DIGITAL SUPPORT WORKER SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Background:

OWLS provides a range of preventative health activities for older people living in their own homes in Headingley, Burley, Hyde Park and parts of Kirkstall. Established in 2011, OWLS has its own identity but is part of Bramley Elderly Action (BEA), a registered charity which for 26 years has helped improve the lives of older people living in Bramley and other parts of West Leeds. OWLS has just relocated to North Lane in Headingley. For more information about OWLS and BEA please visit our websites.

OWLS is looking to recruit a Digital Support Worker. The post is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund as part of the Building Communities & Companionship (B C&C) project. The post will require someone with a flexible open mind and with the relevant skills / attributes / aptitude and experience of delivering and developing projects in the third sector. A job description and person specification is available at http://bramleyea.org.uk/join-bea/job-vacancies/ CV's not accepted. Please return the completed application form, along with a covering letter explaining why you feel you would be the right candidate for this post.

The closing date for applications is 12 noon, Tuesday 1st December 2020. Please submit an application form evidencing how you meet the requirements of the post by email to:hrbramleyea@gmail.com (cc) lee.owls@gmail.com Interviews will be held on Friday 4th December. Times and arrangements for the interview format will be advised as soon as possible after closing date, but candidates should expect to undertake the interview via Zoom and will be sent an invitation.

The Project

We have seen how helping others can lead to helping yourself. The B C&C project 'sells 'this approach to isolated / lonely elders living in the Headingley, Burley, Hyde Park, Little Woodhouse and Kirkstall localities. The Community Builder supports elders to help their community by volunteering for or joining local organisations, including OWLS. In doing so, we plan for people to help themselves by increasing their companionship. The project seeks to strengthen the community whilst reducing social isolation and loneliness amongst local older people.

As you can imagine, the pandemic has changed how we work. Therefore, we have found alternative ways to engage with those most isolated and much of that is over the telephone and online.

Older people have been learning how to Zoom, joining activities and digital champion training, as well as starting to share those skills with other older people. We are also investing in ten tablets with internet sims to enable more to learn how to access online activities. The challenge now is how we do our best supporting older people wanting to go digital.

In line with the objective, we are ambitiously planning to support older people to run Zoom sessions and encourage to support others online, as mentioned in the job description.

Being able to communicate using age friendly language is vital for this role, as many have not used equipment such as tablets previously and can easily be overwhelmed by the tech language used.

Many of those who are already involved are finding using the internet a great way to see family and friends when they are unable to in person, some are making new friends too. For some this is a lifeline and with the help of a digital support worker, we aim to help more socially isolated older people.

The digital support worker will work 16 hours Monday-Fridays, days to be agreed. They will be expected to work with members of our target group, frailer, socially isolated elders.

We are very keen to 'test and learn' from the service and the post-holder will be expected to play a significant role in this. The Digital Support Worker will undertake the necessary information gathering as well as recording, evaluation and reporting of the project. In line with person-centred support, the worker would ensure that the older person is fully involved in the process of designing and implementing an action plan. It is important that the post-holder is strong in all aspects of the post.

The post holder will be line managed by the Community Builder post. The project is supported by the organisations Leadership Team (Services and Development Manager and CEO). The project will also receive support from OWLS's Operations Team (Team Leader, Outreach Worker, Activities Assistant, Volunteer Project Worker, Reception and Admin Worker) e.g. referrals. We are hoping that the post-holder will complement our team's knowledge and expertise by helping us to deliver, learn and develop.