

Support Coordinator

We have a vacancy in our team for a full-time Support Coordinator based in Scarborough. The role is community based and there is also the opportunity to work from home when appropriate.

What is our approach

FirstLight Trust was set up in Scarborough in 2012, to support veterans from the armed forces and emergency services; we break down barriers and work within their communities to ensure veterans and their families get the support they need.

Our aim is to grow a network of hubs, with facilities for support, counselling, activities and workshops, which act as contact points and resource centres. We currently have hubs in Scarborough, Gosport, Lancaster, Hereford, Hawick and an active outreach programme in Redcar.

At FirstLight Trust we place an individual's needs at the heart of all we do (needs not neediness); we identify the appropriate support, source it, and help put it in place; we are most definitely NOT a signposting agency!

The support is as varied as the individuals who access the charity. We work with statutory services and the third sector, but if what is required is not in place, we will fund identified need such as psychological interventions. Whilst lockdown has restricted our activities programme it has made us refocus and develop what we do. Veterans have continued to access Stepney Hill Gardens, Art Therapy, Walks, Model Making for example and there is plenty of scope for developing activities further in the months ahead.

What issues do some of the veterans we support face?

Whilst many veterans experience no problems adjusting to civilian life there are a number who do. Life can be extremely difficult for some as they face the practical challenge of finding new employment, and housing, as well as coping with the psychological effects of service such as flashbacks, nightmares and feelings of guilt, anxiety, anger and frustration. These symptoms are also similar for many of those of the Emergency Services who are increasingly on the 'front line' of traumatic incidents, bombings, fires, fatal car accidents, physical danger, A&E. Experience of traumatic incidents can, in some cases lead to hyper-vigilance, fear of safety, sleep disorder/nightmares, strong startle reflex, reliving past events triggered by sights, sounds and smells, fear of crowds. The on cost to the veterans and their families of this behaviour is heavy and can take time to manifest. At FirstLight we are very clear that support for individuals takes as long as it takes. Sometimes it is simple, sometimes complex, and of course, it is not always successful. However the hubs, based on the high streets provide an easy access point for those who find it difficult to pick up the phone or use IT. Trust is difficult to build over the web, and consistency of approach, and always 'showing up' is vital.

What will the role involve?

You will work with our Occupational Therapist to identify, develop, coordinate and deliver the support veterans require. This will involve working with other services and creating partnership working to ensure all agencies work for the benefit of veterans' needs. You will support veterans to have a renewed sense of purpose, open up new horizons and change the way they feel about their future.

You will be supporting veterans (Armed Forces and Emergency Services) of all ages from all services in all aspects of their lives; some will just require housing and debt support, others might need to find new ways of coping and reconnecting with their communities, from the social to the

practical. Needs range from housing, benefits, debt and money management, employment, education and training, to supporting families, addictions and medical and psychological needs.

Day to day you will undertake 1-1 support meetings with clients, to help identify the kind of support veterans need and may not be accessing. You will assist in actioning appropriate support plans in conjunction with the Occupational Therapist as well as sourcing and delivering support and activities appropriate to leading a purposeful life. Providing support to veterans to enable them to access specialist and statutory services may be through arranging access to these services, preparing information with them which they need for an appointment or accompanying them to build their confidence to then access services and support independently going forwards.

You will also be involved in supporting the delivery of our activities and volunteering programme, which could include barista skills, cooking, gardening, football, walking groups. Part of your role will be ensuring veterans feel supported to access these activities (in both virtual and real time).

What type of person are we looking for?

We are looking for someone who would like a role in which they can make a real difference to the lives of the people they support. You will have experience of supporting people previously and have an understanding of veterans' needs. You will be able to build effective networks and partnerships within the community. An excellent communicator who can quickly build effective relationships and is confident in having challenging conversations when needed. The role is varied and includes some challenges; therefore, the ability to think on your feet, be solutions focussed and be able to multi-task and prioritise is essential. Being able to drive is essential, as you will be working across the local area.

Finally, you will have personality, common sense, a good sense of humour and the ability to make things happen; an individual who empathises and can have fun, balanced against being mindful of boundaries.

What does working for FirstLight Trust feel like?

We want to shape a great place to work whilst making a difference. We are a family where people work together; there are no secrets or hierarchy, everyone's role is to support each other. This does not mean we don't have boundaries in place; we do, but we value trust and respect ahead of command and control. All our people are trusted with the freedom to show their integrity and initiative to ensure the people they support are supported in the correct way that enables them to lead an independent purposeful life.

What can we offer?

- A great place to work alongside dedicated support workers.
- A real opportunity to influence decisions and be part of developing and shaping a much-needed service
- An extra days' holiday with pay on your birthday
- Appreciation and recognition
- Trust and support in times of difficulty
- Flexible working

If you are interested please submit your CV alongside a covering letter explaining why you feel you are the person for the role. If you would like an informal discussion about the role please contact Louise Hanks on 07808 294782.