

Person Specification and Job Description for the post of:

Carer Community Development Officer (Midlothian)

POST	Carer Community Development Officer (Midlothian)
EMPLOYER	VOCAL – Voice of Carers Across Lothian
SALARY	SJC scale SCP54, £18.29 per hour - £34,357 per annum (pro rata) VOCAL will match up to 6% pension contribution 33 days paid leave plus 6 public holidays (pro rata)
HOURS	30 hours per week with some evening and weekend work
LOCATION	The postholder will be working across Midlothian from VOCAL's Carer Centre at Hardengreen Estate, with regular meetings in other Midlothian locality areas
CONTRACT	Fixed Term – until April 2026

VOCAL is a carer-led organisation employing some 60 staff, supported by a team of 50 volunteers, who are based at the Edinburgh Carers Hub and Midlothian Carers Centre, and within several health and social care settings across Edinburgh and Midlothian.

Purpose of the post

The primary focus of this role is to work with community groups, partners and organisations across Midlothian to raise carer awareness, improve early carer identification and ensure carers are connected to local supports. The postholder will have responsibility for a small grant fund to support community groups and organisations to establish peer and group support for carers in their area.

The Carer Community Development Officer will work across the Midlothian locality area and support the work of VOCAL's locality Carer Support Practitioners and Partnership Training Officer to develop and map community assets and engage with community partners in order to establish a network of support for carers across Midlothian.

Locality-based working involves adopting a strengths-based approach and having a comprehensive understanding of the local area which increases awareness and recognition of carers, fosters collaboration within the community in a creative way, and effectively leverages physical and human resources, financial support, and community spirit to provide better support to carers.

VOCAL values

- We are carer-led and engage carers in all aspects of our work
- We recognise and advocate for carers as equal partners in care
- We support carers to:
 - build on their strengths and skills

- identify and achieve their outcomes
- strengthen their resilience
- improve their quality of lives
- We believe in diversity, equality of opportunity and choice
- We promote transparency and honesty
- We treat people with dignity and respect
- We create opportunities for innovation, creativity and enterprise
- We seek to work in partnership around agreed outcomes

Improved outcomes for carers

The post holder will contribute to the following outcomes for carers.

Carers will report:

- Improved health and wellbeing
- A life of their own
- Improved relationships
- Feeling financially secure
- Choices in caring
- Feeling informed/equipped and safe
- Feeling confident and able to continue caring
- Feeling actively involved in shaping support
- Quality of life for the person they care for
- Plans for the future care of the person they care for

Person Specification

Education

- Evidence of educational qualifications, may include qualifications in person-centred support, community development, adult education, social work, health, education to university degree level, or other relevant qualifications.

Experience

- Developing community resources, supports or groups including community engagement
- Working with minority groups and those impacted by poverty and social isolation
- Development and management of finances or funds
- Working collaboratively with colleagues at a senior level in public, private and third sectors
- Developing positive internal and external working relationships

Knowledge, skills and ability

- A sound understanding of the needs and situation of carers
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of community development models and approaches
- Knowledge of current health and social care environment, including relevant policies
- Knowledge of how the statutory, voluntary and private sectors work
- Excellent group work and peer support skills
- Excellent communication skills and ability to develop effective partnerships
- Excellent listening, verbal and written skills, including report writing
- Knowledge and experience of building community assets and resources
- An ability to network with agencies and professionals across all sectors and at all levels
- An ability to manage sensitive discussions and challenging conversations with external stakeholders
- Proven ability in organising, prioritising and managing own work
- Enthusiasm and commitment to develop, adapt and sustain a regular programme of support for partners in their delivery of carer support

Job Description

Community development and resource mapping:

- Lead the mapping and engagement of relevant community resources and assets supporting carers and those they care for.
- Work closely with existing community resources to enhance and expand available services.
- Lead the design and delivery of regular and bespoke training to identified community partners.
- Support sessional workers and volunteers in the delivery of training as required.

Development responsibilities:

- Develop and implement outreach strategies to identify and connect with unpaid carers who may be in need of support.
- Lead the development, promotion and implementation of a new fund to support the delivery of local groups and opportunities for carers.
- Support the development of locality peer and group support for carers.
- Support the development of community consultation and engagement with carers across Midlothian.
- Work collaboratively with relevant VOCAL staff to develop links with key stakeholders, employers and the private sector.

Administration:

- Work with VOCAL's Communications Team to promote local opportunities for carers across Midlothian.
- Work with VOCAL's administration team to ensure smooth grant administration processes.

- Produce quarterly reports to update on progress, feedback and future development.

Monitoring and evaluation:

- Lead on the development of systematic monitoring and evaluation of newly established carer supports, using both qualitative and quantitative data to produce quarterly reports for contract compliance.
- Use monitoring and evaluation reports to evidence impact of the role and influence carer support development.
- Liaise with designated lead managers and partners to give and receive feedback on support provided.

General Duties:

The postholder will be expected to consistently and effectively perform a number of general duties:

- to work with and support any volunteers assigned to facilitate their work
- comply with Carer Centre policies and procedures such as confidentiality policy, telephone and recording procedures, lone working policies, etc.
- comply with and contribute to VOCAL's work of continuous quality improvement
- participate in VOCAL staff team planning meetings
- carry out other non-recurring duties as arise from time to time, and occasionally help cover carer centre duties during the absence of team members.

Accountability, Management and Development

The post holder will benefit from a structured induction programme within the first month of appointment, followed by a three months' probation period.

The post holder will ultimately be accountable to the Board of Directors.

For line management, supervision and support the post holder will be answerable to the Carer Services Manager (Midlothian).

The Board of Directors acknowledges its responsibility to help identify training needs of staff members and to allow reasonable time and resources for staff training, where such training furthers the duties and responsibilities of the post.

Emphasis is placed on team accountability and mutual support.

The post holder will be based at the VOCAL's Carer Centre but will be expected to carry out a range of duties at different locations across Midlothian.

The post holder will be expected to carry out the duties of this post with due regard to Equal Opportunities and non-discriminatory practice.

Conditions of Service

The post is advertised initially at 30 hours per week (worked over 4/5 days). There may be some flexibility over the distribution of hours that will form the normal working week. Occasional evening and weekend work may be required. VOCAL operates a 36-hour week for full-time staff.

VOCAL offers a range of contractual benefits, including:

- generous annual leave entitlement of 33 days plus six public holidays (pro rata for part-time staff). This increases with length of service.
- a 6% pension contribution which increases with length of service
- enhanced maternity, paternity and adoption pay
- paid Carer's Leave
- enhanced sick pay
- a Cycle to Work Scheme.

The postholder will be expected to become a member of the Protection for Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme (Adults). If already a member, a PVG Update will be requested.

