



CUMBRIA SUSTAINABILITY NETWORK COORDINATOR

Job Description

EMPLOYER: Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAFS) on behalf of the Cumbria sustainability network.

LOCATION: Eden Rural Foyer, Old London Road, Penrith, CA11 8ET with travel to meetings and events in other Cumbria locations, when Covid-19 restrictions allow. Homeworking beyond Covid-19 may be possible by agreement.

REPORTS TO: Zero Carbon Cumbria Project Manager.

HOURS: 30 hours a week (4 days). Flexible working hours.

SALARY RANGE: £23,000 - £27,000 per annum full-time equivalent (£18,400 - £21,600 for the 30-hour week), depending on skills and experience.

DURATION: Fixed-term contract from April 2021 to end Dec 2025 (4.75 years).

ABOUT CAFS:

Our vision is a zero-carbon Cumbria and we strive to bring about a better way of life, in balance with our environment.

Our mission is to empower and enable people, communities and businesses to live and work more sustainably by sharing our knowledge, practice, skills, networks and practical experience. We manage and deliver events, advice, training and practical projects across the county as well as providing specialist consultancy services to enable individuals, communities, businesses and local authorities to drive a shift towards a zero-carbon Cumbria.

Now in our 23rd year, CAfS is an award-winning charity with a team of more than twenty highly skilled staff, working with a pool of specialist contractors and volunteers to deliver around 20 low-carbon projects each year. CAfS showcases low-carbon living, energy-efficiency improvements, renewable technology and reduced use of fossil fuels, both on a domestic scale and in the community. It is the first point of reference in the county for information on sustainability. CAfS is a dynamic, proactive and responsive organisation delivering projects that drive real change towards a low-carbon future.

THE CUMBRIA SUSTAINABILITY NETWORK (CSN):

The Cumbria Sustainability Network was established as an informal initiative in 2008 by Sustainable Brampton and a number of other groups including Killington & District Sustainable Energy Trust, Sustainable Energy Network Staveley, Cumbria Action for Sustainability, Riversmeet (Cockermouth), Sustainable Carlisle, Towards a Community Transition and Ambleside Climate Change Forum. The groups involved have a wealth of knowledge and experience of a wide range of environmental issues and have a particular interest in encouraging individual and organisational behaviour change to help achieve zero-carbon emissions goals and other environmental objectives.

BACKGROUND TO THE ZERO CARBON CUMBRIA PROJECT:

Cumbria Action for Sustainability is co-chair of the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership (ZCCP), which involves more than 70 organisations spanning the public, private and third sectors, with the aim of delivering a coordinated partnership emission reduction programme to bring about a zero-carbon Cumbria by 2037.

CAfS has been awarded £2.5 million from the National Lottery's Climate Action Fund, on behalf of the ZCCP, for a five-year Zero Carbon Cumbria project. Eleven of the organisations in the ZCCP will be involved in directly delivering community projects, as part of the lottery funded project.

The lottery funded project will tackle some of the main sources of carbon emissions in Cumbria, with a particular focus on food, energy generation and the goods we buy. People who live, work and study in Cumbria will be able to take advantage of a whole range of opportunities to cut their own carbon footprint and that of their communities, playing their part in global actions to stop climate change. The community projects have been devised by community organisations and chosen because of their wide benefits to local people.

One of these community projects is focused on supporting the development of the Cumbria Sustainability Network, offering county-wide support to community

groups, many of which are volunteer led, facilitating knowledge sharing and peer mentoring and ensuring that there is a real community influence both in the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership and more widely in any decision-making that impacts emissions throughout the county. Community groups will be delivering projects, events and training across the county, and championing community-led emission reduction. There will also be a £100K grant fund to help groups take climate action.

More information about the project is available here: <https://cafs.org.uk/our-projects/zero-carboncumbria-programme/>.

MAIN PURPOSES OF ROLE:

- To support the development of the Cumbria Sustainability Network (CSN) as directed by its members.
- To act as an advocate on behalf of the network and ensure that there is both a strong community voice and real influence in all aspects of the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership.
- To ensure that community groups benefit from a range of advice and support, enabling them to take a lead in tackling climate change.
- To manage a £100K grant fund to help fund community action on climate change.

KEY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND MAIN TASKS:

Increasing community influence, involving community groups and ensuring that community voices are both heard and acted on.

