

KCU INFORMATION AND APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTES

About KCU and our services

KCU has been embedded in our community for almost 35 years. We remain committed to making a difference by helping people to reach their full potential and improve their quality of life, regardless of ability, disability or circumstance. A high proportion of KCU's customers remain users of some of our services whilst they go on to volunteering for the Charity. This is not just to improve their work, life and social skills, but also to reduce isolation, increase their networks and help integration within our community. The uniqueness of our approach is while individuals are themselves accessing support from our services, they also take pride in helping others in their community through volunteering or work experience in our projects and activities.

We provide a number of integrated services. These are:

Non-traditional food bank

The model adopted by KCU focuses on providing 'food with dignity'. People do not go to an identifiable food bank in their community. Food parcels are packed by volunteers and delivered by our volunteer drivers to authorised partner organisations and replenished on a weekly basis. This provides discreet access to food at the first point of contact while ensuring individuals receive support from partners to help them with issues that led to needing a food parcel in the first place. The food bank is affiliated to the Trussell Trust, which provides support and advice for food bank members nationally.

Affordable clothing, furniture and other household goods

Operating through two charity shops and a small storage warehouse, KCU provides affordable items for our local community. Some donated furniture and clothing are up-cycled through our Education and Learning Centre courses and sold in the shops. This is linked to a service level agreement grant with Kettering Borough Council for upcycling/recycling to prevent items being taken to landfill. The shops and warehouse are run by volunteers.

Inclusive Volunteering Project

This Project was established through funding from the Tudor Trust three years ago. It has recently received a further three years continuation funding from the Trust. The Project provides opportunities for people who without additional support, might not be offered volunteering or work experience elsewhere. Trained volunteer mentors/befrienders work alongside those with more complex needs to help them get the most out of their involvement with us. Mentor/befriender training is also offered to other organisations to help open up opportunities for people to supported volunteering/work experience elsewhere. The Project is supported by a multi-agency steering group and provides ongoing support and workshops to trained individuals from across agencies through the Kettering Mentor/Befriender Network.

Education and Learning Centre

KCU's 'non-institutionalised' Education and Learning Centre offers a wide range of life skills learning as well as vocational, educational and accredited courses. Our less formal setting attracts individuals who have opted out of education through not having had good learning experiences in the past. Courses and training are free to

those on low income/benefits, made possible through our partnerships with Northamptonshire County Council's Neighbourhood Learning Team and the WEA (Workers Education Association).

New Dignity in Crisis Project

We are delighted to have been awarded five years funding from the National Lottery Community Fund for this Project. The aim of the Project is to provide a delivery model that meets a gap in basic needs support which also respects people's dignity. By doing so, the Project will help people to engage with services earlier to address the causes that led to them needing such support in the first place. This Project is for anyone in the borough of Kettering facing temporary or on-going financial difficulties who are genuinely unable to pay for all basic needs such as food, clothing, essential household goods and furniture. The services to be delivered within this Project include:

- Maintaining and expanding our current food with dignity food bank model
- Build on our dignity approach to include the discreet provision of essential household packages, baby and young children items and clothes (all ages)
- Discreet outreach advice service (partnering with CASCK (Citizens Advice Service, Corby and Kettering))
- Holiday rangers summer club for young people in families identified as falling into 'food poverty' during school holidays. This is a partnership with Groundwork Northamptonshire through their Green Patch initiative

KCU job vacancies: guidance for applicants

The following points are provided as guidance to all potential job applicants to help them in their application:

- It is not KCU's policy to accept CV's. The application form within the recruitment packs will only be used to select candidates for interview. CV's will not be progressed. If CV's are submitted in addition to the form, only the form will be used to select candidates
- In completing the application form, you should pay particular attention to demonstrating your experience, knowledge and skills against the essential criteria shown in the person specification. The essential criteria acts as the filter to whether people are invited to interview or otherwise. Where there are more applicants meeting essential criteria than the recruitment process can accommodate, desirable criteria will be used as a further filter. Applicants might also wish therefore, to provide some information against the desirable criteria within their initial application
- Where indicated on the application form, applicants should not exceed the word limit or number of pages allowed for each question. If these are exceeded, any information provided beyond these limits will not be considered
- The purpose of the interview is to further explore information provided in the application form against the requirements of the job description and person specification. This is done through scoring all applicants against responses to questions/exercises during interview

We thank you all for applying for roles with KCU and whatever the outcome, wish you success in your future careers