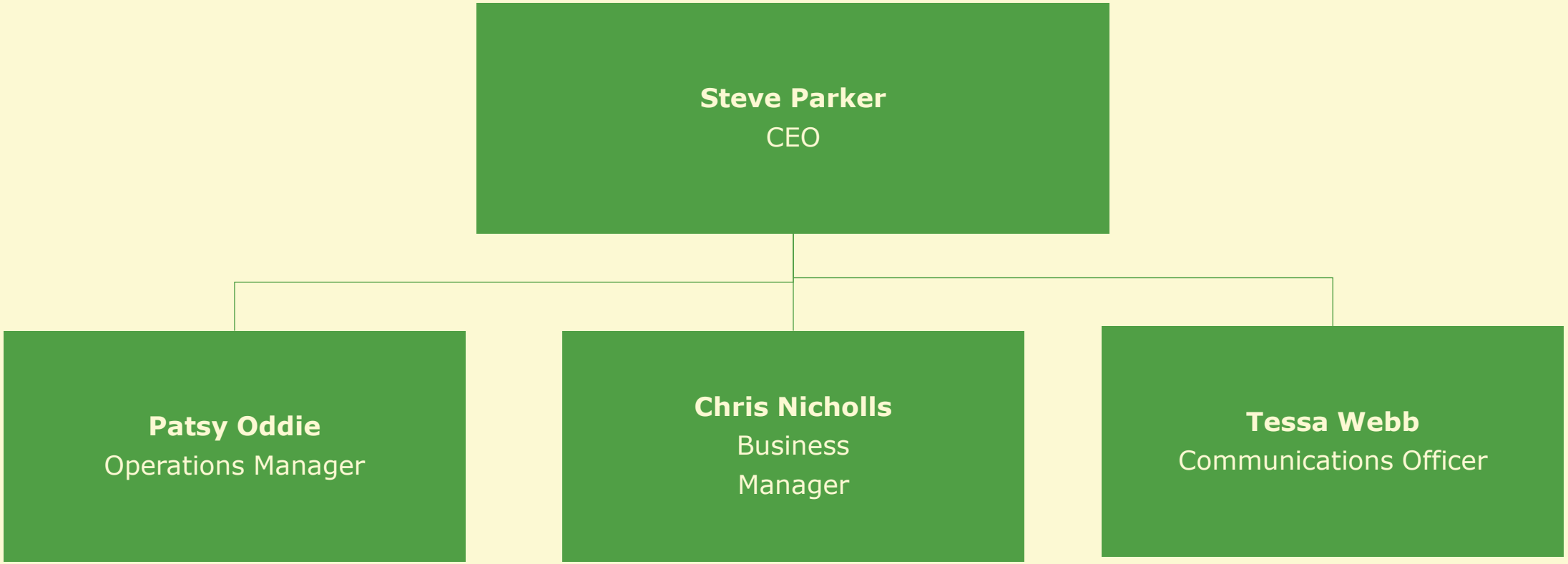
- 14 employees
- About 30 volunteers
- Seven trustees
- Placements & interns
- Peer researchers
- Five hubs



