



**Peer Support Development Officer
South East and the M4 Corridor**

What you need to know about this role:

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| Job title: | Peer Support Development Officer – part-time South East and M4 Corridor |
| Responsible to: | Senior Peer Development Support Officer |
| Contract: | 21 months (with potential 1 year plus 1 year extension) |
| Location: | Home-based with regional travel. |
| Working hours: | 21 hours per week |
| Salary: | £26,500 FTE per annum |
| Closing date: | 1 November 2024, 12pm |
| Interviews: | Week commencing 4 November |

Information for applicants for the post of Peer Support Development Officer – South East and M4 Corridor

Thank you for your interest in the above role. This pack tells you more about 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.

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 team

The Peer Support and Community team at Kinship is dedicated to enhancing the lives of kinship carers across England and Wales by delivering the first national peer support service. With a focus on building and sustaining networks of peer support groups, the team aims to empower kinship carers through access to resources, training, and development opportunities.

By fostering connections within local, regional, and national ecosystems, the team plays a vital role in ensuring that every kinship carer has access to a supportive community.

As part of our commitment to growth and impact, the team develops innovative approaches to peer support, creating an inclusive environment where kinship carers can share experiences and access essential services. We prioritize collaboration across various departments, ensuring that support group leaders receive high-quality advice and training, facilitating their sustainability and effectiveness. This integrated approach also includes alignment with national and local campaigning efforts to further engage and support the kinship carer community.

In line with our strategic focus on cultivating a vibrant Kinship Community of over 10,000 carers, the team leads initiatives aimed at enhancing community connection and empowering kinship families. By developing a robust model of community engagement that encompasses both in-person and digital services, the team aims to amplify the voices of kinship carers, enabling them to effect meaningful change in their lives and communities.

About the role

This role is community-based and focuses on engaging kinship carers, bringing them together to form Peer Support Groups, and supporting them to achieve independence at which point they will receive ongoing support from our national Hub.

You will do this by working with local authorities, schools, other charities and community groups. Arranging information events such as coffee mornings to engage kinship carers. You'll create a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive community for kinship carers, building belonging, resilience, and empowerment.

Funded by the Department of Education, the National Peer Support Service is a game-changing service that creates a sustainable and life-changing legacy. It builds on Kinship's 10 years of experience in developing peer support groups and two years of delivering a national service that has set up 145 new groups.

Who we are looking for

We are seeking an individual located in South East of England, who possesses the drive, passion, and skills to:

- Develop new Peer Support Groups across a diverse range of communities
- Demonstrate the energy and enthusiasm required to achieve key targets and objectives
- Work collaboratively within the Peer Support and Community Team, as well as throughout the broader organisation, to ensure the development of safe and effective support services for the kinship community.
- Maintain current Peer Support Group levels, taking the lead from the national Hub.
- Maintain accurate records that are used to populate reports, identify learning and share key insights across Kinship that allow the organisation to continuously improve our services and products.

You should have experience in developing and maintaining meaningful relationships with various community-based stakeholders such as local authorities, health services, schools, charities, and kinship carers. You will need to understand the key success factors involved in establishing and developing new in-person groups in areas of high need, as well as how to

support existing groups in their journey towards sustainability.

As a practical thinker, you will work creatively to identify stakeholders and assets in areas of high need. You will build local connections and bring together kinship carers across the region, empowering them to build resilient and robust peer support communities.

You will be confident in building relationships that generate referrals from external stakeholders and in contacting kinship carers directly to secure engagement with local coffee mornings, community, and training events that will help kick-start a thriving peer support group.

As you establish new groups, you will provide support and training to help them lead their groups effectively, and develop their group culture, resilience, and skills to function independently while offering reassurance and support to empower them.

We are ideally looking for candidates based close or within easy reach of our priority development areas in the South East of England which include; Reading, Oxfordshire, West Berkshire, Slough and Hampshire but also able to travel to locations along the M4 corridor.

An essential requirement of the role is to be a driver with access to a vehicle for work purposes.

Key responsibilities:

Service delivery:

- In-person (face-to-face) strategic outreach into local communities including setting up and attending local engagement events.
- Set up and develop sustainable in person peer support groups, initially attending and leading sessions in person before transition to self-sufficiency.
- Working with existing groups that are at risk, closed or need support that need replacing or rejuvenating to maintain DfE service level agreement, 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.
- Assist with the delivery of training to support group leaders and groups to become self-sufficient.
- Develop strong boundaries 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 support further development off) the service blueprint to develop sustainable peer support groups.
- Collaborate with the 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 (person spec):

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 the 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:

- Lived experience of kinship care.
- Understanding of children's social care.
- Digital community building (Facebook / WhatsApp etc.).
- Full, clean driving license/own car.

General characteristics and attributes:

- Flexible and willing to travel for work across England.
- 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.
- Permission to work in the UK.

Key behaviours

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| 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

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| 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 necessary for the job. Closing date and interview details:

Closing date: 1 November 2024, 12pm
Interviews: Week commencing 2024

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 they meet the essential skills and experience outlined.

Please tell us if there are any reasonable adjustments, we can make to assist you in your application. If you have a disability, which you would like us to consider, please tell us about this when you apply. Please let us know if we can help and remember that you can request information in large print or in a different format.

How to apply

To apply for the position, please send your application directly to recruitment@kinship.org.uk. Include your CV and a cover letter detailing your relevant experience and motivation for applying. Make sure to specify the position you're applying for in the subject line of your email. We look forward to reviewing your application!

Kinship reserves the right to close a recruitment campaign earlier than advertised where we have received sufficient applications so early application is encouraged.

If you would like further information or an informal chat about this role, please contact recruitment@kinship.org.uk or send an email to 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



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



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



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 leave, compassionate, dependents, and bereavement leave that support the lives of employees who have additional commitments.
- Maternity & Paternity, Surrogacy and Adoption and Kinship Care Leave policies.
- 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.
- Accessible HQ - The Foundry is fully wheelchair accessible.
- Wellbeing Wednesdays (half a day off on top of AL for all staff at one time - discretionary).
- Charity Worker Discount.



Holidays:

- 30 days annual leave, plus bank holidays (1 April to 31 March) pro rata to role.
- 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.

Conditions of Employment:

Working hours:

The working week is currently 28 hours per week over 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:

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