

Our Board of Trustees

Our Board of Trustees comprises of individuals with a wealth of experience from academia, advice services, criminal justice, drug and alcohol support, business development and funding bodies.



Julie Dent CBE, Chair of Trustees, Julie has a wealth of experience, having chaired Devon Partnership NHS Trust, London Probation, User Voice (a charity for offenders), as well as Libraries Unlimited. She has had an exciting executive career in the NHS before retiring to enjoy Devon. Julie has great insight into, and knowledge of CoLab's areas of focus and will support the staff and Board of Trustees on their journey of evolution. Julie is passionate about raising the profile of the issues experienced by the most vulnerable in Exeter and Devon, and working with partners to find solutions that enable people to lead the best lives they can, whilst supporting them through the most difficult times.



Steve Barriball Steve has been the Chief Executive of the local Citizens Advice charity in Exeter for the last 13 years and more recently also the Chief Executive of Citizens Advice in Torbay also. Before then Steve worked for the Big Lottery Fund delivering their regional Awards for All small grants programme. Steve started his career as a Policy Officer with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Steve has an excellent knowledge of charity governance and processes, and is the current chair of the Resources and Development Committee. Steve is also a member of Colab Finance Committee.



Jess Hurrell has been involved with CoLab for three years. I was absolutely stunned walking into a newly refurbished building which looked more like something you would see in Silicon Valley not Exeter! I was hooked then and there! The core values and mission of CoLab matched my own and complemented my day job of working at the University of Exeter with academics, businesses and policy makers.



Louise Arscott I have worked with excluded and challenged groups for over 25 years, starting off working for the Big Issue and then working in the criminal justice system as a Probation Officer. I have also worked as a psychological therapist in a self-harm team and in a Family Assessment Centre. Currently, I am Head of Devon and Torbay Probation Service. I also sit on Mental Health Hospital Manager Panels. I strongly support the rationale of people working creatively together to support and champion the most vulnerable in our community.



Anthony Farnsworth became a Trustee in June 2021. He worked for Devon County Council as a Social Worker before joining the NHS in 1995. After working in Exeter for a number of years he moved to Torbay care Trust in 2006 and became Chief Executive of the Torbay Care Trust in 2009. After retiring from the NHS in 2015 Anthony has worked for himself in various senior roles in both NHS and Social care organisations. He has held a long standing interest in mental health services, especially for those where the Criminal justice system is also relevant. He has a lot of experience in making positive working arrangements between partner organisations and wants to support CoLab to make a positive difference for people

Our Board of Trustees



Andrew Rome FCA. Andrew is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales and is CoLab's Treasurer. In addition to a wealth of commercial and financial experience across a wide range of business sectors Andrew has particular knowledge of the children and young adult's social care system and the way in which government bodies interact with service providers and other non-governmental bodies.



Marsha Miles Ms, MinstF (Dip) Marsha is an experienced consultant and business owner with a wide breadth of experience in the charitable sector. I have been running my own business since 2014 and am especially interested and knowledgeable in mental health and wellbeing. I have been a CEO for a Local Mind Association and held a variety of interesting roles including, part of a regional Integrated Personalised Commissioning team, and as Chair of Trustees for SPARK Somerset. I like to share my skills with those who may not otherwise have the chance to benefit and am driven by my need to enrich the world around me, nurturing the potential in others so that people and communities can flourish.



Thomas Lomas After moving to Exeter in 2015 I began to fall in love with the city, the people and the surrounding area and after a couple of brief moves away settled down fully 2 years ago. I wanted to support the community and work with a charity that shared my values and beliefs and after a short meeting with Fiona and the team I knew CoLab was that place. Having worked for John Lewis and Partners for the last 12 years I recognise the importance of working collaboratively and the benefits of using the knowledge of all parties to influence change.