



Policy Officer: Application Pack

Thank you for your interest in our Policy Officer Vacancy.

The application pack that follows contains:

- Information about BCT
- Job description
- Person specification
- Conditions of service

Closing date: 23rd January

Interviews: 3rd February

To apply: please send your CV and a covering letter highlighting how you meet the requirements of the person specification to: info@bct.wales

For an informal discussion about the job, please contact Chris Johnes, Chief Executive BCT on 07736 158817.

About us

Building Communities Trust (BCT) aims to assist and resource people and communities affected by poverty to develop solutions to local issues, improve wellbeing, raise aspirations, build social capital and promote social inclusion and increase resilience to challenging circumstances.

BCT has been delivering [Invest Local](#) – a major community building programme funded with a 10-year expendable endowment fund from the National Lottery Community Fund – since December 2015. The programme provides long-term funding of £1 million to each of 13 different communities across Wales to support people living in those communities to develop initiatives which strengthen their communities and address the impacts of poverty.

BCT has also played a growing role in supporting local community groups in getting their voices heard in wider policy debates and arguing for stronger recognition of the value that their work brings to local residents. We have lobbied at both central and local government level, held a major conference in late 2017 and subsequently published a manifesto – [Our Local Economies](#).

During 2019 we conducted a large-scale consultation exercise with community groups in all parts of Wales which led to the production of [Strong Welsh Communities](#) and subsequently a manifesto for the 2021 Senedd elections calling for stronger rights, recognition and resourcing for communities.

We have also undertaken research on the work of [community organisations in response to Covid](#) and are involved in a number of networks promoting stronger cross sectoral relationships.

We currently represent the [Community Sector Network](#) on the [Third Sector Partnership Council](#) and are currently working with a range of other organisations to set up a [Community Movement for Wales](#) to give community groups and organisations a stronger voice.

Our Values

BCT supports communities to help determine their own future. We are enablers and supporters who believe in the capacity of people to take the right decisions to create better futures for themselves. Our staff are all strongly committed to these principles and it will be one of the guiding principles of how this post holder undertakes their work.

The BCT team is small and new and flat, with no extended hierarchy. This gives all team members the opportunity and the responsibility for being part of shaping the organisational culture and helping to ensure it is one that is fit to meet our goals and provides a fruitful working environment for everyone. Our size means that all our staff need to work flexibly and cooperatively, doing what's needed, be willing to make suggestions and think of new ways of doing things, and be willing to learn new skills as they go on.

The majority of team members were appointed in September 2015 and have been together since then.

Job Description: Policy Officer

The overall purpose of the post is to advocate for policies which help achieve BCT's wider charitable aims and especially:

- *The promotion of social inclusion*
- *The prevention or relief of poverty*
- *The promotion of urban or rural regeneration of areas of social and economic deprivation*
- *The development of the capacity and skills of members of socially and economically or socially disadvantaged communities in such a way that they are better able to identify and help meet their own needs and to participate more fully in society*
- *The provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure pursuits in the interests of social welfare in order to improve the conditions of life of members of the public*

In particular the post-holder should be utilising the evidence from community-based organisations and enabling the perspectives of local residents to make the case for appropriate policies and practice.

Relationships

- a) Build and maintain relationships with relevant policy makers at political and official level to pursue BCT's agenda.
- b) Develop relationships with relevant third sector and community-based organisations to allow us to pursue advocacy work in partnership.
- c) Build effective relationships with Invest Local Officers and community-based Invest Local steering groups to gain an understanding of the policy priorities emerging from their work, and support steering group members to play a role in advocacy work.

Policy Development

- a) Develop policy positions to support the development of sustainable community-based work. This will specifically include work on a Community Wealth Fund for Wales.

- b) Develop BCT priorities and gain commitment to them across the three main political parties in Wales.
- c) Consult and engage with relevant stakeholders to secure wider legitimacy for BCT policy asks; this will include community level, regional and national work.
- d) Working with colleagues, enthuse residents from Invest Local areas to engage with policy development, demonstrating the difference it could make to the work they are trying to do where possible.

Communication

- a) Promote BCT's policy agenda in relevant fora and networks.
- b) Provide regular written communication that is understandable to our key audiences in order to promote of our policy agenda across a range of media.
- c) Work with the BCT Communications Officer to ensure our voice is heard by relevant audiences and that our work is fed back to community practitioners.

This is not an exhaustive list. The post-holder may be asked to carry out additional duties from time to time or, as required, by the developing needs of the service or organisation.

Person Specification: Policy Officer

The successful candidate will demonstrate substantial and demonstrable experience, knowledge, skills and attributes in the following areas:

Skills and Experience

- At least 3 years' experience of policy development and advocacy work in Wales.
- Proven experience of brokering and maintaining relationships with other third sector groups and policy makers, including those with diverse interests and across party lines.
- A strong understanding of political decision making in Wales.
- Experience of monitoring and reporting on Assembly business to the wider team.
- Experience of using research evidence to underpin advocacy work.
- Experience of commissioning research.
- An understanding of community-based asset development and of the importance of ensuring that community voices are clearly heard.
- Good facilitation skills.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to present complex ideas in a clear fashion to varied audiences – from communities to senior policy makers.
- Good planning, record keeping and organisational skills.
- Willingness to work flexibly as part of a small team.
- The ability to speak Welsh is desirable for this post.
- A full driving licence is desirable for this post.

Personal Attributes / Attitude:

- Professional approach to act as an advocate for BCT and its work.
- Commitment to working to and upholding BCT's values, ethos and culture.
- Ability to stay calm under pressure and keep 'big picture' focus.
- The ability to work with and see people and situations in a positive way.
- A willingness to work flexibly and respond positively to change.
- Values diversity and shows commitment to understanding the thoughts and opinions of others.
- A 'can-do' attitude and interest in personal growth and development.

Conditions of Service

Responsible to:	Chief Executive of BCT
Salary:	£ 33,950 per annum FTE
Contract Length:	This post is a three-year, fixed term contract (from date of commencement)
Probationary period:	The appointment is subject to successful completion of a six-month probationary period.
Base:	Flexible though some travel to both Cardiff and Invest Local communities will be required (with expenses paid).
Annual leave:	25 days plus bank holidays pro rata.
Travel:	Use of public transport is preferred; when this is not convenient staff may use their own vehicles or use the car rental system. Mileage rates are paid in accordance with recommended Inland Revenue rates.
Hours:	The working week is between 25 and 37 hours and will be subject to negotiation with the successful applicant. You will be expected to work those in a way that ensures the requirements of the post are fully met and we will operate entirely flexible working hours to help make this happen.
Superannuation:	The post will attract a maximum contribution of 10% of annual salary to an approved pension scheme of your choice.