



EQUALITY | RESPECT | LOVE

## Who Cares? Scotland Job Specification

Post title	Advocacy and Participation Worker
Salary range	£23,093 – £28,866 pro rata per annum
Hours of work	30 hours per week Part-time availability and Secondments will be considered
Area	Shetland Islands
Base location	Shetland – home based in the first instance due to Covid-19
Responsible to	Advocacy and Participation Manager, North North Project and Participation Coordinator
Last update	June 2021

### Purpose of the post

**Who Cares? Scotland is Scotland's only national independent membership organisation for Care Experienced people. Our strategic vision is to secure a lifetime of equality, respect and love for Care Experienced people in Scotland.** At the heart of Who Cares? Scotland's work are the rights of Care Experienced children and young people, and the power of their voices to bring about positive change. We provide individual relationship-based independent advocacy and a broad range of imaginative participatory opportunity for Care Experienced young people across Scotland; we work alongside corporate parents and communities of all sorts to broaden understanding; we work with policy makers, leaders and elected representatives locally and nationally to shape law, policy and practice on the basis of all that can be learnt from the voices of those with experience of care - working together to build on the aspirations of [The Promise](#) and secure positive change.

**The post will help nurture an environment where the voices, views and experiences of Shetland's Care Experienced children and young people, and others with significant needs for support, are at the heart of decision-making – for them as individuals experiencing care and support; and collectively, in the shaping of services to create opportunities and meet needs.**

You will work directly with children and young people in an individual advocacy role. This means developing relationships, listening to what they say and supporting them to have their voices heard regarding the decisions which impact on their lives. At the heart of the advocacy

relationship is trust - built through transparent, honest, accountable and reliable interactions with a skilled and knowledgeable advocacy worker.

You will work closely with partners to facilitate a broad range of participatory and engagement opportunities, creating the conditions for collective voice. This often brings young people together, allowing them to develop confidence, a sense of belonging and the opportunity to identify common issues. You will help ensure their voices are heard by corporate parents and communities, creating positive change. You will work closely with partners, including Shetland Islands Council and other services, to ensure that the voices of Care Experienced young people have real impact.

You will be brilliant at developing positive relationships with children and young people. You will place young people at the heart of everything you do, helping them live a positive life now and to reach their full potential in the future.

You will be joining Who Cares? Scotland and working on Shetland at an exciting time, when the voices of those who are in or have experienced care are growing in power, individually and collectively - bringing with them insight, challenge, hope and change. Strong foundations have been created on Shetland, with individual advocacy support playing an important role in many lives. Ambitious collaborative projects such as [Being the Light - the Shetland Festival of Care 2021](#) are creating connection, inspiration and change. You will be part of a growing and dynamic network on Shetland and across the North, working alongside a skilled and ambitious team.

### **Main duties and responsibilities**

#### **Independent individual advocacy:**

- Provide high quality independent advocacy support for Shetland's Care Experienced children and young people, and for other young people requiring support, helping ensure their voices are heard and their rights upheld.
- Assist children and young people in preparing for and effectively participating in all the processes that impact on their lives, including children's hearings, reviews, planning meetings, important transitions and other decision-making processes.

#### **Youth opportunity, participation and collective voice:**

- Work with partners to create a programme of opportunity and participation activities for Care Experienced and other young people across Shetland.
- Ensure that the networks through which Care Experienced young people can connect, develop and grow as individuals are maximised, including opportunity across the North and nationwide.
- Create and support opportunities for Care Experienced leadership to develop.

- Work effectively with partners to involve and engage a growing number of children and young people with experience of care or other support needs.
- Raise awareness of the experiences and voices of Care Experienced children and young people across a wide range of audiences.

**Partnership working:**

- Develop excellent working relationships with relevant organisations and partners.
- Work with others to ensure that the voices of those with experience of care are at the heart of creating positive change to care and support.
- Raise awareness and understanding of lived experience of care, children's rights and the care and support that enables positive pathways.

**Reporting and Impact:**

- Ensure that the work of the service is appropriately recorded.
- Provide reports in relation to the service provided and its impact.

**Other responsibilities:**

- Adhere to Who Cares? Scotland's values, policies and procedures at all times.
- Carry out any other duties commensurate with the post as identified by your manager.

**Communication**

The post holder will have key contacts with:

- Children and young people from Shetland
- The Who Cares? Scotland team on Shetland, across the North and nationwide
- Partners across Shetland (Local Authority, other public sector Corporate Parents, the Third Sector)
- National networks supporting the development of effective participatory engagement for Care Experienced children and young people, and its positive impact on care.

Teamwork alongside strong individual initiative will be crucial for the effective operation and imaginative development of the work.

**Working environment**

There is ongoing work to develop a partnership hub in Lerwick. More generally, the remit of the role requires flexibility including home working, some travel and some evening and weekend work. A full driving licence and access to a car is required.

**Attitudes and values**

Commitment to:

- Children's rights
- Working inclusively with an understanding of equal opportunities practices

- Belief that young people can make transformative change happen in their lives if given the opportunity
- Working in partnership with young people, empowering them to shape their own lives, benefitting from the care and support they need
- Learning and development
- Inter-agency, inter-disciplinary working to improve outcomes for children and young people

### Essential knowledge, skills and experience

#### Qualifications:

- Ideally a relevant qualification, to a minimum standard of HNC/SVQ 3 (SCQF level 7) in a discipline related to working with children and young people, **or equivalent work experience.**

#### Knowledge:

- The issues affecting children and young people in care or with experience of care
- The care system in Scotland
- Children's rights
- Child protection issues
- Independent advocacy and its principles
- Effective participation and engagement
- Current developments, policy and practice in relation to children and young people experiencing care in Scotland

#### Skills and competencies:

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, both verbal and written
- Ability to form positive relationships with children and young people
- Ability to work both collaboratively as part of a team and on own initiative
- Ability to manage your time and workload to effectively prioritise and meet deadlines
- Ability to effectively plan and evidence work
- Shaping participatory opportunity
- Managerial skills (an entry-level Participation Assistant trainee opportunity and other supported opportunities for Care Experienced leaders may be an important element to the work on Shetland)
- Ability to travel, and to work some evenings and weekends, with possible overnight stays
- Excellent administrative skills and the ability to produce high quality reports on activity and impact

**Experience in:**

- Working directly with children and young people, both individually and in groups
- Delivering training or engaging a range of audiences
- Working in a collaborative, inter-agency, inter-disciplinary way
- Report writing and evidencing practice and impact

**We particularly welcome applications from people with experience of care who meet the criteria for the post.**