

Southwark Law Centre

Job Description

Job Title: Neighbourhood Planning Caseworker

Salary: NJC scale SP 31-42 £30,693- £40,236 pro rata

Hours: 21 per week

Line managed by : Law Centre Director

Line manages : trainees, volunteers

MAIN OBJECTIVES:

- To support and empower local people from economically and socially disadvantaged communities to be able to influence developments affecting the environment they live in.
- To provide access to support for individuals who have been affected or potentially will be affected by major developments.

PRINCIPAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Training and support

- To provide consultancy support on planning matters for community activists and frontline workers in other community agencies
- To provide training/workshops for the public, voluntary organisations, advice centres and other professionals on planning matters
- To develop training materials and briefing notes aimed at the public
- To review technical planning related documents and provide guidance on these for the public and other agencies
- To provide one to one advocacy support for members of the public affected by major developments to include assisting at planning enquiries and appeals
- To coordinate a panel of pro bono planning experts who can provide specialist support for the public
- To consider possible Judicial Review in public law cases and taking associated action including drafting pre- action letters

Community Engagement

- To develop contacts with stakeholders, communities and individuals, raising awareness of the planning project and the support offered

Policy work

- To assist local residents to draft responses to planning consultations
- To draft responses to consultations around planning issues on behalf of the Law Centre
- To raise issues linked to major redevelopment affecting disadvantaged local residents with the Local Authority, Government departments and other agencies.

Administration

- Maintaining case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, monitoring and reporting
- Drafting training materials , briefings and presentations
- To lead on drafting monitoring reports as required by funders

Professional Development

- To keep up-to-date with relevant changes in legislation and case law
- To attend regular support and supervision and appraisal meetings.
- To keep up-to-date and to meet identified learning and development needs as appropriate, attending a minimum of 16 hours relevant training per year

Team Work and Service Development

- To attend and contribute to staff meetings
- To attend and actively participate in other meetings as required, and to take an active role in the planning and development of the Service.
- To support the Director to raise additional funding for the project
- To support internal communication so that staff, Trustees and volunteers of the Law Centre are aware of the planning issues affecting local residents
- To network and liaise with external agencies as agreed.

General

- To uphold and promote the Aims and Principles of the Law Centre
- To be available to work outside normal office hours on occasion as required and notified in advance.
- To undertake any other duties that are compatible with the functions of the post.

Neighbourhood Planning Caseworker

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential requirements

1. Ability to demonstrate an up to date knowledge of the English planning system
2. Understanding of some of the key impacts of major development on local communities
3. Understanding of how to engage with more disadvantaged members of the community around planning issues
4. Experience of liaising with external stakeholders
5. Experience of interpreting planning documents and giving guidance and advice face-to-face, over the telephone and by email
6. Ability to use online and written resources to research planning law issues
7. Experience of providing training for frontline workers or the public
8. Ability to work under pressure, to prioritise and to meet deadlines
9. Excellent communication skills (written and oral)
10. A commitment to the aims, principles and policies of Southwark Law Centre
11. Ability and willingness to be self-servicing and to use a computerised case management system

Desirable

1. 2 years experience in a professional planning role
2. Experience of community development work
3. Experience of providing planning advice to the public
4. An understanding of the application of the Judicial Review process in public law cases
5. Experience of working with professional volunteers