

Welcome!

Thank you for showing an interest in this role. Do you have a concern for those people in our communities who are struggling with social isolation and loneliness? Are you aware that 4.2 million people in the UK reported that they ‘always or often’ feel lonely? ¹ Do you believe that the church has a key role to play in addressing these issues in communities across the country? If so, this is a role which may well be of interest to you.

The successful candidate for this position will play a key role in developing an exciting new partnership across Edinburgh to support socially isolated older people in the city. The project ² is a collaboration between Edinburgh City Mission and Linking Lives UK who are working together with churches in the city to run a befriending service.

Edinburgh City Mission

Linking Lives UK

Our Aims

Our primary aim is to inspire, equip and resource churches and Christian organisations to develop effective responses to loneliness and social isolation in local communities which impact the lives of older people. This is achieved by enabling churches to set up local befriending projects in which volunteers regularly visit or telephone older people on a regular basis. This contact has a significant impact on addressing loneliness and social isolation and there is evidence that such activity can improve physical, mental and spiritual health as well as self-confidence. We are also very much aware that older people have much to offer to the rest of society, and we encourage our local partners to value and celebrate these contributions and experiences.

Who we are and what we do

Linking Lives UK emerged from the initial work of a church-based community project in Berkshire which began in 1998. Our approach involves weekly visits or phone calls being made by volunteers and those receiving visits are also encouraged, where possible, to attend local social events and activities or visit places of interest with their volunteer. We began working on a national level in 2012 and registered as a separate charity in 2016.



43 telephone befriending projects in 2020-21



32 home visiting projects in operation by March 2021



1000 people receiving regular calls by March 2021

Our befriending model is called ‘Two’s Company’ and there are currently 32 visiting projects and 43 telephone befriending projects operating across the UK (including Perth, Aberdeen, Renfrewshire and Inverness). Each project provides crucial support to those most in need of company. Our main role is to provide the necessary

¹ ‘Office of National Statistics Nov 2020

² With financial support from TOR Christian Foundation

training, advice, documentation and ongoing support to partner churches as well as sharing good practice. As at the end of March 2021, we estimate that around 1,000 individuals were receiving regular calls from a Linking Lives UK partner project.

Edinburgh City Mission was established in 1832. We have experience in community work through our Foodbank+ network, Salaam refugee support work and other projects. We “stimulate and strengthen the church’s mission in Edinburgh” and so we have strong links with churches and other key agencies in Edinburgh.

Our Values

The strapline for Linking Lives UK is:

Improving quality of life



through friendship

Linking Lives UK and Edinburgh City Mission achieve this in accordance with five specific values:

- We want to serve those who feeling are most alone and to bring hope
- We particularly value one to one relationships
- At the heart of everything we do is the love of Jesus
- We want to build mutually beneficial relationships of trust
- We deeply value understanding everyone’s story, acknowledging that we are all equal

¹ Office of National Statistics Nov 2020

² With financial support from TOR Christian Foundation

Both of our organisations believe that the church has a key role to play in addressing these key issues of our time, and that many are recognising the need to respond in their local communities. This was highlighted recently in a report produced by AllChurches Trust which found that **78% of churches consider loneliness and social isolation will be the biggest issues in their communities during the next three months, and 58% expect a similar situation in the next twelve months**². We are excited at the prospect of continuing to support churches in this way, and this role will be a key one in enabling us to meet our objectives.

‘A defender of widows is God in His holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families’



Jeremy

Jeremy Sharpe – National Director
Linking Lives UK



Duncan

Duncan Cuthill – CEO
Edinburgh City Mission

¹ Office of National Statistics Nov 2020

² With financial support from TOR Christian Foundation

Development Officer – Edinburgh

Job Description

Based: The Coracle, 41 Bryson Road (Edinburgh City Mission offices)

Status: Employed (by Edinburgh City Mission)

Hours: 35 hours per week

Salary: £26,000pa

Contract: Six months

This is an exciting opportunity to join an innovative partnership between a national Christian charity and a local Edinburgh-based Christian charity, both seeking to combat loneliness and social isolation across the city. This is a brand-new role which has been created following an opportunity to develop ‘Two’s Company - Edinburgh’ befriending project with churches across the city. The post-holder will play a key role in building effective networks and links across Edinburgh between churches and socially isolated older people.

