



**Community Development Worker  
(Hope Keith Villagers Trust)  
Job Application Pack  
May 2026**

## 1. Introduction

Dear applicant

### Community Development Worker (Hope Keith Villagers Trust)

Thank you for expressing interest in this new role, working in the villages of Ruser, Colgate and Faygate within the Horsham District of West Sussex.

This is an exciting opportunity to join our community development team and to be part of this innovative project that contributes significantly to enriching the lives of the older generations in their own communities.

We hope you find this job pack helpful in making your application. **Section 2** gives background about how this new project came into being that should help provide some useful context.

The Job Description and Person Specification can be found in **Section 3**. This gives you the scope of the role and the skills and experience that we would like to see. We are keen to hear from applicants who are able to offer interesting and relevant experience, but we also understand that skills can be transferable. Applications will be shortlisted from the person specification, so applicants should respond to these points.

You should find enclosed all the information you need to assist you to make an application. If you haven't already discovered our website, I would encourage you to have a browse as they contain a range of useful information about AirS the organisation – please see: <https://www.ruralsussex.org.uk/>.

As this is a part-time role, we want to emphasise that we operate flexible working arrangements. Exact working patterns can be agreed according to the needs of the job and the employee. There will need to be some flexibility as community events and meetings can occur in the evening and at weekends.

Completed applications must be received by **Noon on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026** – either by post or email. **Section 4** of this pack sets out the timetable for our decision-making process.

All applications must be submitted to Sarah Blake, Action in rural Sussex 16 Market Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2NB OR by email to [recruitment@ruralsussex.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@ruralsussex.org.uk).

If you'd like to chat informally about the role, please give me a call on **07943 743403**.

I look forward to receiving your application.

**Tom Warder**

**Director of Rural Community Services and Acting CEO**

## 2. Background and Context

This project will be managed by Action in rural Sussex and funded by The Hope Keith Villagers Trust, who, as a local and invested stakeholder, will also be monitoring progress regularly.

**Action in rural Sussex (AirS)** is an independent charity that exists for **all** people living in rural areas but especially those who are at risk of isolation and/or disadvantage and for whom rural life brings an additional challenge and cost to their daily lives. Our aims are:

1. To reduce the incidence and impact of disadvantage and poverty on people living in rural areas.
2. To increase the capacity of rural communities to manage change for the benefit of all their members.
3. To inform and amplify the voice of rural communities to influence public policy.

**Hope Keith Villagers Trust (HKVT)** is a charity that supports the older generations who live in the communities of Colgate, Faygate and Rusper in the Horsham District of West Sussex.

HKVT used to fund a direct support programme within these villages, but felt that, while useful, a different approach might be worth exploring. AirS were able to offer an asset-based model that could still offer individual support and signposting but would also consider the wider context of strengths and assets, supporting the development of activities that would further benefit those from the older generations to live a healthy, independent, and enriched life within their communities.

This approach builds on learning from historic and existing projects within AirS, especially the East Sussex based Making it Happen Project. There is an emphasis on learning and development, with outcomes linked to 'shifts' within people and the wider community, rather than a simple quantitative approach.

We believe that a community-led, person centred way of working ensures that any development and activity is appropriate to the context and existing situation. It also offers opportunity for creative ways of working, and we fully support staff development and training within this.

There would also be the opportunity for staff to develop to their own strengths and the possibility of extending the work, with additional hours, when suitable projects can attract appropriate funding.

**Attached to this pack is** a copy of the PowerPoint presentation that outlines the project in a little more detail.

### 3. Job Description / Person Specification

**Job Description: Community Development Worker – Hope Keith Villagers Trust Project.**

**Salary: £26,000 (pro rata)**

**Term: Permanent**

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**AirS Strategic Aim: *Enable communities to improve their wellbeing and resilience***

**Purpose of the post:**

To provide an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to support the older members of the villages of Colgate, Faygate and Rusper in Horsham District of West Sussex.

To work with the residents and other assets of these communities to ensure a positive and strength-based focus, whilst developing collaborative and co-produced activities and solutions to increase support for the older generations of the community.

