

Community Action Suffolk Recruitment Pack

Rural Equalities Officer



Welcome from Hannah Reid, Chief Executive of Community Action Suffolk

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in working for CAS and the role we are currently advertising.

CAS is a diverse and responsive organisation and I am incredibly proud to lead such a trusted and passionate team. Our enabling work has such a positive impact on VCFSE organisations and the communities they serve.

This application pack should provide you with all the information you need about the role, as well as an idea as to what CAS is all about, what we do and where we see our future.

We achieve this through our high performing and motivated staff team as well as our person centred approach to our work keeping people and communities at the heart of what we do. As well as making a difference in our communities you will find that the CAS team provide a friendly and collaborative environment to work in and no two days are the same.

I hope that you will find this opportunity both interesting and exciting and will consider submitting an application to join us.

Hannah Reid, Chief Executive



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About CAS

We exist to ensure the sector is supported, safe and sustainable. We provide (or signpost) whatever is needed behind the scenes to enable this, so the sector can concentrate on doing what it does best – making Suffolk an incredible place in which to live and work. CAS supports organisations in the sector to enable them to operate more effectively. We provide a voice for organisations and groups who may not otherwise be heard and represent their interests to the private and public sectors. We do this through conferences, workshops, events, specialist networks, and by consultation with the sector. We work closely with a wide variety of partners from other sectors including Suffolk County Council, Borough and District Councils, Town and Parish Councils, Health and Police, along with partners from the private sector such as New Anglia Local Economic Partnership and local businesses. All these parties have a vital role in improving the lives of people in Suffolk and by working together we ensure Suffolk is the best place it can be for all those living and working here.

Our Vision

Community Action Suffolk's vision is that Suffolk is a county where every community aspires, thrives and grows.

Our Mission

Community Action Suffolk's mission is to strengthen and champion community action in Suffolk by supporting the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector in its work.



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Our mission is underpinned by our **4 Strategic Priorities...**

1. Focus on sustainable income growth to ensure CAS remains an essential business in Suffolk, driven by continuous improvement

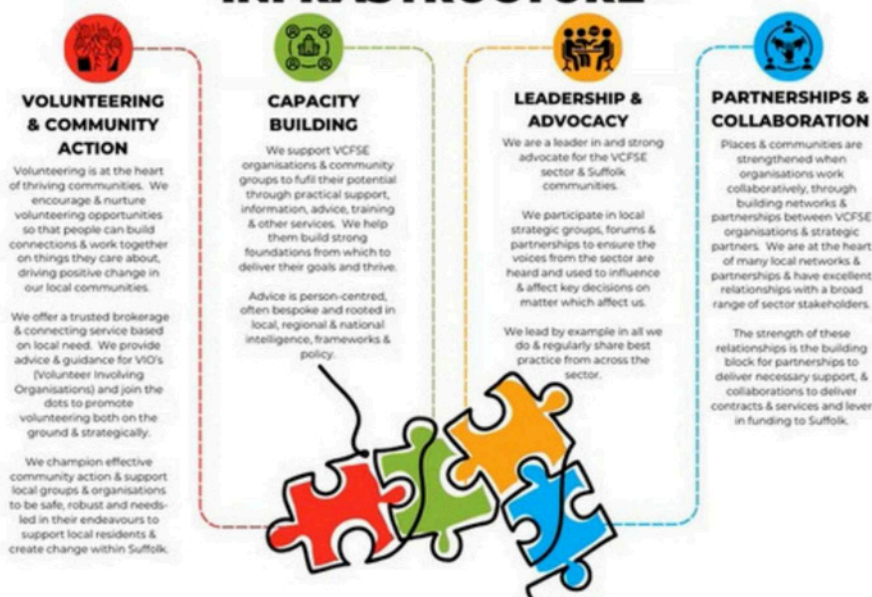
2. Deliver high quality needs-led services which enable Suffolk's VCFSE sector to deliver projects, activities & services in our communities in a safe, robust & sustainable way

3. Promote the 4 functions of local infrastructure to increase awareness & understanding of our role with key stakeholders

4. Champion, promote & advocate for, the VCFSE sector in Suffolk in order to create & maintain influential, equitable & beneficial relationships across sectors



• CAS 4 FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE •



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CAS VALUES



Collaborative



Enabling



Person
Centred



Trusted



Responsive

Our **values** represent who we are, how we work, our aspirations, purpose, & our goals.

Chosen by our staff team, we reflect them in everything we do both internally and externally.

