

Support Worker County Durham

Permanent

16 hours per week

£10 per hour

Closing date: Thursday September 19



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Willington, Crook, Co Durham DL15 0UT
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Registered Charity No: 1145726

CORNERSTONE'S ETHOS, MISSION AND HISTORY

Cornerstone is a regional charity that supports hundreds of people each year. We are a well-respected, growing organisation dedicated to supporting the most vulnerable people across the North East

We began as housing charity supporting people who were homeless in the North East 10 years ago.

Our widely admired furniture making venture began in 2012 in a shed built in the yard of one of our six supported houses at that time. Since then, our housing has increased to 34 homes and a 9,000 sq ft Learning and training complex and a high street store with drop in and training facilities in Hartlepool. The charity's services have grown and developed to support people experiencing a wide range of personal challenges, including addiction and recovery programmes, employment guidance, employment training, and genuine employment opportunities for service users, help for people on release from prison or on probation, and support for people experiencing sexual exploitation or domestic abuse.

We're looking for committed and passionate professionals who share our enthusiasm for including socially excluded people fully in our work, our communities and our day to day lives.

JOB ROLE

To work with people to ensure they have the skills and resilience to live independently. To ensure the safety and security of all residents living in Cornerstone accommodation.

OUR SUPPORT APPROACH - have fun doing stuff as a team

A successful Cornerstone support worker uses her or his professional skills and judgment to create a meaningful and information-rich relationship with service users where both are on an equal footing, their voices and ideas are heard, respected and valued.

Cornerstone expects this respectful approach as a baseline of communication of every person throughout the organisation from board level to the newest arrivals in our service. As such Cornerstone has no place for preadonnas and there is no task expected of one person that would not be expected of another not even the CEO!

Although traditional one-to-one support meetings using a Homelessness Outcome Star are the basis of work and important for recording and assessing progress, they represent a small amount of time spent with service users. For this reason, An excellent Cornerstone support worker will generate as much fun as possible for themselves and their clients following the charity's model of addressing and assessing support needs informally while performing their day-to-day duties. The progress and areas for attention they discover in this informal work will be gathered and recorded by them formally using Cornerstone's Inform client database after the engagement activities.

On the professional side of this work, support workers and managers hold weekly meetings to discuss each individual's service user needs and develop an action plan. Based on the actions to be addressed informal engagement opportunities are chosen from the lists of duties to be performed that week and opportunities to involve the client added to the individual's plan. An example may be asking a client to help you to cook a meal or organise paperwork for a drop in group.

Informal engagements such as these, Cornerstone has found to help form a bond of trust and openness away from a more clinical environment. It is a highly prized technique within the charity and is our benchmark of excellence in support work. We have been doing this for 10 years + and earned an excellent reputation for our successful results.

You are not expected to be an expert of activities in any area – in fact the more you rely on each other and learn together the better. Although not an exhaustive list shared tasks can involve:

- Drop in groups
- Joinery/ Furniture-making workshop
- House checks and guided cleaning
- Preparing for new residents
- Running the shop and its administration
- Gardening
- Cooking
- Making arts, crafts, woodwork
- Collecting supplies for foodbanks and clothes banks
- Front of house in the shop or on market stalls
- .Any task in fact that is a fit for the client and the issue to be tackled.

To ensure you keep yourself safe and others in an informal setting, it will be essential that you develop a detailed knowledge of our practices and policies and the mental dexterity to assess your changing environment and use it to its full potential.

Although the service user will remain mostly in this informal space, you must use it only as a professional support tool. It exists to meet your clients needs and not your own.

PERSON SPECIFICATION – Support Worker

Criteria	Essential Requirements necessary for safe and effective performance in the job	Desirable Where available, elements that contribute to improved / immediate performance in the job
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Homelessness, Supported housing, or customer service qualification (NVQ, HNC) or at equivalent experience of working within a similar role 	
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working within a Homeless organisation, supported housing, or local authority environment Housing department or a registered landlord • Experience of, and commitment to, promoting and implementing equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion for vulnerable people. • Experience of working respectfully with individuals offering advice, guidance and support on housing and appropriate tenancy related information • Experience of Housing Management practice and knowledge of Housing legislation & welfare benefit legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of supporting individuals to maintain their own accommodation

Criteria	Essential Requirements necessary for safe and effective performance in the job	Desirable Where available, elements that contribute to improved / immediate performance in the job
Skills, Knowledge and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent customer service, organisational, administrative, planning and time management skills. • Knowledge of using a Housing Management software system • Knowledge of inform system, and able to authorise support plans and risk assessment • Mentoring and providing information, advice and guidance • Communicate effectively with a wide range of people in a professional manner and develop partnerships and networks. • Have good problem solving and analytical skills • Skills in working with and knowledge of, the issues faced by vulnerable people, including those with substance misuse problems, mental health problems or a history of involvement with the Criminal Justice system. • IT competency, including in word processing, Microsoft Outlook and internet. Use of our specialist information management system will be required for which training will be given as necessary. • Excellent active listening skills. • Ability to work independently using own initiative and as a member of a team, taking instruction as necessary. 	
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full driving licence and access to a vehicle 	