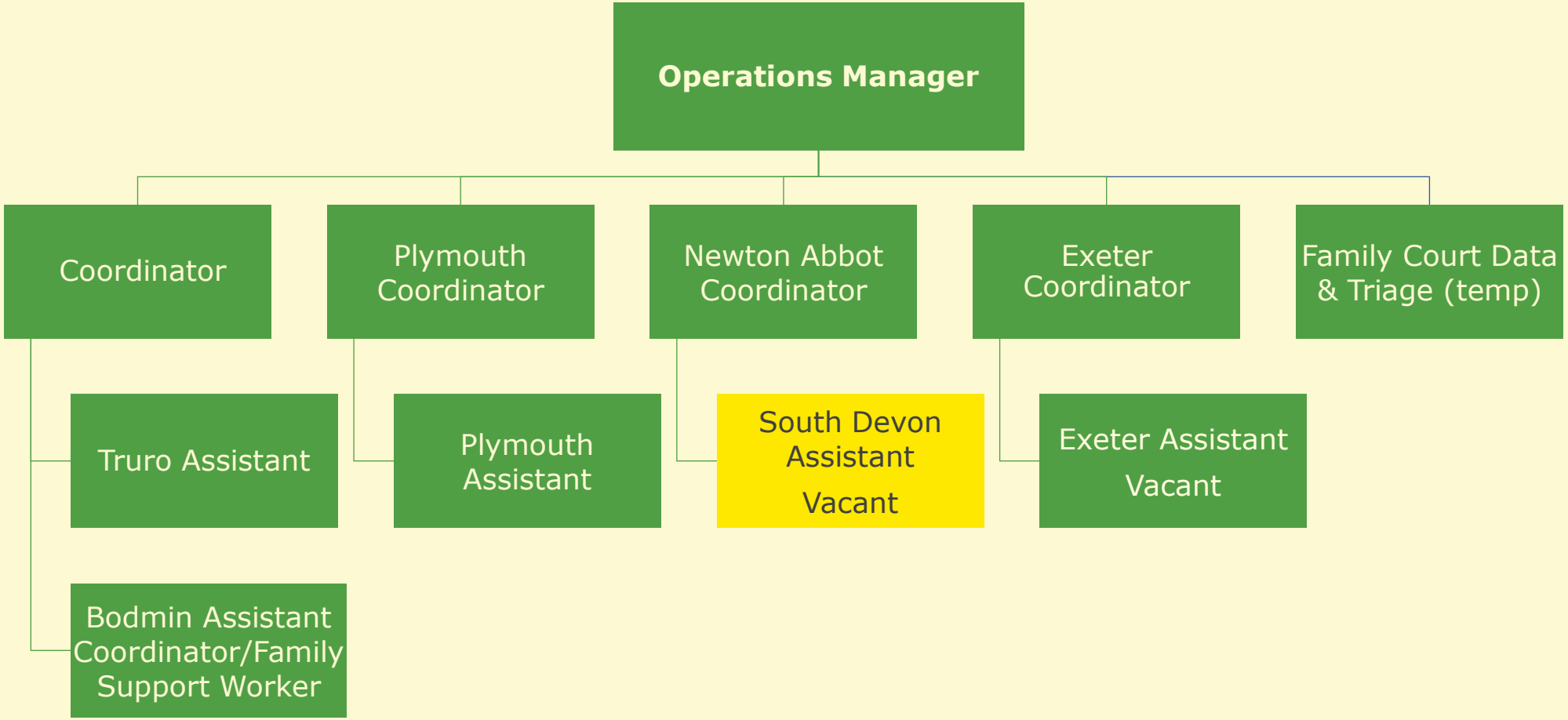
Our team: trustees



Our team: senior management



Operational structure



Our volunteers

In 2017, we were proud to receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. Equivalent to an MBE, this is the highest award given to a voluntary group in the UK - lifetime recognition for the contribution made by volunteers to the community.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

We could not do this vital work without our dedicated team of volunteers:

- University students studying law, criminology, counselling, psychotherapy and social work
- Local people who simply want to support people less fortunate than themselves
- Others with lived experience of the justice system and have transformed their lives and want to help others do the same

Partners & funders

Some of our partners & funders

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

PCC Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Devon and Cornwall

AB CHARITABLE TRUST

THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOUNDATION

Centre for Justice Innovation

Cornwall Community Foundation

THE NORMAN FAMILY TRUST

LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION ENGLAND & WALES

WE ARE DEVON Community Foundation

Ministry of Justice

Crest

THE HADLEY TRUST

Criminal Justice Alliance
For a fairer & more effective criminal justice system

SAFER STRONGER

Trusthouse Charitable Foundation

Current income

This is a highly cost-effective service with minimal overheads because our offices with internet and landlines are supported by HMCTS.

We place great store on the quality of our employees. As a result, almost all of our expenditure from our income of about £300k is taken up by salaries.

A recent evaluation by the independent research body CREST Advisory calculated that for every £1 spent by CASSPLUS, there was a public value benefit of £3.36.

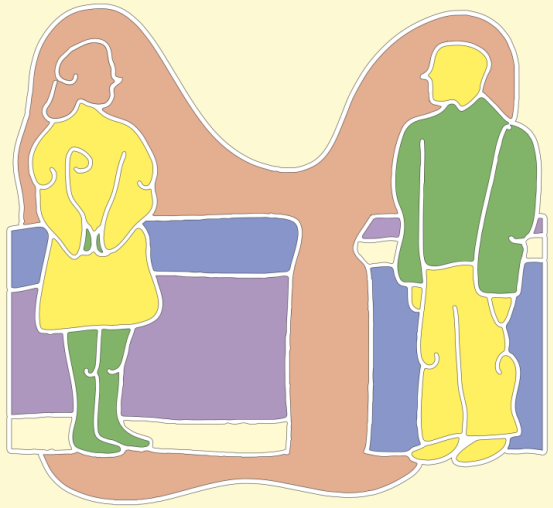
Please visit our Charity Commission entry here for our accounts.

Our impact

Impact April – December 2025

1,121

People received 1-to-1 support through magistrates' & family courts & into life beyond



434

New clients received 1-to-1 support through magistrates' & family courts & into life beyond

650

People supported through the Criminal Justice System

397

People supported through the family courts

Our stories

Visit our YouTube Channel here or read about people we've helped:

Lee through the family court in Exeter here.

Derrick (client & volunteer) through court in Plymouth here.

Peter through court in Exeter here.

Elizabeth through court in Newton Abbot here.

How on earth would I have managed
these past months
without your support and understanding?

