

Community Places Post of Planner and Head of Engagement Recruitment Pack

September 2026



Recruitment of Planner and Head of Engagement for Community Places

About Us

Community Places empowers individuals and communities to shape their places and services through independent planning advice and community engagement support. We offer free, impartial advice to those in need of planning expertise and guidance. We also support communities, as well as councils and other service providers on planning and engagement initiatives.

Formed in 1984, we are a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. We deliver our services across the region and our office is in Belfast. We are managed by a voluntary Board of Directors elected by our 200+ member organisations.

We are seeking to appoint a Planner and Head of Engagement:

- To promote the aims and values of Community Places by providing quality planning, community planning, place-shaping engagement and other services.
- To contribute to the development and resourcing of the organisation's support services for communities.

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Our Mission

Our mission is to empower communities to build sustainable and thriving places through planning advice and community engagement in spatial and community planning.

Our Values

- **Participation and Inclusion** - All citizens have a right to participate in spatial and community planning and public policymaking processes and we will work to further the inclusion of disadvantaged and marginalised people and communities.
- **Empowerment** - We will assist community groups in developing the capacity to influence spatial and community planning issues that affect them and their communities.
- **Equality and Equity** - We will assist and develop processes and projects which remove barriers to full civic engagement and further equality and equity for all.
- **Reconciliation** - We believe that a more cohesive society will be furthered by communities working together on issues of common interest and will support and assist such work.
- **Partnership** - We will work with community, voluntary and public sector organisations and with funders to provide sustainable, quality services which deliver our mission and objectives.
- **Transparency and Independence** - We work to provide fair and unbiased advice and guidance. Our impartiality encourages openness, fairness and accountability.

Our Work

We have four key areas of expertise:

- **Planning Advice** - Empowering people and communities through free, impartial planning advice.
- **Community Engagement** - Enabling communities to shape places and services through engagement and collaboration.
- **Community Planning** - Supporting Community Planning through collaboration, meaningful engagement and action.
- **Participatory Budgeting** - Promoting people-powered budgeting for inclusive, community-led change.

More information on our work is available on our [website](#).

Post of Planner and Head of Engagement

Job Title	-	Planner and Head of Engagement
Reporting to	-	Chief Executive of Community Places
Responsible for	-	To promote the aims and values of Community Places by providing quality planning, community planning, place-shaping engagement and other services. To contribute to the development and resourcing of the organisation's support services for communities.
Salary and Pension	-	Salary Scale NJC Points 29 to 35 (£39,862 to £46,142 [2025/26]). Employer's pension contribution is 6%. Posts are likely to start at the lower level unless exceptional circumstances.
Holiday Entitlement	-	28 days per annum plus public holidays
Terms	-	Permanent full-time, subject to a probationary period of six months. (Flexible and part-time working is available subject to agreement).
Hours of Work	-	35 hours per week (with occasional evening and weekend work)
Location	-	2 Downshire Place, Belfast, BT2 7JQ

Community Places has a hybrid working model in place whereby staff currently work remotely for part of their working week

How to Apply

If you are interested in the post, please complete the Application Form (in Word format) which is available on our website.

Applicants will be shortlisted for interview solely on the basis of the information contained in the application. The recruitment panel will shortlist only those applicants who, from the information provided, appear to most closely meet the essential criteria for the post. The desirable criteria may be used to facilitate shortlisting.

The closing date for receipt of applications is noon on **24 September 2026**.

If you are offered the post, we will ask you to provide:

- Proof of relevant qualifications (in the form of original hard copy documentation); and
- Original documentation to prove you are legally entitled to work in the region.