- Act as a champion for the skills, knowledge and abilities of community groups.
- Support the development of the Cumbria Sustainability Network (CSN) as directed by its members. This will involve working with them to prepare and implement an annual workplan covering tasks such as: attracting new members, maximising media impact and collective influence, undertaking research, coordinating funding proposals, helping to coordinate a web presence and/or helping the CSN to become more formally established.
- Provide secretarial support for CSN activities such as organising meetings, circulating agendas, preparing minutes, etc.
- Ensure CSN members are kept informed of relevant projects, policies and decisions in the county that affect carbon emissions.

- Represent and act as an advocate for the CSN at Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership and other meetings as requested.
- Work with the ZCC Local Authority Climate Coordinator to transform relationships with local authorities and other organisations who can have an impact on Cumbria’s emissions to ensure communities are equal partners in policy development and decision-making.
- Ensure that community sustainability groups are involved in and influence all aspects of the Zero Carbon Cumbria Programme. This will involve:
 - Ensuring that there are opportunities for community groups to be involved in the main partnership meetings.
 - Identifying suitable individuals from community groups who could act as community representatives on various groups and topics.
 - Working closely with the ZCC Events and Training Coordinator to help organise a programme of events and training across the county delivered jointly by ZCCP and local sustainability groups.
 - Using knowledge of community groups, their skills and abilities to identify opportunities for these groups to be involved in other aspects of the ZCC programme such as citizens’ juries and the county-wide citizens’ assembly.
 - Working closely with the CSN to ensure that members inform and influence the support provided to community groups through the lottery funded project.

Advice and support for community groups

- Provide effective advice and support to community groups across the county covering topics such as:
 - Access to training
 - Signposting to funding
 - Running events
 - Youth engagement
 - Influencing organisations that have a significant impact on emissions
 - Communications, especially with new audiences and hard to reach groups
 - Signposting to exemplar projects from within Cumbria or other parts of the UK, which could be replicated in their area of interest
- Promote and manage a £100K central grant funding pot, to help grassroots community sustainability groups take effective climate action as follows:

- Ensure the objectives and priorities of the Cumbria Sustainability Network are reflected in the allocation of this funding
 - Help groups to apply for funding for training, learning resources, events and local activities
 - Manage the grant making process
 - Provide feedback to applicants
 - Provide ongoing support to successful applicants
 - Monitor and report progress
- Identify and facilitate support for two innovative and exemplar community energy projects and use an additional central grant pot of £60K to support the development and implementation of these projects.
 - Help community groups build their capacity for monitoring and evaluation.

Sharing learnings, knowledge and best practice

- Map the knowledge, skills and experience of community sustainability groups across Cumbria.
- Ensure that there are effective mechanisms in place for sharing and promoting expertise widely, whilst recognising that many groups are made up of volunteers.
- Facilitate the two-way sharing of learnings and best practice between community groups based in Cumbria and other parts of the UK.
- Facilitate partner and community networking and use a central fund to cover transport, accommodation and time costs.

Monitoring and reporting

- Help community groups monitor and evaluate their activities.
- Monitor progress and submit quarterly reports to the Zero Carbon Cumbria Project Manager.
- Collate activity, outputs and outcomes data to feed into the Zero Carbon Cumbria monitoring and evaluation framework.

Other

- Perform other duties that may be required from time to time.

Person Specification

Essential skills, knowledge and experience:

- Experience of working with or for a range of community groups.
- Experience of enabling peer support, peer learning and skills sharing across a network.
- Experienced at providing high quality advice and support services.
- Ability to develop strong and effective working relations with stakeholders and partner organisations.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Ability to act as an advocate on behalf of others.
- Excellent influencing skills.
- Knowledge of climate science and actions that community groups can take.
- Knowledge of the challenges communities face in ensuring that their voice is heard.
- Highly organised with the ability to handle a wide range of tasks and prioritise these effectively.
- Ability to use initiative, be innovative and make effective decisions.
- Ability to use a comprehensive range of software (Microsoft Outlook, Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Zoom and MS Teams).
- Understanding of and commitment to the aims, values and objectives of community sustainability groups such as CAfS.

Desirable skills, knowledge and experience:

The following are **desirable** but not essential:

- Event organisation skills.
- Knowledge of community energy.
- Experience of managing and/or administering grant funding.
- Experience of developing and delivering training.
- Experience of skills mapping.
- Experience of coordinating and facilitating online events and meetings.
- Project management skills.
- Knowledge of legal structures for community organisations.
- Knowledge of funding available to grassroots community sustainability groups.
- Knowledge of exemplar community climate change projects.

- Understanding of local authority procedures and policies and the ways in which community groups can engage with and influence such organisations.

If you would like more information about the role, please contact John Forbes, Zero Carbon Cumbria Project Manager, john.forbes@cafs.org.uk.