



Peer Support Officer – North West

What you need to know about this role:

Job Title:	Peer Support Officer – North West
Responsible to:	Senior Support Officer
Contract:	To 31 st March 2026 (with potential for extension of 1 year + 1 year)
Location:	Home-based with regional travel.
Working Hours:	28 hours per week
Salary:	£26,500 pa
Closing date:	Friday 4 October 2024
Interviews:	Week commencing 14 October 2024

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS FOR THE POST OF PEER SUPPORT OFFICER (North West)

Thank you for your interest in the above role. This pack tells you more about the Kinship, how we work, and details of the role and the people you will be working with. It also gives information on how to apply.

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About Kinship:

Kinship is the leading kinship care charity in England and Wales. We offer kinship carers financial, legal, practical and emotional support and understanding from the moment they need it, for as long as they need it. Our expert advice, information and guidance helps with complicated and stressful decisions that so many kinship families have to make. We are always there to support them through challenging times and celebrate the good.

Kinship carers are strong and determined. Together, they are powerful. We help them build communities of support and action by connecting families locally and across England and Wales.

We are at the heart of kinship networks, partnering with and influencing service providers, local and national government and other organisations. We give everything we have to fight for each family and their rights, changing society until every kinship family is recognised, valued and supported.

Kinship care often begins in crisis. A child has parents who are unable to care for them, for whatever reason. It can be frightening, confusing and heart-breaking.

Instinctively, a loved one steps in – a grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle or family friend. They are now a kinship carer, bringing up the children they love. There is often no chance to prepare. Plans may be pushed aside. Relationships, jobs and savings are frequently sacrificed.

It is life changing and challenging raising children who have been hurt or neglected, but kinship

carers do it anyway because they put the children first.

We know how hard life can be for kinship carers, but we have seen the amazing things they are capable of, with someone by their side. With the right support, children raised in kinship families can flourish.

That is why we support, connect and campaign – to keep kinship families stronger by keeping them together.

About the role

This role is all about developing a welcoming and supportive support group community for kinship carers wherever they live. Building **belonging, resilience** and **empowerment** for support group leaders and kinship carers.

Funded by the **Department for Education**, our national **Peer Support Service** is creating a sustainable and life-changing legacy for kinship carers across England.

This is a **game-changing service** for kinship carers and builds on Kinship's 10 years' experience of developing peer support groups, and two years delivering a national service which has set up 145 new groups.

As a **Peer Support Officer**, you'll make sure we deliver an exceptional and consistent peer support service for kinship carers.

You'll set-up and develop new in-person groups in areas of high need, as well as supporting existing groups to thrive, developing a resilient and powerful peer support community.

Purpose of the role

Taking responsibility for the North West of England, you will reach out and work directly in local communities to develop sustainable kinship peer support groups.

You'll need to think strategically – mapping areas and utilising resources to be effective and efficient in managing your time and building local connections.

Using community engagement techniques like coffee mornings, community events and linking with our training and support service, you'll build local connections and relationships.

As you develop a group and recruit support group leaders, you'll provide standardised training and help the group to navigate forming and storming – providing reassurance and support to empower the group.

Once the group is stable, you'll transition the support group leader/s over to the 'Hub' team to build confidence and knowledge to run their group independently. You'll also support online groups and special interest groups to transition to independence.

You'll ensure targets are met and that kinship carers receive a good experience.

Service delivery:

- In person (face-to-face) strategic outreach into local and regional communities including setting up and attending local engagement events.
- Set up and develop at least six new **sustainable** in person peer support groups **annually**, attending up to six sessions in person (if needed) before transition to self-sufficiency. Existing groups that are at risk, closed or need support will need replacing or rejuvenating to maintain DfE service level agreements across the team, in addition to new groups. Targets are subject to change and are not fixed.
- Recruit and retain support group leaders to develop their peer support groups.

- Deliver standardised training to support group leaders (group roles and responsibilities, safeguarding, setting up, running and promoting a group).
- Develop strong boundaried and positive relationships with support group leaders – building resilience, empowerment and community.
- Support established groups (including independent) in your area to access support group leader networks and training (this includes visiting groups in person) to build a peer community.
- Follow (and where appropriate develop) the service blueprint to develop sustainable peer support groups, thinking strategically to develop groups.
- Collaborate with Peer Support Hub team to provide a joined up and positive user experience for kinship carers.
- Manage special interest groups and regional online groups as required, transitioning to 'Hub' team for sustainability and work with partners.

Service quality, development and data management:

- Accurately record all recruitment, contact information and volunteer case management in Salesforce in line with service framework and data protection requirements.
- Ensure accurate data entry in Salesforce to support service performance, evaluation and learning.
- Provide regular reports to ensure targets and SLA are met for the service.
- Support continuous development and improvement of the service (new systems and processes) as required.