Duties

Services Provision

1. Operational management of community planning and engagement programmes, services and projects as required.
2. Working with CE to identify and secure opportunities for provision of planning, community planning and engagement programmes, services and projects.
3. Working with CE to identify and secure funding, resources and contracts to support the work of the organisation.
4. Building and maintaining effective collaborative relationships with external stakeholders and networks. Including managing contracts with external partners to achieve project objectives.
5. Provision of planning advice and information services to people and communities throughout the region on the planning system, planning policies, local development plans and development management.
6. Provision of advice and representation, where required, at planning appeals and Public Inquiries and at meetings with councils, planning, regeneration and other bodies.
7. Undertaking the organisation and facilitation of public and community consultation and engagement on planning, community planning, regeneration and related issues.
8. Preparing project and local community plans, place-shaping plans, strategies and reports.
9. Research into planning, engagement, participatory budgeting, regeneration and related issues and preparation of reports, briefing papers, guides and other publications.
10. Providing training and information workshops and making presentations throughout the region on issues relevant to the post, including deputising for the CE from time to time.
11. Contributing to projects which involve team working with other staff including co-ordinating teamwork with other staff on projects.

Contributing to Forward Planning and Management

1. To assist the Chief Executive as required in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of strategic and operational plans.
2. Preparing reports for the Chief Executive as required.
3. Representing the organisation, its needs and policy views as required by the Chief Executive.

Contributing to Financial Administration

1. Maintaining such records as may be required for the preparation of accounts and monitoring and control of project related and organisational expenditure.

Other

1. Actively participating in the development and promotion of Community Places.
2. Participating in the induction and recruitment of new staff and volunteers mentoring and overseeing the work of volunteers, placements and interns as required.
3. Maintaining and updating planning advice records and project files as required by the Chief Executive.
4. Undertaking training to further develop relevant skills and knowledge as determined by Community Places.
5. Any other duties consistent with the job as required by the Chief Executive.

Person Specification – Planner and Head of Engagement

(a)- To be evidenced in **application** form

(i)- To be demonstrated at **interview**

Qualifications and Experience

Essential	Desirable
Current membership or be eligible for membership of the RTPI, IPI or equivalent body (a)	Chartered Town Planner (a)
- Three years' post-qualification experience of working in a planning environment. This should include direct experience of providing planning advice to members of the public (a). - Working experience in the delivery of community planning or engagement programmes, projects or services (a). - Wide experience of making presentations and facilitating meetings and workshops (a). - Experience of undertaking socio-economic research using Census and other published data. (a)	- Experience of giving planning advice for three years within the past five years. (a) and (i) - Experience of giving planning advice to community groups. (a) and (i) - Operational management of leading on community planning or engagement programmes, projects or services. (a) and (i) - Proven experience of identifying opportunities for development of new programmes, projects or services and of securing new resources, contracts or funding for same. (a) and (i)

Skills, Abilities and Knowledge

Essential	Desirable
• Ability to communicate in a variety of settings and to write effectively and clearly (a) and (i). • Ability to gather, collate and analyse data and information (a). • Proven research and report-writing skills (a). • Experience of using a wide range of engagement tools. (a) (i) • Experience of representing an organisation (a) • Ability to work under pressure to deadlines and as part of a team (a). • Ability to represent the views and needs of the organisation (i). • Organisational ability, self-motivation and personal initiative (i). • Knowledge and understanding of planning and engagement issues as they affect disadvantaged communities (i). • Commitment to working closely with community and voluntary groups and maintaining a good working relationship with them (i). • Commitment to the aims and values of Community Places (i).	– Relevant technical skills including GIS mapping and drawing (Photoshop or similar). (a)

Other

Access to transport for travel extensively throughout the region as required by the post and willingness to work unsociable hours (a).

Note: Desirable criteria may be used for short-listing, interviewing and selection.

Artificial Intelligence can be a useful tool to support your application, however, all examples and statements provided must be truthful, factually accurate and taken directly from your own experience. Where plagiarism has been identified (presenting the ideas and experiences of others, or generated by artificial intelligence, as your own) applications may be withdrawn.

Community Places provides support and opportunities for training and professional development.



**community
places**

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