

CONNECTING SPACES Ltd.
Helping You Take New Projects Forward

1. Introduction

Connecting Spaces Ltd is the consultancy and trading arm of Chichester Community Development Trust (registered charity).

The company was founded to empower and enable voluntary and community groups at the beginning of their asset transfer journey and support them throughout the process, including:

- Feasibility Assessment
- Community Consultation
- Business Planning
- Finding and Securing Funding
- Capital Appeals
- Managing and Maintaining assets.

We also work with town, city, borough and county councils, delivering presentations, tours and training. The subjects we cover include working and engaging with developers, engaging resident associations and working with communities.

We take an innovative approach to buildings and land acquisition, with a successful track record in funding, delivering, and running thriving community businesses. We work with purpose-led organisations to establish projects and trading operations in the heart of their communities, safeguarding assets for future generations.

Let's Start from the Very Beginning...

Our experience extends beyond our multi-million-pound development of heritage spaces, with considerable experience in working alongside planners, councils and developers to understand the need of a community at the very beginning of a new development. The most successful spaces are the results of combined consultation in both design and purpose - interrogating the existing local and regional provision, the demographic of the community that will inherit the space and the challenges those are likely to bring.

Understanding the gaps and working to create spaces that will fill them on a practical and aesthetic level. Creating and developing community assets is not about meeting obligations, it's about delivering social impact that creates transformative change. A space designed around need, not just necessity of construction.

2. How We Help You Progress Your Project



Tour of community facilities



Securing Funding



Capital Appeals



Working with Communities



Funding and Financing our work



Working and Engaging with Developers



Consultation and Research findings



Asset Transfer



Managing Community Buildings and Land



Engaging with Residents Associations

Do you have a community-based project or idea, and need advice and support or guidance on how and where to get started, or what to do next? Our team will help you to focus, get organised, and then plan a way forward that fits with your priorities and aspirations. We fill the gaps you may have in skills, knowledge, or lack of time... We help with project management and coordination, writing and supporting funding applications and with partner and stakeholder brokerage and support.

We help you identify your needs and - where needed - challenge and encourage you to make changes so that you can move forwards, establish a resilient and robust business model, and ensure that the project remains viable post-completion for years to come.

We help build capacity, resilience and sustainability in organisations, groups and new ventures. We give ideas and advice on legal structures, funding, staffing, income generation and how to keep your project up to date and relevant for the future. With over 25 years of experience in placemaking, community development and fundraising we know what it takes.

We have lived experiences of the challenges faced by groups and voluntary sector organisations and have delivered many successful projects including:

- The Pavilion, Chichester, see <https://thepavilionchichester.com/>
- Graylingwell Chapel, see <https://graylingwellchapel.com/>

We oversaw both these projects in their entirety, from the very start of the journey at feasibility research stage, through to acquiring the asset, finding funding, community engagement, stakeholder engagement, capital works and restoration, and ongoing operation of the business.

We match purpose-led organisations with community assets to ensure the buildings and organisations are resilient for the future.

3. Clients, Current & Previous

3.1 Housing Developers and Partners

- Clarion Housing Group
- Clarion Futures
- SAY Property Consultants
- The Hadley Group
- Urban and Civic
- Vivid Housing Group
- Vivid Plus

3.2 Local Authorities/Public Sector Organisations

- Arun and Worthing Council
- Ashford Borough Council
- Aylesbury Garden Town
- Bosham Parish Council
- Bosham Primary School
- Centre for Social Justice
- Chichester District Council
- East Hampshire District Council
- Hart District Council
- Hastings Borough Council
- Havant Borough Council
- Longcross Garden City – Runnymede Council
- Kent County Council
- Notting Hill Genesis
- Portsmouth City Council
- South Downs National Park Authority
- Southbourne Parish Council

