

**Peer Advocate  
Job Description**

<b>Post Title:</b>	Peer Advocate
<b>Based:</b>	Bedford Borough
<b>Salary:</b>	£21,255 per annum
<b>Hours:</b>	37.5hrs
<b>Contract:</b>	Permanent

**Job Summary**

The pan-Bedfordshire Rough Sleepers Initiative is an exciting partnership, including Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, East London Foundation Trust and Community Led Initiatives with an ambitious vision to help people who have been rough sleeping and impacted by alcohol and drug use, improve their lives, and sustain these improvements. The partnership incorporates statutory, voluntary, and public sector organisations.

We believe that people sleeping rough across Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire, when accessing the right support, can achieve real and lasting growth. Simply surviving is not enough.

To make our vision possible, we will need to inspire a wide range of people across the city to change their beliefs and their behaviour. Through our project, we will:

- Inspire people with entrenched, damaging lifestyles to take the first step on a personal journey of change.
- Motivate people to persevere with their recovery, though the journey may be long and challenging.
- Utilise your own lived experience to influence professionals, from the front-line to senior decision-makers, to break down the barriers that stand in the way of people resolving their complex needs and having the chance to thrive.

**Main Duties**

- Support people with multiple complex needs to engage with services and help advocate for their needs.
- Develop co-produced, outcome focused support plans that reflect each individual's user's personal strengths and goals.
- Encourage engagement with support provided by other agencies to ensure that the right support is accessed at the right time to enable people to progress on their journey to recovery.
- Adopt and model best practice in working with people who have multiple and complex needs.

**The main requirements for the role are:**

- Work to an assertive outreach model that places the emphasis on engagement, maintaining contact, and relationship building in community settings.
- Engage with and build rapport through strong relationships with people to determine their eligibility for the programme.
- Carry out regularly reviews of action plans and assessments.
- Build and maintain networks of support for people across the area by helping them navigate and access interventions provided by other agencies.
- Work with people to develop a co-produced and outcome focused support plan.

- Ensure relevant data is accurately and promptly recorded and updated for accurate reporting.
- Follow the principles of “No Wrong Door” to ensure that all individuals are supported to access the relevant help by referring or enabling access to other services as appropriate.
- Act on advice and support from more senior staff as appropriate.

**Requirements for the successful candidate**

- Experience of working or volunteering within homelessness / housing or drug & alcohol recovery or treatment services is essential.
- Lived experience of similar issues faced by the people we support is essential.
- Passion for supporting people who are living in complex situations.
- Driving and own car with business use insurance is essential.

## Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy

This policy applies to paid employees of Community Led Initiatives CIC (CLI) and volunteers who volunteer directly with Community Led Initiatives and its associated projects.

- As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, CLI complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- CLI is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff, or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability, or offending background.
- We have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
- We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills, and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience.
- A DBS check is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a DBS check is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- Where a DBS check is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within CLI and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
- Unless the nature of the position allows CLI to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- We ensure that all those in CLI who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or opportunity to volunteer.
- We make every subject of a DBS check aware of the existence of the Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
- We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

**Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with CLI. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.**