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The role at a glance

Hours - 18.75 hours per week. Working days to be agreed

Salary - £31,048.83 FTE, £15,524.41 per annum

Start date - As soon as possible

Location - Office base - Brightspace, Ipswich or Kirkley Centre, Lowestoft with some blended home working

Accountable to - Community Action Manager

Contract term - Fixed term to 31st March 2028

Application deadline -

Closing date for applications: 12.00pm Wednesday 19th August 2026

Interviews will be held during the week beginning 31st August 2026

Please contact jessica.glen@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk for any queries regarding your application



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JOB DESCRIPTION – Rural Equalities Officer

JOB TITLE: Rural Equalities Officer	SALARY £31,048.83 FTE, £15,524.41 per annum
FUNCTION: Community Action	HOURS: 18.75 hours per week Fixed term to 31 st March 2028
ACCOUNTABLE TO Community Action Manager	LOCATION: Community Action Suffolk, Brightspace, Ipswich or Kirkley Centre, Lowestoft.
JOB PURPOSE	
• To play a key role in helping to reduce Suffolk’s rural inequalities and diversity gap, with a particular focus on supporting voluntary organisations to overcome barriers to support thriving communities • To champion CAS’s work by building awareness of our services, connecting organisations to the right support and promoting the positive impact of our work across Suffolk • To contribute to a supportive, high-performing and values-led CAS team that is ambitious for communities and committed to making a difference	
MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
Champion Equity, Diversity and Inclusion across Suffolk’s VCFSE sector, with a particular focus on tackling rural inequalities and improving access to support • Build trust and awareness among diverse-led and rural VCFSE organisations and groups, helping them understand and access the full range of CAS services • Develop strong relationships within rural communities, helping to remove barriers and connect people and organisations with the support they need • Work creatively with colleagues and partners to identify opportunities, address inequalities and develop practical, sustainable solutions for communities across Suffolk • Identify, celebrate and share inclusive practice, strengthening the voice of organisations and communities led by lived experience	

- Collaborate with capacity building and community action colleagues to design useful training, guidance and resources that help organisations strengthen inclusive policies and practice
- Deliver engaging training and consultancy packages for external organisations, supporting them to take confident and practical action on inclusion
- Share learning and insight across CAS so inclusive approaches are embedded in our services, projects and decision-making
- Stay informed about current research, policy and practice on tackling inequalities, using this knowledge to spot opportunities for collaboration and improvement

Act as a confident ambassador for CAS, helping organisations understand and benefit from our diverse range of services

- Develop a strong working knowledge of CAS's services and confidently promote opportunities that will benefit communities, organisations and partners
- Provide a helpful first point of contact, guiding people to the right colleagues, services or sources of support within CAS
- Work with colleagues across CAS to raise awareness of our services and activities, enabling wider promotion through stakeholder networks
- Promote the value and benefits of the CAS Network to organisations that could benefit from connection, learning and support

Be part of a supportive, ambitious and enterprising CAS team that works together to create positive change

- Work collaboratively with colleagues, bringing energy, curiosity and a solutions-focused approach to challenges as they arise
- Demonstrate CAS values in everyday practice, contributing to high-quality, inclusive and responsive services
- Undertake any other duties as requested by the Community Action Manager and Executive Team, contributing flexibly to the wider success of CAS.

Community Action Suffolk encourages learning and development and therefore, if you don't meet all the above criteria, but feel you have demonstrated experience which relates to the role and the activities outlined, please apply. We will work with the successful candidate to build on their strengths and development areas and ensure a tailored induction and training program is put in place.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

E- Essential / D- Desirable

Assessment methods: I – Interview / P- Presentation / AP- Application Form / T- Test

Knowledge, Experience and Skill	E/D	Assessment method
• Excellent communication and presentation skills	E	AP, P, I
• Proven track record in developing, engaging, and maintaining good collaborative working relationships both internally and externally, with a diverse range of people and communities	E	AP, I
• Excellent organisational and prioritisation skills and time management abilities	E	AP, P, I
• Good understanding of VCFSE sector in Suffolk and in particular the challenges diverse-led and rural organisations and groups face	D	AP, P, I
• Ability to assess community needs and promote community cohesion	E	AP,P,I
• Practical experience of community engagement	D	AP, I
• Demonstratable knowledge of equality, diversity and inclusion and a good understanding The Equality Act 2010	E	AP, I
• Experience of delivering training and ability to engage learners at different levels	D	AP, I
• The ability to consider communication styles and accessibility needs, when working with different groups and organisations	E	AP, P, I
• Proven track record in securing funding from a range of sources, including through earned income and sales	D	AP, I
• Skilled in handling data and ability to analyse and interpret to identify key issues, including reading financial information	D	AP, I
• Experience of setting and working to targets within an outcomes framework	D	AP, P, I
• Excellent working knowledge of modern IT and software programmes	E	AP, I
• A willingness to learn and an appetite for professional development	E	AP, I
Attributes • A commitment to CAS, our values and an understanding of our services	E	AP, I
• A commitment to tackling inequalities, promoting diversity and inclusion across all services	E	AP
• Excellent team player with a positive attitude, flexible and a can-do attitude to “muck in” where required	E	AP
• A collaborative and solution-based approach to solving problems.	E	AP, I
• Ability to self-manage, organise, balance, and deliver against a range of competing priorities	E	AP, I
• Frequent travel around the county and so an ability to travel within Suffolk or further afield as necessary	E	AP