To offer signposting and other direct advice and support to older people in the villages.

**Accountable to:**

Senior Community Development Worker

**Key Accountabilities:** The post-holder will be responsible as follows:

**Overview**

- Work with the ... and other members of the team to fulfil the project contract as agreed between Action in rural Sussex (AirS) and the Hope Keith Villagers Trust (HKVT).
- As part of a team, contribute to the development and implementation of the workplan on a continual basis.
- Support effective monitoring and evaluation via use of our Aide CRM database and Social Value Engine tool as appropriate.
- Contribute to the evaluation and reporting for the project, according to the agreed frameworks.
- Keep up to date records on work undertaken, in accordance with project guidelines.
- Keep up to date case notes on individual clients as appropriate and in accordance with GDPR legislation.
- Engage with individual, team, and project learning to enhance professional and project development.
- Commit to an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to the work, being open to learning new and innovative ways of engaging, connecting, and supporting the communities.

- Help research and understand latest thinking in terms of supporting older generations to maintain independence and live enriched and satisfying lives.
- Assist in sharing knowledge and learning around the themes of the project both internally and externally.
- Ensure regular opportunities for residents to access signposting and other 1 to 1 requests.

### **Main tasks and responsibilities**

- Adopting an ABCD approach to support the villages of Colgate, Faygate and Rusper to develop and maintain activities that enable the older generations to live independently and enjoy enriched lived experiences.
- Identifying and mapping existing and new groups, assets and networks that exist in and around the project area.
- Connecting and building relationships with these individuals, groups, organisations and networks.
- Promoting and supporting existing and new community initiatives that provide services for local people.
- Building an understanding of what the older residents in the area value and would like to see more of in order to support their independence and quality of life.
- Supporting those who volunteer in the community with mentoring, training and development. Supporting groups to attract new volunteers when appropriate.
- Recruiting and supporting direct volunteers for the project.
- Providing face to face information, advice and support to groups, organisations and their members, helping people to make informed choices.
- Building relationships with the organisers / leaders of community services to help build capacity, skills and understanding of what is achievable.
- Assisting statutory and other service providers make suitable contacts in local communities, often acting as a first point of contact with the named communities for external service providers.
- Working with other agencies and organisations to improve local service provision.
- Ensuring that the voice of the community is heard and valued at all levels and encourage service providers to adopt a collaborative approach to co-production.

### **General duties**

- Provide an excellent service internally and externally.
- Maintain confidentiality of information acquired in the course of undertaking duties.
- Working within the team structure, sharing and cascading information, supporting the team manager to enable the smooth running of the programme.

- Attending some evening meetings and possibly occasional weekend events.
- Actively pursuing self-development opportunities, identifying training needs and potential solutions.
- Contributing to the overall work of the organisation to include attendance at team meetings, staff meetings and AirS Annual Conference and/or AirS AGM.
- Undertaking other duties as may reasonably be requested.

**Safeguarding:**

- To comply with AirS Safeguarding policies and procedures.

**Health & Safety:**

- To uphold AirS Health and Safety requirements, particularly by following agreed codes of practice and safe methods of working.
- To fulfil personal responsibilities with regard to AirS' Health & Safety and Risk Policies.
- To comply with the Health & Safety policies and arrangements which are in place to ensure that staff and others are safe, and communication is effective.

**Equal Opportunities:**

- To uphold AirS policies relating to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

**Statement of Flexibility:**

- Attend and participate in AirS (and associated bodies) events and staff meetings.
- This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time when it was drawn up. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence. The post holder will be expected to carry out other related duties and responsibilities as may reasonably be requested.
- Staff team-working and individual personal development are key to AirS' success in delivering its business aims and objectives. All staff will therefore be expected to have a flexible attitude in responding to new priorities and opportunities as they arise.
- The post holder will be expected to continuously develop their skills and experience.

**Hours per week:**

21

**Location:**

- The post is home-based but requires frequent and regular travel to the Project area.