3.3 Voluntary and Community Organisations

- Case Community Trust
- Cemetery Road Baptist Church
- Chichester Welfare Trust
- Chilmington Management Organisation
- Cholsey Community Development Trust
- Community Works Worthing
- Eastney Beam Engine House
- Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust
- Hastings Museum & Art Gallery
- Leybourne Chase CIC
- Ovation Music
- Oxmarket Gallery
- Peter Ashley Activity Centres

- Repton Community Trust
- Rok Skool (Haywards Heath) CIC
- St Bartholomew's Church
- Stonegrove Community Trust
- Sutton Coldfield CDT
- The Steadings Community Management Trust
- Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester
- Whitchurch Silk Mill
- Whitehill and Borden Community Trust

4. Quotes and Testimonials

“I just wanted to take the time to thank you and all the partners and young people I met for taking the time to share your experiences. You should be proud of the great work that is truly transforming your communities and individuals’ lives. Well done and keep up the great work!”

SAY Property Consulting

“Gulp – this is an impressive and professional piece of work – my congratulations to all those who put this together! Phew!”

Cemetery Road Baptist Church

“I have now read through the Development Phase Plan. I am absolutely delighted. It is an amazing document and a ‘good read’! Thank you so much, again for producing this massive document. I feel huge sense of relief :-)”

Ovation Music

“I just wanted to say a big thanks to you and your team for your time and kind hospitality last Friday. The visit to CCDT was incredibly insightful and has certainly given me much to think about. I’m sure we’ll be ‘knocking at your door’ again in the very near future.”

Centre for Social Justice

“Thank you for organising the trip to Chichester on Friday – a truly inspirational, honest overview, plenty to think about...”

Urban and Civic

5. How We Work with You

We work with all sorts of clients, from those with “just an idea”, to others who are “nearly there but in need of some external support and advice”.

Where possible we like to break projects down into the stages listed below... you can commission our support at any point. We don’t want to scare you, but successful projects - those that reach completion - will need to go through most of, if not all, these steps.

Project Plan Implementation
Early-Stage Feasibility Project
Feasibility funding secured
Governance Review and Audit
Planning and Research
Project Team Meetings
Asset Transfer/ Leasehold arrangements underway
Development Funding Application Submitted
Funding Secured
Project Development Stage
Advertise new posts and consultant roles
Appoint Project Manager, Project Coordinator, Lead Architect, Quantity/Property Surveyor and Cost Controller, Mechanical and Engineering Consultant, Surveyors, CDM/ Advisor - Principal Designer, Structural Engineer, Conservation Advisor
Appoint Activities Plan Consultant
Appoint Management and Maintenance Plan Consultant
Appoint Business Planning Consultant
Appoint Evaluation Consultant
Community consultation on pre app plans
Thinking day and working with stakeholders
Audience audit
RIBA Stage 3 review and update
Business planning
Viability planning
Activity Plan Created
Planning submitted
Financial forecasting and modelling
Management and maintenance plan
Update on surveys as required
QS cost reports and budgets
Open call for practitioners, licence holders and tenants
Prepare Delivery stage (capital) Funding applications
Planning decision
Submit Development stage (capital) Funding applications
Fundraising
Secure and finalise transfer of asset
Secure Funding
Reports and returns to funders
Delivery Stage - Build Phase
Building project detailed RIBA Stages 4-6
Tender for contractors
Tender appraisals and interviews

Contractor Procurement
Contracts awarded and issued to Lead Architect including CDM Coordinator, Quantity Surveyor, Mechanical & Engineering Consultant and Structural Engineer
Develop Cost Plan
Meeting with local Authority - planning and B regs
Mobilise team on site
Steering Group Meetings
Initiate delivery phase volunteer programme
Initiate delivery consultants programme
Recruit & train new staff
Recruit & train new volunteers
Fundraising
Construction on site
Repair & conservation work
New building work
Completion of building works
Post Project Completion - Operating Stage
Defects and snagging identified
Audience development work undertaken following audit in development phase
Open call for practitioners, license holders and tenants
Volunteer Programmes
Website Development
Training for staff
Training for Volunteers
License, hires agreements and contracts signed
Booking systems rolled out
Evaluation and Social Impact