Apply Now

How to Apply

To apply you will need to complete our application form by:

Closing date for applications: 12.00pm Wednesday 19th August 2026

Interviews will be held during the week beginning 31st August 2026

For further information on the job role, please contact
patsy.johnson@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk

You can find a link to the application form via our vacancies page on our website: <https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/about-cas/vacancies/>

As part of your application you will be asked to:

- Tell us why the position appeals to you, and how your skills and experience demonstrate your suitability for the role.
- Provide full details of your education and employment history including dates
- Include how you have demonstrated the CAS values of: Person Centred, Collaborative, Trusted, Responsive and Enabling within your supporting statement
- Provide details of two referees. One of your referees should be your current or most recent employer. All posts are subject to satisfactory references as detailed in the selection process section below.

Your completed application form should be sent to

jessica.glen@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk or posted to Community Action Suffolk, Brightspace, 160 Hadleigh Road, Ipswich, IP2 0HH. Please mark your application for the attention of Jessica Glen.

When submitting an application please state where you saw the post advertised.

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to completing our Application Form

CAS aims to ensure that comparison between applicants for posts is thorough, fair and in line with our Equal Opportunities Policy. It is therefore essential that you complete the application form fully as it will be used to assess whether or not you are shortlisted for an interview.

Please ensure you fully read the Job Description and Person Specification for the role before completing the application form.

The application form is in two sections and section A and the Equal Opportunities Form will be separated from the application before being given to the recruitment panel for shortlisting.

Your application will be assessed against the responses you provide in section B. Please ensure you relate your answers on your application to the requirements set out in the person specification and where possible provide examples. Please address each point in sufficient detail as incomplete sections may impact on the likelihood of your application being shortlisted.

Please do not send us a CV as part of your application or to apply for the role. We will only consider candidates who have completed the application form. If there is insufficient space on the application form, you may attach supplementary sheets but please include your name and the position you are applying for.



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Benefits of working for CAS

Our people are passionate about what we do and the difference it makes to the communities we work in and the people that live in Suffolk. Working in the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector has never been more interesting, offering talented people the opportunity to innovate, use their skills and expertise to make a difference.

We recognise that our people are central to what we do and the services we provide. We are committed to creating positive and fulfilling roles and providing environments where people flourish, develop and have the opportunity to make a real difference in delivering good quality services.

The benefits we offer to colleagues to support them in delivering their crucial role includes the following:

- ✓ Blended working where role allows
- ✓ Flexible working options to support work/life balance
- ✓ 33 days increasing to a maximum 36 (FTE) annual holiday which includes an allowance for bank holidays
- ✓ Up to 4% matched pension contribution
- ✓ 2 days pro rata volunteering days to support volunteering in Suffolk
- ✓ Staff Discounts Scheme for a range of retailers including; shopping, holidays, insurance, eating out and health and leisure activities
- ✓ Company Sick Pay Scheme
- ✓ Continued Professional Development for job related development
- ✓ Family Friendly policies and practices
- ✓ Tailored induction



Selection Process

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted and offered an interview date and time. Candidates will be notified of the method of interview. If the interview is face to face you will be notified of the location the interviews will be held and provided with directions. All interviews will be confirmed via email once agreed.

As part of the interviews candidates will be required to take part in a discussion or presentation about our CAS values. The format for this discussion will be confirmed when the interview date and time is accepted.

Referees

Always ask your referees permission before giving their contact details for your application. One of your referees should be your current or most recent employer/line manager, academic tutor or a volunteer manager if applicable. Please do not give details of family and friends.

Referees will only be contacted after an offer has been made and accepted. We will confirm with you before we approach your referees.

