



Building Capacity-primary groups: Freelance-Community Engagement officers

Summary

Queen's Park Community Organisation (QPCO) grew from the ground up within one of the most multicultural wards in Bedford. We have become a vital resource for the town, regularly consulted by non-profit organisations and statutory services for insight, co-design, delivery and evaluation. We pride ourselves on working flexibly, maximising resources, and getting to the heart of the issues and barriers that impact community resilience, integration and individual achievement.

While our work now spans Bedford Borough, we remain rooted in the belief that building capacity and self-sufficiency within communities enriches society and reduces the impact of systemic issues such as poverty, isolation, and lack of access to services.

This project aims to establish *primary groups* that provide safe spaces, improve access, and create meaningful communication between communities and statutory/non-statutory services. In the current climate, where integration and community cohesion are increasingly important, our work has been recognised as a vital contributor to the health, safety, aspirations and wellbeing of people in Bedford.

What is a 'primary group'?

They are characterised by:

- **Cultural familiarity** - enabling vulnerable people to feel comfortable, safe and confident enough to attend.
- **Opportunities for fellowship** - creating natural spaces for connection, belonging and peer support.
- **Language accessibility** - ensuring people can express their needs, understand information and engage on equal terms.

The project: Primary groups

We develop community-tailored safe spaces designed to act as stepping stones for under-represented communities. This project will strengthen collaboration, bring people together, and support the development of community infrastructure such as networks, shared resources, community leadership and coordinated approaches.

QPCO proposes to engage community specialists on a flexible basis (self-employed or short-term contract) to support the development of our primary groups. Engagements will be shaped around the needs of each group, with a set number of hours over one to six months.

This model enables:

- Multiple specialists working with different groups concurrently
- Culturally and linguistically appropriate engagement
- Targeted expertise from individuals with lived experience or specialist knowledge

Current project page: <https://qpc.org.uk/projects/building-capacity/>

The Brief

QPCO is seeking **experienced Community Engagement Officers** with a background in community development and experience working within diverse communities.

The primary responsibility of each specialist is to develop and strengthen their assigned community group. This includes outreach, trust-building, facilitation and capacity-building. We are currently seeking an officer to work with our **Punjabi** and **Caribbean** groups.

Key Responsibilities

- Build and maintain strong links with the community through regular visits
- Identify and empower key members of the group to take on leadership roles
- Provide one-to-one support to emerging community leaders
- Recruit volunteers from within the group
- Support volunteers and leaders to access training
- Assist with funding applications
- Support the delivery of safe, inclusive community spaces
- Strengthen connections between the group, their wider community and the QPCO network

Person Specification

Essential Characteristics

1. Ability to work effectively under pressure and manage multiple priorities
2. Ability to speak or understand the language of the community group you are supporting
3. Strong understanding of relevant cultural practices and community dynamics
4. Ability to work co-operatively as part of a small, committed team
5. Excellent interpersonal skills
6. Strong and versatile communication skills, both written and verbal
7. Ability to relate to and work with people from all demographic backgrounds
8. Self-motivated, enthusiastic and proactive
9. Ability to work independently with minimal supervision
10. Good record of timekeeping and reliability
11. Flexibility regarding working hours, including occasional evenings or weekends
12. Ability to act with integrity, confidentiality and respect at all times

Fee and Conditions

- **£15 per hour**, with the number of hours negotiated based on the project needs and candidate availability
- Minimum **30 hours per project**
- This is a **freelance contract**. The engagement officer is responsible for their own tax, insurance and pension contributions.
- This contract does **not** constitute employment.

Application Process

To apply, please submit an **expression of interest** (maximum 2 pages of A4) outlining:

- Why you are interested in the role
- How your experience and skills match the brief

You may also submit an expression of interest in audio or video format (max 5 minutes). If you require any support with the application process, please contact us to discuss how we can help.

For informal enquiries, please email our Director, Marie-Ange Comerford-Raillon, admin@qpco.org.uk. (Please note that we are closed over the Christmas period 20 December 2025 - 2 January 2026)

References will be obtained from the successful candidate before appointment.

For informal enquiries, please contact our Director, **Marie-Ange Comerford-Raillon**, at: **admin@qpco.org.uk**
(Please note: our office is closed from 20 December 2025 - 2 January 2026.)

Deadline for applications: 11 January 2025

Please send expressions of interest to: **admin@qpco.org.uk**

Eligibility

We welcome applications from individuals at various stages of their career and from a variety of demographic backgrounds. An Enhanced DBS check will be required for any unsupervised work with the community.

About us:

Queen's Park Community Organisation is a grassroots organisation and registered charity (1199226) targeting the most deprived areas in Bedford. We have four objectives, Welfare, Capacity Building, Recreation and Relief of Poverty.

Our mission is to empower local people to make change by building bridges between communities, schools and organisations through our three core programmes:

- Advocacy and outreach service
- Building capacity & increasing building community resilience

- Youth program

More Information: <https://qpcos.org.uk/>

This post is funded by the **National Lottery** and the **Harpur Trust**.

Equal Opportunities

QPCO is an equal opportunities organisation. We do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or any other protected characteristic. Selection is based solely on aptitude and ability.