



BLATCHINGTON COURT TRUST

Engagement Officer

Up to 35 hours per week full-time | Hove Office & throughout Sussex | Up to £35,000

Are you passionate about making a real difference in the lives of young adults who have vision impairments?

We are seeking an **Engagement Officer** to join our team and play a vital role in supporting our young adult clients across Sussex. This newly created position will be central to our commitment to ensuring that every young adult with a vision impairment has access to the information, resources, and community they need to thrive.

What You'll Do:

- Be the first point of contact for our young adult clients aged 16-30 offering emotional and practical support.
- Organise social events, peer support groups, and information workshops.
- Signpost to relevant services, benefits, and financial assistance.
- Manage online resources and community spaces to share information and increase connection.
- Advocate for young vision impaired adults and contribute to reports that shape policy and service improvements.

If you have experience in young adult/ youth support, advocacy, or working within the vision impairment community, we'd love to hear from you. We encourage applicants with lived experience of vision impairment.

To apply, please send your CV and a covering letter explaining how you meet the person specification to sophie@blatchingtoncourt.org.uk. Please note that applications sent without a cover letter will not be considered.

Application Deadline: 5pm on 20 June 2025

Shortlisting: 23 June 2025

Interview dates: Monday 30 June 2025/ Tuesday 1 July 2025. You will be asked to prepare a short presentation on a topic to be shared if shortlisted.

Reports to: Sophie Heiser – Services Manager

Job Purpose

The Over 16 Support Co-Ordinator will play a vital role in supporting vision-impaired young people aged 16 and over as they navigate their progress into adulthood. This includes building their independence, accessing education and employment, developing social networks, and ensuring their voices are heard. You will be an advocate, mentor, and connector, providing one-to-one and group-based support while working collaboratively with external agencies and the wider BCT team.

Key Responsibilities

Independence Support

- Provide tailored, practical support to help young people build skills in daily living, travel, communication, and self-management.
- Conduct individual needs assessments and collaboratively create action plans with clear goals and review points.
- Build strong working relationships with Local Authority Visual Rehabilitation Services (VRS) to support referrals and service integration.
- Supporting with digital literacy and use of assistive technology for independent living.

Employment, Education, and Benefits Signposting

- Support young people to explore pathways into employment, apprenticeships, further education, or volunteering.
- Signpost to accurate and up-to-date information about Access to Work, Disability Living Allowance (DLA), PIP, and other relevant benefits.

Housing and Supported Living

- Signpost to specialist housing charities, supported accommodation services, and local authority housing teams.
- Help clients navigate application processes, including forms, eligibility checks, and preparing for interviews or assessments.

Social Engagement

- Plan, promote, and deliver inclusive social activities across Sussex that encourage peer bonding and reduce isolation.
- Organise regular drop-in sessions (2 hours weekly), providing informal advice and emotional support over a chat and cuppa.
- Collaborate with community groups to co-host or participate in events that broaden young people's experiences.

Youth Forum Development

- Lead the development of a "Speaking Up Group" – a youth-led forum focused on advocacy, self-expression, and peer support.

- Facilitate workshops on confidence-building, rights awareness, and self-advocacy skills.
- Ensure outcomes and ideas generated by the group are shared with BCT trustees and used to inform service development.

Alumni Network and Transition Support

- Maintain regular contact with clients as they approach their 30th birthday, supporting their transition to adult services and other VI organisations.
- Build and maintain an alumni network to support continued connection, mentorship, and community.
- Encourage alumni to become mentors, event speakers, or supporters of younger service users.

Partnership Development

- Establish and maintain working relationships with local authorities, charities, health and education providers, and advocacy organisations.
- Attend external meetings and events to raise awareness of BCT's work and identify collaboration opportunities.

Monitoring and Reporting

- Keep accurate, confidential records of all client contact and service delivery.
- Collect and analyse feedback from young people and families to inform service improvements.
- Prepare regular reports for the Services Manager and trustees on project impact and outcomes.

Risk Management

- Undertake risk assessments for all group activities, travel, and one-to-one support sessions.
- Ensure all safeguarding procedures are followed, escalating concerns as appropriate.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

- Experience working with young people, especially those with additional needs, disabilities, or long-term health conditions.
- Strong understanding of issues facing vision-impaired individuals, including barriers to independence, access, and opportunity.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, adaptable to different audiences and communication needs.
- Demonstrated ability to plan, organise, and deliver projects or events.
- High level of self-motivation and ability to manage a varied workload with minimal supervision.
- Proficient in using Microsoft Office, databases, and social media for communication and outreach.
- Ability to work empathetically and build trust with young people from diverse backgrounds
- Experience in safeguarding and managing disclosures, equality, and inclusivity in all aspects of work.

Desirable Criteria

- Previous experience in the charity or voluntary sector.
- Understanding of assistive technology for vision-impaired individuals (e.g., screen readers, magnification software).
- Experience facilitating forums, focus groups, or youth advisory panels.
- Lived experience of visual impairment or supporting someone with a vision impairment.
- Knowledge of local services and support networks in Sussex.

Additional Information

Some evening and weekend work will be required. The role will be based at the BCT office in Hove but there will be regular travel/ work in East and West Sussex.

A valid enhanced DBS check is essential.

Full training and ongoing professional development will be provided.

We welcome applications from people with disabilities and are committed to supporting reasonable adjustments.