Team culture:

- Act in the best interest of Kinship and the families we support.
- Maintain and contribute up to date understanding of kinship care.
- Deliver effective administration with attention to detail and keeping to deadlines.
- Identify and contribute to appropriate case studies to demonstrate the impact of Kinship services and contribute to policy and campaigns work.
- Actively contribute to delivering and evidencing a high performing service.
- Take responsibility for your ongoing continued professional development.
- Work in line with the Kinship values.

Knowledge, abilities, skills and experience

Essential

- Proven experience in reaching and establishing strong relationships with hidden or underserved communities in person.
- Significant experience developing peer support communities.
- Proven experience of recruiting, managing, training and supporting volunteers in community settings with an emphasis on understanding and working with vulnerable volunteers.
- Proven experience of ensuring outcomes and impacts of services are evidenced through high quality data collection.
- Evidence of developing and delivering training/support to volunteers, based on needs of service users (in this case kinship carers).
- Strong facilitation skills and essential experience of peer support or user led groups with charity beneficiaries.
- Proven experience of using a customer relationship management system effectively (we use Salesforce).
- In-depth understanding of safeguarding particularly around vulnerable families.
- Excellent communication and engagement skills, with good attention to detail.

Desirable experience:

- Lived experience of kinship care.
- Understanding of children's social care.

- Digital community building (Facebook / WhatsApp etc.)
- Full, clean driving licence/own car.

General attributes:

- Flexible and willing to travel for work across England and Wales.
- Commitment to the values, aims and objectives of Kinship.
- A real commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion within your role and a respectful approach to working with people from a range of backgrounds.
- Excellent written and spoken English.
- Right to work in the UK.

Key Behaviours

Personal attributes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relational approach • Self-aware • Calm under pressure and good with difficult conversations • Clear, straightforward communication • Resilient • Assertive and firm 	Behaviours: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solutions focus; can do attitude • Shows initiative and anticipates activity and challenges • Positive attitude and approach • Respectful • Professional • Empathic, sensitive, tactful
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Key Contacts

Internal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Director Peer Support and Community • Programme Lead - Peer Support • Senior Peer Support Officer • National Peer Support Hub Lead • Advice, Training and Information Team • Network Development Team • Communications and Marketing teams 	External: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kinship carers • Local partners, local authorities and community influencers
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Equality Diversity and Inclusion

Kinship is committed to championing equality, diversity and inclusion. We believe our work is greatly enhanced by the varied backgrounds, experiences and views represented within our teams. We aim to create inclusive teams, celebrate differences and encourage everyone to join us and be their true self at work. We therefore encourage applications from anyone who fits our values, whatever their religion or belief, sex, gender identity, race, age, sexuality or disability and are actively seeking candidates that can bring real innovation and commitment to us.

Candidate Application Information

Please refer to the Job Description for this role to check that you meet the criteria in the "knowledge, skills and experience" section that are necessary for the job.

We will guarantee interviews to any candidates with experience of kinship care (either of being in kinship care or of being a kinship carer) who demonstrate that they meet the essential skills and experience outlined in the job description.

Please tell us if there are any reasonable adjustments, we can make to assist you in your application. Please let us know if we can help and remember that you can request information in large print or in a different format.

How we select candidates

To adhere to our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Kinship uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) as part of an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) – BeApplied. This ensures personal characteristics, such as age, ability, ethnicity etc. are **not** available to the shortlisting panel. The BeApplied ATS system goes further by aiming to remove all socio-demographic details that might affect decision making. This is known as 'Anonymous Recruiting'.

The platform invites candidates to respond to 'SIFT' questions. This is your opportunity to highlight your knowledge, experience, skills and abilities.

You are invited to apply for this role via the BeApplied recruitment platform [here](#) **INSERT BeApplied JOB LINK**

Any applications arriving after the closing date will not be considered for shortlisting unless there are exceptional reasons.

Kinship reserves the right to close a recruitment campaign earlier than the advertised where we have received sufficient applications.

Key Dates:

Closing date: Friday 4 October 2024
Interviews: Week commencing 14 October 2024

If you would like further information or an informal chat about this role, please contact: **Deborah Fox, Programmes Lead Peer Support**, by emailing deborah.fox@kinship.org.uk.

What it means to work at Kinship:

Our vision:

A society in which kinship carers and the children they care for are **recognised, valued** and **supported**.

Our mission:

To ensure that kinship carers and the children they care for get the **support** and **recognition** they need.

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Knowing what you do helps kinship families that really need support.

Staff at kinship are caring, passionate and positive. Colleagues are genuinely nice to work with and care about each other as well as the kinship families we support. We are always innovating to better support kinship carers. **(Staff member at Kinship)**

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We want to offer you the best place to work. Our people are really friendly and incredibly passionate about working alongside kinship carers.

