



INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES – Funding and Benefits Officer (permanent)

About Shared Lives South West

Shared Lives South West recruits, trains and supports individuals and families (SLSW Carers) who can offer accommodation and care for vulnerable adults in their home, enabling the person to share in family life and maintain their independence. This is known as Shared Lives.

Our service supports adults over 18 years of age and occasionally young people in transition into adult services from the age of 16 upwards. We currently support 300+ people using our long-term services with 280+ carers providing support within their own homes and a further 130+ people using our short break services. Our current client group is predominantly people with a learning disability, with some mental health referrals. You can read more about the activities of Shared Lives South West in our latest Annual Report which is available on our website: www.sharedlivessw.org.uk

Shared Lives South West is a registered charity and a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. We were set up in 2004 and provide Shared Lives services across Devon, Cornwall and Somerset.

1. About the role of Funding and Benefits Officer

This post will work alongside our other Funding and Benefits Officers and Senior Funding & Benefit Officer as well as support the Finance team. There are three main aims of the post:

1. To support those using our long-term Shared Lives services throughout the scheme to maximise their welfare benefits and challenging decisions accordingly
2. Apply local authority charging policies and to check & challenge contribution towards the cost of their service as necessary
3. Ensure the correct appointee/deputy is in place

The Funding and Benefits team of Shared Lives South West carry out these roles for the majority of those using our long-term service as part of our contractual agreement with the local authorities who commission our service. The organisation has well developed systems for processing and recording all benefits claims, and has developed an expertise in this area within the Shared Lives sector. These systems and welfare benefits as they apply to Shared Lives is specific knowledge that you would need to acquire when you join us, so induction and training will be an important initial part of the role.

On a day to day basis, you will be allocated a “caseload” of SLSW Carers and people using our service to support with their funding and benefits issues. You will need to be prepared to travel as part of the role, although most of your working week would be office based. In response to the pandemic, and in line with government guidance, Shared Lives South West have adopted a supportive and flexible working approach.

The role requires someone with a wide knowledge of the many welfare and concessionary benefits, who is willing to apply this to a new service setting. Some experience of working with vulnerable people who are in receipt of disability benefits would be useful, as would experience of housing benefit and local housing allowance. A good idea for detail, accuracy and working to deadlines is essential.

A full job description and person specification are enclosed.



2. If I join Shared Lives South West as an employee what can I expect?

You will be joining a team of 44 enthusiastic and committed staff. The organisation is led by our chief executive, Dominic Spayne, who in turn reports to a small but dedicated and knowledgeable board of trustees.

This post will be based in our Devon office. This is located in Kingsteignton, near Newton Abbot. This is a permanent post.

This post would be offered subject to satisfactory enhanced DBS check and references. The hours required are 37.5 per week, 5 days per week.

The starting salary for this post is £21,008 per annum. Our basic terms and conditions include 25 days paid leave per year in addition to Bank Holidays.

We also offer travel allowances and opportunities for training and development to meet the needs of the role and new demands created by the service. Regular team meetings and occasional away days are held and there is a structured supervision and annual review system in place.

3. How do I apply?

Please fully complete the application form that is included with this pack (**CV's alone are not accepted**) and return it before the closing date by **9am on 07 February 2022**. All candidates will be notified if selected for interview or not after that date.

Interviews for those short listed will commence the week of **February 14, 2022**, at our offices in Kingsteignton.

If you would like an informal chat about the role, please call Alison Langmead, Senior Funding and Benefits Officer, on **01626 882560**.

If you have any queries about the recruitment process, please contact Claire Waring, People Team Assistant, on **01626 360170**.