Accessibility and Adjustments

We are committed to providing reasonable adjustments throughout our recruitment process and we will always endeavour to be as accommodating as possible.

If you require a different format of the application form, such as large print, or you would like to discuss any specific requirements, please get in touch with us at louise.bradshaw@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk or call 01473 345400 and ask to speak to a member of the HR Team.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

CAS is an equal opportunities employer which welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Everyone can expect to be treated with consideration and respect and CAS is committed to providing an inclusive environment for all. Good working relationships enable the full potential, creativity and productivity of each individual, in an atmosphere where everyone can learn and work without prejudice, discrimination or harassment.

The application pack contains an Equal Opportunities Form which we encourage you to complete and return with your application. Please be assured that this form is not part of the application process and it is removed prior to the shortlisting process.

The data we obtain from these forms is analysed to support our commitment to equal opportunities and the information will be used to help guide our recruitment strategies.

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Why work for Community Action Suffolk?

Here's what our staff have to say...

"Every day is different at CAS because the services we offer are so varied, and you never quite know what ideas or challenges our customers will want support with. This provides lots of opportunities to connect and collaborate with colleagues across the organisation, who may be working with the same people, or have relevant knowledge or skills to support you with your work. Working in this way is a great way to get to know colleagues across different teams and to share ideas and experiences, and staff are very supportive of each other.

As an organisation, CAS enables staff to have an effective work life balance, through blended working policies, and flexibility with working hours when needed. Due to this, I have been able to move from part time working into a full time role that fits around my commitments as a parent.

In the 6 years I have worked for CAS I have been able to progress through variety of roles. Having started at CAS as the receptionist, this gave me a great understanding of the wide range of services and support that CAS provides. I have been given the opportunity to undertake training, learn new skills and work on a variety of projects over the years and now co-ordinate 2 projects within the organisation."

"CAS show they care for their employees. As I had dedicated 10 years to customer service at XXXX, I was nervous about moving on to a new career, but CAS has definitely proved most beneficial for me and my family. My health and wellbeing have improved massively and the work environment, including all the staff, have been most welcoming – it's a joy to be at work."

"Having worked in the corporate world for over 30 years. Working for CAS has been like a breath of fresh air. I received a very warm and professional induction. The staff are extremely helpful, friendly and nothing is too much trouble. A thoroughly enjoyable place to work."

"When I started working at Community Action Suffolk, I was taking a leap from part time work around my young family to working full time. They assured me that flexible working was in place and now, nearly two years on, I wish I had joined sooner! CAS ensures there doesn't have to be a choice between being a parent, or working, by allowing for there to be a healthy work-life balance. The team is amazing, everyone supports each other, it really is a joy to come to work and see colleagues. Everyone is valued and, as an organisation, the staff really are kept at the heart of the work they do. Training opportunities, personal CPD and staff progression are encouraged, which allows for personal and professional growth at your own pace. The projects that CAS run are really varied, but everyone supports each other and genuinely takes interest in what is going on within the community. I feel fortunate to be part of a fantastic organisation who I am proud to represent and work for."

I recently moved from working in the intense investments industry to Community Action Suffolk. I have really appreciated the change in working environment, and the care CAS gives their employees. From my first day, I felt welcomed and part of the team. The inductions provided to me, gave me an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of how CAS operates, and everything that it has to offer. Being a Support Services Assistant and part of the Reception team, I enjoy meeting such a variety of people and everyday has something new to offer. I would describe CAS as a very open, welcoming and friendly place to work.

"Well, what can I say! I've been here since 1998 and I can honestly say I fell into my first job here purely by chance. I didn't know anything about the charity or what it did at that point, and I applied on a whim! I liked the sound of it. I started as a part time secretary and librarian (for the smallest library ever!). Since then, I have undertaken various roles at CAS and within one of its predecessor organisations, varying from working with Village Halls, being the Rural Transport Partnership Officer, Quality Standards Officer, Reception and Buildings Supervisor and Community Oil Buying Co-ordinator! Pretty varied roles I'm sure you'll agree. Currently my work is around undertaking Research and supporting our Network Membership scheme. The one consistent thing throughout my time with CAS is the lovely people you get to meet and work with. That is the overriding comment made when people join or leave the organisation, that everyone here is lovely and that we all work as a team. Though many of us work in different areas, on different projects and at different times of the day and week and from different locations, there is always someone around who you can bounce ideas around with, ask for help from or simply have a chat with."

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Get in touch



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website

www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk

Call us on *01473 345400*

or email

info@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk



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