Client, Truro Magistrates' Court

Join our Board

As a charity trustee, you will:

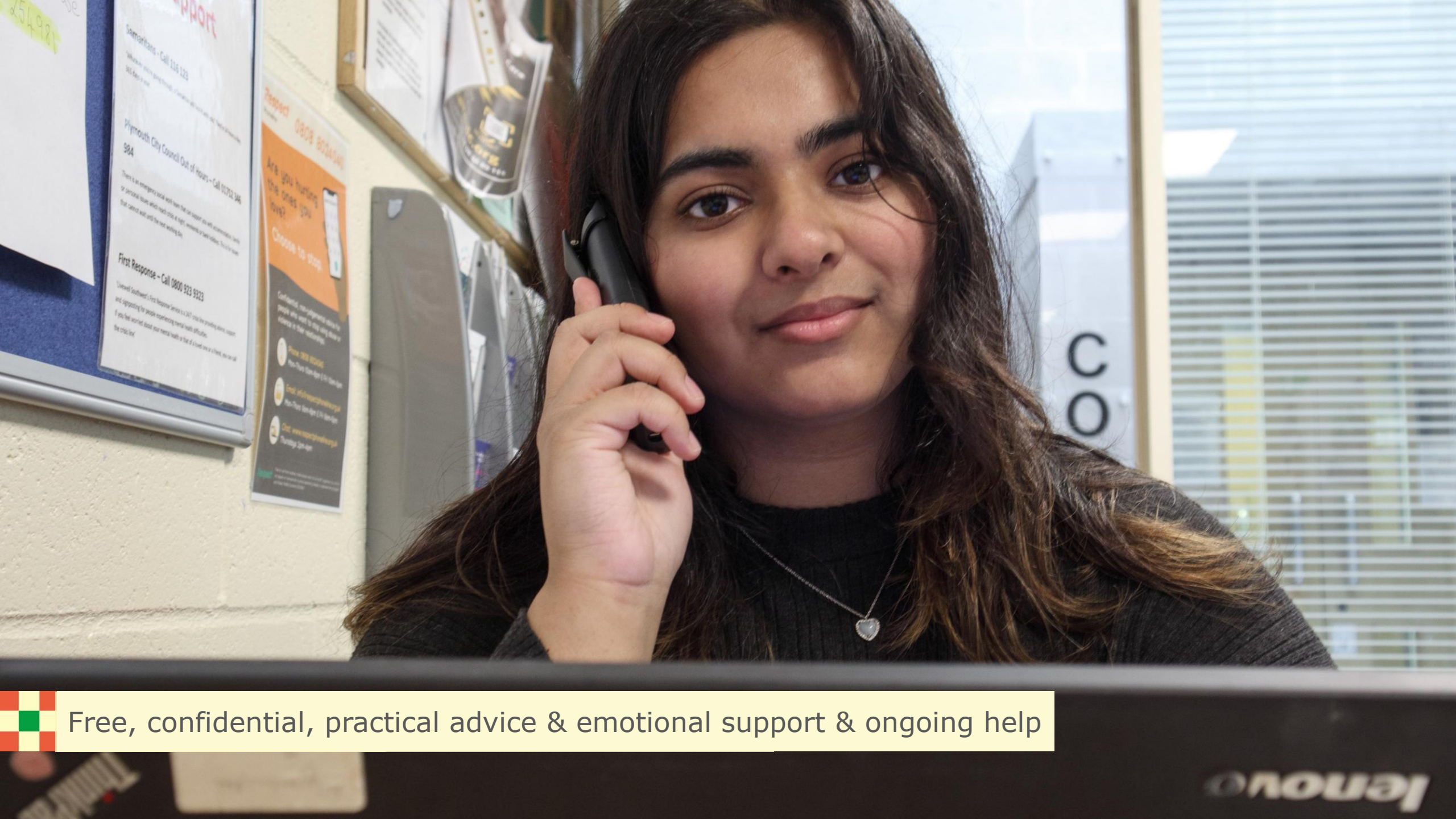
- Decide and steer the strategic direction of the charity
- Hold the senior team to account
- Participate in our quarterly in-person Board meetings (each 3-4 hours)
- Join other Board-related meetings like a monthly finance sub-committee (1-2 hours) chaired by the Deputy Chair; a quarterly risk register committee chaired by the Chair (1-2 hours); and a quarterly communications and fundraising committee (2 hours)
- Attend our annual Board Away Day which takes place on the same day as the first quarter Board meeting
- Read papers for these meetings – these cover operational and financial performance, along with confidential issues for consideration
- Visit our teams to discuss their work and observe the way we deliver our service. Each trustee aims for one half-day visit per year.

What next?

Looking for a third sector leadership role? We welcome trustees from all walks of life. Here's what to do next:

- Call Steve Parker on 07719 977417 if you would like to talk this through
- Send your completed Expression of Interest Form and optional short CV to Susan Hurrell: susan.hurrell@cassplus.org
- Attend an interview with two or three of our Trustees and possibly a member of the senior management team
- Join the Board as an observer to see how you feel
- The Board will then vote on your application
- Following this, you will receive a comprehensive induction with an experienced Trustee assigned as your mentor. As a part of this, you will visit our hubs in Devon and Cornwall. Our Clerk to the Board will then run checks like DBS and you also complete various forms, like Declaration of Conflict of Interest.

NB. All reasonable expenses, including travel expenses, will be reimbursed.



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Find out more here

Read our Spring e-news here

www.cassplus.org

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