We want you to feel proud to work here and if you join us, we'll do our best to make that happen.



Our Values:

Be bold

We fight for what's right with focus and determination

- Be driven by evidence and deliver quality
- Innovate bravely, fail fast and learn quickly
- Challenge constructively to move us forward



Be stronger together

We see the bigger picture of our work and value collaboration to drive impact

- Recognise and value the part everyone plays
- Bring different strengths and expertise together with purpose
- Ask whose voice and experience may be missing



Step up

We all take responsibility for changing lives and changing the system

- Actively seek and share knowledge
- Step in with ideas and solutions Ask for
- and give honest feedback



Put people first

We care about each other and create spaces where people feel they belong and can thrive

- Bring people together to share experiences and celebrate success
- Listen with curiosity not judgement
- Support with understanding and compassion



What we can offer you:



Community:

- Employee resource groups (including Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group and Wellbeing Committee).
- Staff away days.
- Regular social activities online and in person.



Flexible working:

- We operate flexible working practices which include working from home, varying start and end times of the working day, compressed hours and variable contract hours through the year.



Family:

- Our policies include kinship care, compassionate, dependents, and bereavement leave that support the lives of employees who have additional commitments.
- We are proud that 20% of our current staff are kinship carers, and we are striving to lead the way as a 'Kinship Carer Friendly Employer'.



Health and Wellbeing:

- Employee Assistance Programme (24/7 confidential advice line and counselling).
- Wellbeing Action Plan for each staff member.
- Wellbeing Wednesdays
- Charity Worker Discount



Holidays:

- 30 days annual leave, plus bank holidays (1 April to 31 March).
- We close for three days between Christmas and New Year, which will be deducted from your annual leave allowance.



Pay and pension:

- You'll be eligible and auto-enrolled into a pension scheme - we use Nest Pensions. Current employee contributions are 5% and we will contribute 3%.



Cycle to work programme:

- This scheme enables employees to get tax incentives from cycling to work.



Learning and development:

- A key part of our People Strategy is to continue to develop and enhance the learning experience during your time at Kinship, and we are proud to offer many learning opportunities.

Working hours:

The working week is currently 35 hours per week from Monday to Friday. These may be varied by agreement with your line manager. For some roles, there will be occasions when these hours are exceeded for example some weekend working or a requirement to attend evening meetings. In such circumstances and in agreement with your line manager you may take reasonable time off in lieu. Overtime is not paid.

Travel:

For this role, there may be a requirement to occasionally travel across the nations (England and Wales). There may also be, on occasion, the need for overnight stay. Reasonable travel, subsistence and hotel expenses will be covered using the Charity's expenses procedures.

Pension scheme:

All staff will automatically be enrolled into a Group Personal Pension Scheme as part of our requirement to meet automatic enrolment legislation. According to the statutory requirements.

Probationary period:

All new employees will be required to undertake a period of probation for six months, in which time you will be expected to establish your suitability for the post.

Flexible working:

Kinship will consider applications for flexible working arrangements. Kinship will enable as many jobs to be open to job sharing as is operationally practicable.

Our recruitment process:

As a charity we want to hire the best people to support our vision and mission. People who are values led, high performing and really passionate about doing their best for kinship carers.

We will guarantee interviews to any candidates with experience of kinship care (either of being in kinship care or of being a kinship carer) who demonstrate that they meet the essential skills and experience outlined.

We welcome applications from people from all sections of the community, irrespective of race, colour, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

Kinship is committed to attracting, developing and retaining a diverse workforce, with a broad range of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives, and we encourage applicants from those groups currently under-represented in our organisation and sector.

Standard clauses:

- This role will require satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.
- The post holder must at all times carry out their responsibilities with due regard to Kinship's Equal Opportunities Policy and Safeguarding Policy.
- Salesforce is our customer relationship management system (CRM) and all staff are expected to take accountability and responsibility for using it successfully as part of their day-to-day role to support the growth and impact of Kinship and better services for kinship carers.
- The post holder must accept responsibility for ensuring that the policies and procedures relating to Health and Safety in the workplace are adhered to at all times.
- The post holder must respect the confidentiality of data stored electronically and by other means in line with the Data Protection Act.
- The post holder must carry out their responsibilities with due regard to the non-smoking environment of all Kinship offices.

Note: This job description is not exhaustive. Kinship reserves the right to add to or revise the job description at any time - the post holder may be required to undertake any other duties that fall within the nature of the roles and responsibilities as detailed in this document.

Any substantial or major changes will be negotiated with the post holder.

Kinship is the working name for Grandparents Plus, which is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales under number 4454103 and registered as a charity under number

1093975