

COMPASSION ACTS

Victoria Centre, 197a Sussex Road, Southport, PR8 6DG
Tel: 01704 264505

Worried about the impacts of the Cost of Living crisis and the inequalities in society? Do you want to be part of the solution? Come and join the team.

We believe that timely and quality advice services should be available to people who need it, via the Foodbank session itself. This 'financial inclusion' agenda is backed by investment from the national network for Foodbanks, the Trussell Trust.

Thank you for your interest in our new Advisor position. Please find enclosed a Job Description and Person Specification. Application Form to be downloaded separately, completed and returned to Richard Owens – r.owens@compassionacts.uk

The closing date for applications to be received is Friday 17th February 2023, 12 noon.

You must demonstrate how you meet each of the requirements as outlined on the Person Specification; you may use additional sheets of paper if required. Please note that CVs or other forms of submission for the role will not be accepted.

We wish you good luck with your application and if you would like an informal chat about the role before applying, please contact Alison Read or Richard Owens on 01704 264505.

About Compassion Acts

Launched in the summer of 2019 and emerging out of a previous Organisation (Southport & Formby Churches Debt Centre Ltd) the charity has a good reputation in the local area for the provision of the Trussell Trust Foodbank and other wrap around services. To strengthen the capacity of the Organisation and to meet increasing needs from the public, it has been structured with staff and volunteers falling into two main teams.

1. Poverty Reduction

This includes our Foodbank operations for those in emergency situations, our expanding Food Pantry service for the 'just about managing' and the Next Steps project for life-skills training.

2. Advice & Support

This includes the welfare benefits advice team, the Southport Community Money Advice (SCMA) debt advisers. Each of these rely on volunteers for different aspects of the services.

There is also the desire to strengthen the core functions of the charity in finance, HR, fundraising, influencing, communications, and administration in a team alongside the CEO.

We are looking for an applicant who will not only fit into our existing team but will support the Charity in the wider concept and supporting our vision and 5 year Strategic Plan 'Going Upstream'. The successful post-holder will work in a friendly team of paid and volunteer advisors, and will have specific responsibility for developing the 'offer' of on site advice within Foodbank sessions in Burscough and Skelmersdale.

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Job Description

Job Title: Advisor
(with particular coverage for Burscough and Skelmersdale Foodbanks)

Responsible to: Advice and Support Manager

Location: Victoria Centre, Sussex Road, Southport AND at Foodbank sessions in Burscough & Skelmersdale

Rate of Pay: £11.89 per hour plus up to 6% matched employer pension contribution.

Hours: 12 hours per week in the first instance with the possible extension if demand requires (pattern by agreement)

Term: Fixed Term Contract until end March 2024, hoping to be renewed, subject to funding.

Job Purpose:

To be an additional team member to support service users from the point of enquiry, especially in the Foodbank setting in Burscough and Skelmersdale, enabling them to access timely support for welfare and/or debt advice. Obtaining information from the client and progressing the case to an appropriate level.

Main duties:

- Advise, assist and support service users who could benefit from welfare benefit and/or debt advice in accordance with agreed procedures, policies and good practice.
- After appropriate training, take responsibility for Debt Advice under the Community Money Advice (CMA) model. Maintain appropriate records in line with CMA and FCA guidelines.
- The role will involve providing the Advice and Support service via both Compassion Acts and the Skelmersdale Foodbanks. This will involve travel to/from the satellite sites across the two areas. Use of a vehicle with business travel insurance essential.
- To engage in relevant training and maintain up to date knowledge of the benefit system. Initially shadow the welfare advice interviews and sessions with clients, learning 'on the job' the details of how to complete benefit claim forms, re-assessments and Appeals.
- Develop a caseload and maintain detailed, up to date and confidential case notes and supporting documentation for the purpose of information retrieval and continuity of casework.

- To act as an advocate for service users.
- To work and liaise with other team members, to share information and to support best practice.
- To refer clients to other colleagues /services to assist in meeting any identified needs and liaise and negotiate with relevant agencies.
- To Deputise and backfill for the Advice and Support Manager.
- Provide administrative back-up for the Advice and Support Manager.
- To assist the Advice and Support Manager in developing and delivering courses and training to clients and volunteers.
- Provide relevant and appropriate data for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation to meet the requirements of the Charity, Financial Services Authority and other stakeholders.
- Work collaboratively with other colleagues in the team and wider organisation to enhance the services provided.
- Undertake any other reasonable duty consistent with the operation of the service required by the Charity.

Health and Safety

It is the general duty of every employee to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others and to co-operate with management in meeting its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act. Any failure to take such care, or the contravention of safety policy or managerial instructions may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Data Protection and Client Confidentiality

All staff are required to adhere to the regulations of Compassion Acts Confidentiality and Data Protection policies and procedures in support of the Data Protection Act (2018), ensuring they respect the confidentiality of all matters they may learn relating to their employment, other members of staff and the general public.

Variation

The postholder may be required to undertake other duties commensurate with the role. Some duties may be subject to variation changes and will only be made after consultation with the postholder.

Policy and Procedure Expectations

Employees are required to comply with all policies and procedures of Compassion Acts including equality and diversity, data protection, health and safety and safeguarding.

Supervision, Training and Development

Employees are required to participate in regular supervision and personal and staff development planning sessions, as required. There is a 3 month probationary period.

Other Terms of Employment

- A NEST pension scheme with up to 6% matched employer contribution of gross salary.
- 25 days Annual Leave entitlement per year, in addition to Statutory Holidays (pro-rated for part-time employees).
- An unconditional offer of employment will be made to the successful candidate, subject to successful completion of the following pre-employment screening checks:
 - Evidence of a satisfactory Enhanced Certificate of Disclosure certificate from the Disclosure Barring Service
 - Evidence to confirm the candidate's Right to Work in the UK
 - Receipt of two references, satisfactory to Compassion Acts
 - Evidence of Full UK Driving Licence and car insurance that cover business travel

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Person Specification

Advisor Role

	Experience	Essential	Desirable
1.	Relevant experience of providing advice and/or support in a client or customer facing role	X	
2.	Relevant experience in providing debt and/or budgeting advice		X
3.	Experience in working with volunteers and in Charities		X
4.	Experience in developing and delivering group training sessions		X
5.	Full UK Driving Licence	X	
	Knowledge	Essential	Desirable
6.	Ability to quickly understand and prioritise complex issues	X	
7.	Ability to analyse spending habits and support with budgeting	X	
8.	An understanding of the welfare benefits system (England and Wales)		X
9.	An understanding of debt advice and debt solutions		X

	Skills	Essential	Desirable
10.	Ability to write clear and concise reports and keep accurate case records	X	
11.	Proficient in the use of Information Technology, particularly Microsoft Word, Excel as well as Databases	X	
12.	Excellent assessment and communication skills, both written and verbal	X	
13.	Strong organisational skills	X	
14.	An imaginative and committed approach to the development of the service and quality assurance	X	
15.	Ability to maintain accurate records, in line with Data Protection Act (2018)	X	
	Personal Attributes	Essential	Desirable
16.	An understanding of and empathy with people and their problems, together with a positive and non-judgemental attitude towards clients	X	
17.	Able to demonstrate an ability to work as part of a team, as well as independently.	X	
18.	Ability to liaise at all levels	X	
19.	Commitment to continually develop and update professional knowledge	X	
20.	Possess a can-do attitude with the willingness to respond creatively to a fast-moving environment	X	
21.	Appreciation of the values of the Charity, its vital relationship with local churches and its aims to tackle the causes of poverty.	X	