**Person Specification: Community Development Worker – Hope Keith Villagers Trust Project**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<b>Education and qualifications</b>	Qualified to GCSE level (A-C) or equivalent.	Qualified to A level or equivalent.  Qualified in relevant profession or discipline – Community development, Health promotion or similar.
<b>Knowledge, skills and abilities</b>	<p>Strong interpersonal and communications skills.</p> <p>Ability to be able to communicate in a variety of ways to different clients and stakeholders.</p> <p>Understanding of current rural issues such as poor access to services, rural isolation, and loneliness, especially for those from the older generations.</p> <p>Knowledge of the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>Knowledge of community development approaches, especially asset-based models.</p> <p>Basic knowledge of relevant statutory services and local democratic structures.</p> <p>Good organisational skills.</p> <p>IT skills – Microsoft office, social media, CRM's (input only).</p> <p>Understanding of and skills in meeting monitoring and reporting requirements.</p>	<p>Good knowledge of the designated area</p> <p>Report writing and evaluation skills.</p> <p>In depth knowledge of relevant statutory services, local and national organisations.</p> <p>Ability to deliver some training or presentations to groups.</p> <p>Understanding of mentoring and facilitation in order to support the development of people and groups.</p> <p>Understanding of how various activities can benefit health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Understanding of safeguarding issues as they pertain to vulnerable adults.</p>

<p><b>Experience</b></p>	<p>Experience of listening to, supporting and signposting groups and individuals to relevant activities and services.</p> <p>Experience of working with community groups and organisations to develop activities and local services.</p> <p>Working collaboratively with formal and informal partners.</p> <p>Experience of engaging individuals and groups in creative formal and informal ways.</p>	<p>Experience of working with rural communities.</p> <p>Working with public and/or voluntary and community partners to deliver services.</p> <p>Working with vulnerable adults / older people.</p> <p>Experience of casework with individual clients.</p> <p>Experience of planning and running events.</p> <p>Experience of running and participating in community and professional networks.</p>
<p><b>Personal attributes</b></p>	<p>Ability to work on own but with a collaborative approach to enhance individual skills.</p> <p>Ability to collaborate within a team to share and learn skills, knowledge and experience, and co-produce project plans and activity.</p> <p>Strong commitment to improving the lives of older people living in rural areas.</p> <p>Commitment to an asset and strength-based approach to community development</p> <p>Strong commitment to a person-centred and community-led way of working.</p> <p>Enjoyment of engagement with people from all different backgrounds.</p> <p>Build connections and relationships professionally.</p>	<p>Interest in expanding skills and knowledge.</p> <p>Commitment to personal and professional development.</p> <p>Willing to share and connect with the wider AirS Team.</p> <p>Friendly, approachable, and empathetic</p> <p>Self-motivated and adaptable</p> <p>Confident in taking initiative and solving problems</p>

<b>Other</b>	<p>Able to work from home.</p> <p>Able to travel independently within the designated area on a frequent and regular basis.</p> <p>Prepared to work occasional evenings and weekends.</p> <p>Willing to attend required training.</p> <p>Willing to attend AirS staff meetings and other events when needed and appropriate.</p> <p>Prepared to undergo enhanced DBS check</p>	<p>Own vehicle and full driving licence.</p> <p>First Aid Certificate and / or Fire Safety Training.</p> <p>Local networks and contacts in the designated area.</p>
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#### **4. Selection and Interview process**

##### **Timetable**

Application closure date – Noon on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Interviews: Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May (unless otherwise agreed)

##### **Interview**

Interviews will Take place in or near the villages of Colgate, Faygate or Rusper and will be conducted by a panel comprising:

Members of the Senior Leadership Team (TBC)

Jasmine Watkins – Senior Community Development Worker

Candidates will be asked to undertake a 10-minute presentation at the start of the interview on a subject to be notified in advance.

#### **5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

We welcome applications from everyone and value diversity in our workforce.

To help us to monitor and review the success of our recruitment process we ask all applicants to complete our monitoring form which can be accessed via the following link: [AirS Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Monitoring](#)