



Job Description

WINCANTON CARES – Benefits Officer

WINCANTON CARES aims to provide more care, in its broadest sense, to older, more vulnerable people living in the BA9 Postcode area which comprises Wincanton and the 15 associated parishes.

We know that Adult Health and Social Care funding and provision are in crisis, We believe that the only sustainable answer to this is a more localised model of care. By ensuring that older residents claim the benefits they are entitled to, they will have the funds needed to purchase the support they need. This in turn will help to stimulate the local rural economy.

The strategy has 8 main strands listed in the background documentation.

The main role of the Benefits Officer will be to help residents across the BA9 Postcode area to claim a range of Government benefits and services with an emphasis on Attendance Allowance, Carers' Allowance, Pension Credits, Blue Badge applications and charitable support.

Job Title	Benefits Officer – WINCANTON CARES
Responsible to	WINCANTON CARES Steering group
Base	Working from home
Salary	£27,000 pro rata
Term	Contract runs for one year
Working hours	6 hours per week, to be flexibly deployed
Annual leave	28 days pro rata
Probationary period	3 months
Notice Period	2 months

Job Title: WINCANTON CARES – Benefits Officer

Job Purpose: To support residents in the BA9 postcode area in making successful benefit applications that will enable them to live their best life. Successful applications also have the potential to bring monies into the area to support the provision and growth of local goods and services.

Accountabilities:

- **Monitoring:** WINCANTON CARES Steering Group
- **Review:** Balsam Centre Board of Trustees

Recruitment Practices

- We recruit for potential, not perfection,
 - We are a values based recruiter,
 - We value lived experience as a demonstration of capability for a role,
 - We only utilise truly “essential” criteria in recruitment,
 - We are committed to safer recruitment practice.
- The post holder will have a strong understanding of the benefits’ system; in particular Attendance Allowance, Carers’ Allowance and Pension Credits.
 - The postholder will also be expected to be able to help residents access other sources of support including Blue Badge, winter fuel payments and local charities.
 - You will also need to work closely with our Project Officer who acts as a Community Connector: bridging the gaps between individuals and the support, resources, and relationships available within our local area.

A. Main Responsibilities

1. Work collaboratively to promote awareness of WINCANTON CARES Benefits service to prospective users
2. Provide accurate information regarding welfare benefits
3. Provide an advice service which is flexible to need and which will likely include delivery via local hubs, home visits, email and telephone as well as face to face appointments.
4. Provide assistance to complete applications for a range of benefits and support acting as the client’s advocate
5. Work in partnership with the WINCANTON CARES Project Officer, representatives of Citizens’ Advice Bureau and other agencies
6. Work autonomously with a minimum of supervision
7. Handle correspondence, maintain records of meetings, performance data and design and implement office procedures
8. Lead on associated Benefits-related publicity material, social media, reports for the Steering Group, Board of Trustees and other stakeholders.
9. Manage any allocated budget alongside WINCANTON CARES’ Finance Officer
10. Maintain clear IT systems including data bases.
11. Report regularly to the WINCANTON CARES Steering Group and other interested parties
12. Maintain confidentiality at all times unless it impacts negatively on the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.
13. Respect difference, diversity and the lived experiences of service users and providers whilst promoting equity and inclusion.
14. Ensure the welfare of vulnerable residents by following WINCANTON CARES’ Safeguarding procedures; referring concerns, in the first instance, to the line manager or safeguarding Lead.
15. Comply with WINCANTON CARES’ policies and procedures
16. Undertake any other reasonable duties as identified by the line manager.

B. Desirable Qualifications and Experience

1. To empathise with, and understand the needs of, vulnerable people in the community and work in a Person-centred way.
2. Understanding of the personal and financial implications of rural isolation, age, illness, disability and end of life care.
3. Effective communication and networking skills
4. Ability to interpret the legislation in relation to benefits
5. Ability to maintain clear performance data; ensure it is kept up-to-date
6. Good administrative, numeracy and literary skills
7. Good IT skills and be administratively self-supporting
8. Hold a clean, current Driving Licence

C. Other useful skills

1. To show a desire to make a difference in the local community.
2. The ability to work both independently and as part of a team
3. To think creatively, take the initiative and to be both forward thinking and act proactively
4. To multi task, prioritise and be adaptive
5. To understand relationships and adapt to the differing needs of residents
6. Exhibit outstanding interpersonal skills

D. General

1. Take a positive approach to professional development by updating skills and knowledge to ensure quality service delivery
2. To take part in regular, reflective supervision and appraisals to ensure both the delivery of a good quality service and personal and professional development.
3. To attend any required training that will increase knowledge and proficiency in the specified area of work.
4. To attend any meetings as deemed necessary by management.
5. To work collaboratively and restoratively with colleagues, stakeholders, people who are supported.
6. To provide training so as to enable the Steering Group to understand the Benefits' system

Disclosure and Barring Service Check

This post is subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions Order) 1975 and as such it will be necessary for a submission for Disclosure to be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service to check for any previous criminal convictions.

Right to Work in the UK All applicants must have the legal right to work in the United Kingdom. Proof of eligibility will be required prior to employment. We are committed to conducting right to work checks in line with Home Office guidance and will not discriminate based on nationality or immigration status.