Summary and Main Purpose of Role

To build and develop relationships with churches and Christian organisations across Edinburgh with the target of:

- Establishing a befriending initiative supporting socially isolated older people through partnerships with churches and Christian organisations
- Build partnerships with other key agencies in the area where appropriate

Specific responsibilities

1. Researching and networking

We recognise the importance of encouraging partnerships and avoiding duplication of effort and, as a result, cooperation with relevant local organisations form a core element of our local expressions. For this reason, the role will involve:

- Carrying out research into existing services, projects and activities focusing on social isolation and loneliness among over 65’s with a particular focus on befriending projects. Identifying those communities less well-served and which would benefit from a befriending project
- Consult and build relationships with key local and regional agencies including churches, local authorities, emergency services, health bodies (including GP surgeries, Health Boards and social prescribing bodies), adult social care teams, charities and other relevant organisations.

2. Profile-raising

- Actively pursue possible sources of interest in running projects addressing social isolation in the city through meetings and other forms of communication
- Write articles highlighting the aims of the project for local publications



- Explore possible partnerships with local churches, statutory agencies and voluntary/ community sector organisations
- Coordinate and deliver Information Sessions according to interest

Other features of the role/ special requirements:

- You will need to be able to work on your own initiative as well as operating effectively as part of a wider team.
- Contribute appropriately to the advancement of the Christian faith in all aspects of the role and personal conduct
- Contribute positively to regular Edinburgh City Mission and Linking Lives UK team meetings including prayer times, engaging in social media chat groups, etc.
- Be willing to be featured in publicity material and social media for both organisations.

To apply, please send a CV and covering letter explaining why you wish to apply for the role to duncan@edinburghcitymission.org.uk and jeremy@linkinglives.uk by 5.00pm on 29th October 2021. Interviews will be held in Edinburgh on 11th/ 12th November 2021.

Person Specification

Skills & Experience Required		
	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
At least 2 years' experience in Christian social action or community development	✓	
Working to agreed targets and deadlines through effective time management and prioritisation	✓	
Lone working	✓	
Presenting at senior level	✓	
Researching & networking within local communities		✓
Working with older people and/ or socially isolated individuals		✓
Knowledge of:		
The voluntary, community and faith sector across Edinburgh	✓	
Of the Christian faith	✓	
Reviewing & analysing statistical data		✓
Community development practice		✓
Skills		
Management and organisation skills	✓	
Ability to keep clear and accurate records and to present them in an effective way	✓	
The ability to produce concise, accurate and appropriate proposals and reports	✓	
Data analysis and interpretation	✓	
Excellent interpersonal and communication skills both written and oral with the ability to communicate on a one-to-one basis with key stakeholders	✓	
Ability to carry out inspiring and informative presentations to larger audiences eg. Church congregations or events	✓	
Innovative and creative, able to think strategically and laterally	✓	

Competent and confident with IT systems – Microsoft Office applications and databases	✓	
Other		
Flexible	✓	
Team player	✓	
Commitment to the philosophy and values of Edinburgh City Mission and Linking Lives UK	✓	

OCCUPATIONAL REQUIREMENT (OR)

Edinburgh City Mission offer our services and support on a non-discriminatory basis as modelled by Jesus in the gospels, and in accordance with the Equality Act (2010).

It is essential that the Development Officer is committed to the vision, doctrine and ethos of Edinburgh City Mission, sharing our core beliefs and values, together with those of Linking Lives UK, as they will represent both organisations to the public, churches, church leaders and other organisations.

All employees are required to agree to Edinburgh City Mission's Statement of Faith and Conduct.

On the basis of the above, we believe that it is appropriate to apply an Occupational Requirement to this position.