



EQUALITY | RESPECT | LOVE

## Who Cares? Scotland Job Specification

Post title	Advocacy and Participation Worker
Salary range	£24,147 - £30,184 per annum (pro rata)
Hours of work	20 hours per week
Contract	Permanent
Area and base location	Shetland
Responsible to	Advocacy and Participation Manager – North
Last update	May 2024

**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 people, and the power of their voices to bring about positive change. We provide individual lifelong relationship-based independent advocacy and a broad range of participatory and engagement opportunities for care experienced people across Scotland. We work alongside Corporate Parents and communities to broaden understanding and create change. We work with policy makers, leaders and elected representatives locally and nationally to shape law, policy and practice, working together to build on the aspirations of The Promise and secure positive change.

### Purpose of the post

**The purpose of the post is to provide an independent advocacy service for Shetland’s Care Experienced Children and young people (up to the age of 26) and other young people with significant needs who would benefit from advocacy support.**

The core of the advocacy relationship is trust - built through transparent, honest, accountable and reliable interactions with a skilled and knowledgeable Advocacy and Participation Worker.

Advocacy Workers provide independent advocacy support to children and young people who have a need for advocacy support. This means listening to what they say and supporting them

to amplify their voices to ensure that their views are heard regarding all decisions which are being made about their lives.

You will also support the facilitation of participatory and engagement opportunities and create conditions for collective advocacy bringing young people together to address common issues. You will help ensure their voices are heard by Corporate Parents and communities, creating positive change. You will support care experienced young people and care leavers to raise awareness and secure positive action on issues affecting young people who are in care or have experienced care.

You will work closely with partner agencies including Shetland Island Council and the Shetland Charitable Trust, alongside other agencies and services. This will help to ensure that the voices of children and young people have an impact and to create new opportunities, whilst developing existing ones.

You will be skilled 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.

### **Main duties and responsibilities**

1. To provide high quality independent advocacy supports to Shetland's care experienced Children and Young People (up to the age of 26) and other young people with significant needs who would benefit from advocacy support, helping ensure their voices are heard.
2. To support Shetland's care experienced children and young people in the full range of processes impacting on their lives, including Child's Plan/Team Around the Child meetings, Children's Hearings and Looked After Children Reviews, and Court processes.
3. Provide information to ensure that children and young people's rights are promoted, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
4. To ensure that the networks through which children and young people can connect, develop and grow as individuals are maximised, including opportunities across the North area and nationwide.
5. To work effectively with partners to involve and engage a growing number of children and young people.
6. To raise awareness of the experiences and voices of children and young people across a wide range of audiences and to help children and young people to feel respected, included, listened to and understood.
7. To support a programme of engagement and participation activities for Shetland's care experienced children and young people to engage in collective advocacy and action on a variety of themes that affect them.
8. Provide other engagement/participation/consultation opportunities for children and young people as part of Who Cares? Scotland local and national work.

9. Encourage and enable Shetland's care experienced children and young people to engage with a diverse range of local, regional and national opportunities, to build confidence, connection and self-belief, and shape progress on issues of importance to them and their peers
10. Keep detailed computerised records of work undertaken with young people you support and comply with data protection legislation.
11. Assist in the preparation of liaison reports which evidence the work and advocacy supports provided on Shetland.
12. Raise awareness of Who Cares? Scotland and the range of the service and opportunities on offer amongst care experienced children and young people, professionals, carers and organisations.
13. Work in partnership with professionals, carers and organisations to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people through supporting their voices to be heard.
14. To develop excellent working relationships with relevant organisations and partners.
15. To work as a part of a team within a geographically dispersed area, whilst having strong individual initiative.
16. To implement professional boundaries and have clarity of the advocacy role.
17. Adhere to Who Cares? Scotland policies, procedures and values at all times.
18. Carry out any other duties commensurate with the post as identified by your line manager.

### Communication

The post holder will have an adaptable communication approach that recognises barriers to communication. The post holder will have key contacts with:

- Children and young people from Shetland within a variety of settings including (but not limited to) school, residential school, foster placements, kinship care or home settings.
- Partners and professionals across Shetland, including the Local Authority, Corporate Parents and other Third Sector agencies.
- National and regional networks that support children and young people.
- The North area team and the broader Who Cares? Scotland team.

### Working environment

The post holder will work from home, with the ability to travel to meet with children and young people throughout the Shetland area often. There will be occasional travel to our Inverness and/or Glasgow offices. A full driving licence and access to transport is required. The remit of this role requires flexibility, which may include some evening and weekend work and some overnight stays.

## Attitudes and values

### Commitment to:

- Child and Human rights.
- Working inclusively with an understanding of equal opportunities and trauma informed practices.
- Belief that young people can make transformative change happen in their lives if given the opportunity and the correct supports.
- Working in partnership with young people, empowering them to shape their own lives and make decisions about their own lives.
- Inter-agency and inter-disciplinary working to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- Developing best practice through regular support and supervision, training and development opportunities.
- Embrace new ways of working to benefit the children and young people that we support.

## Essential knowledge, skills and experience

### Qualifications:

- While we would welcome the knowledge gathered through relevant qualifications, we are just as interested in relevant work experience with children and young people.
- Demonstrable continuing professional development in relevant areas.
- A current full driving license.
- Satisfactory PVG.

### Knowledge:

- The Children's Hearing System.
- The issues affecting children and young people in care or with experience of care.
- Awareness of the care system in Scotland.
- Children's rights.
- Child protection issues.
- Legislation relevant to children and young people.
- Awareness of independent advocacy, the SIAA Principles, Standards and Codes of Best Practice and the boundaries of the advocacy role.
- Current developments, policy and practice in relation to children and young people 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 develop relationships with other professionals including social work, health and education.
- Ability to manage your time and workload to effectively prioritise and meet deadlines.
- Ability to effectively plan and evidence work.
- Experience of providing participatory opportunities and activities.
- Excellent administrative skills and the ability to produce high quality reports on activity and impact.
- Willingness to learn and develop your skills.
- A reflective approach to your work and service delivery.
- A positive can-do attitude.

**Experience in:**

- Working directly with children and young people, both individually and in groups.
- Delivering training and/or engaging with a range of audiences.
- Raising awareness and facilitating information sessions.
- Working in a collaborative, inter-agency and inter-disciplinary way.

**Equal Opportunity Employer:**

As an equal opportunities employer we are committed to diversity, equality and inclusion in our workplace. We positively encourage applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy and maternity.

**Lived Experienced Employer:**

**We particularly welcome and encourage applications from those who are care experienced.** The term “care experienced” refers to anyone who has been in or is currently in care. This care may have been provided in many different settings, such as: Kinship care, looked after at home, residential care, foster care, secure care – living in a secure unit, and adoption.