Glenkens Community & Arts Trust

Job Description:

Development Officer

(21 hrs week, 0.6FTE, fixed term to 31 March 2027)

The Glenkens Community & Arts Trust

The Glenkens Community & Arts Trust has a long track record of economic regeneration through arts and community work in the Glenkens. We are a key anchor organisation for the area, with a clear vision of **making the Glenkens an excellent place to live for people of all ages.** We do this by:

- Interweaving Arts, Community and Heritage to enrich the life of the area.
- Delivering our Artistic Vision with passion and creativity.
- Supporting activities core to the quality of life of people and environment of the Glenkens.
- Driving economic and social regeneration of the area through championing the delivery of the Glenkens Community Action Plan.

Our CatStrand Artistic Vision has three key strands:

- **CatStrand Touring Arts** - hosting high quality touring work and supporting the region's artists with a focus on theatre, dance, comedy, arts and music.
- **Cultural Glenkens** – preserving and celebrating our natural and cultural Heritage.
- **CatStrand Young Creatives** – engaging and developing young people aged 5 to 25.

Our delivery of the Community Action Plan is done through:

- **Direct delivery** of GCAT projects.
- **Supporting local organisations** in their delivery of CAP priorities.
- **Creating regional and national partnerships** to pilot delivery of CAP priorities.

This has been an exciting period for GCAT, as we have amplified our 20+ years of high-quality arts and community delivery for the Glenkens through our strategic alignment with the Glenkens Community Action Plan.

The Development Officer Role

This is a rare opportunity to join the organisation as its first Development Officer – to build on a track record of delivery but also an ambition to push for better outcomes for our communities.

With an initial focus on developing community proposals for education, skills and learning, the Development Officer will support the research, exploration and development of community projects aligned with the refreshed Community Action Plan. Whilst the initial funding is secured to end March 2027, there is an expectation of securing funding to enable a permanent contract.

The role will identify local needs, develop projects and funding opportunities, support programme delivery, and ensure that activities achieve positive outcomes for Glenkens communities.

In this post you will be a champion of life in the Glenkens and remote-rural communities in the south of Scotland more generally. Particular areas of focus at present include educational provision, depopulation and changes in land use.

Based primarily at CatStrand in New Galloway, the GCAT Development Officer will provide the organisational development capacity to support delivery of the Glenkens and District Community Action Plan. Supported by and reporting directly to the Chief Executive, the Development Officer role involves:

- Until end March 2027, focus on research, exploration and development of project proposals for an **Education, Skills and Learning Hub**.
- Support existing Community Action Plan delivery projects.
- Development and delivery of new aspects of the Community Action Plan priorities or emerging community priorities.
- Developing and maintaining local and regional partnerships by being a knowledgeable public face of GCAT and rural communities more generally.

Initial focus: Glenkens Skills and Learning Hub

Funded by the Community Led Local Development Fund, the initial focus of this role until March 2027 will be exploring and developing proposals for an Education, Skills and Learning Hub – in response to the need identified by the Community Action Plan Steering Group and in the context of the consultation on the proposed closure of Dalry Secondary School. In addition and beyond March 2027, the role will work on developing community projects in alignment with the refreshed Community Action Plan.

We want to work with Dumfries & Galloway Council to create sustainable and stable statutory educational provision in the Glenkens, from Nursery to senior years, that attracts working-age families into the area and give our young people the best possible start in life. This work recognises that education provision is evolving with distance learning, hybrid teaching and online resources becoming an increasingly important issue which brings its own challenges as well as solutions for rural communities.

The Glenkens Community Action Plan Steering Group, Education and Learning sub-committee has identified a need to develop a community-led solution to rural education challenges. This vision involves ultimately providing:

1. Assured, stable and high quality statutory pre-school and primary school provision across the Glenkens. This is a statutory function, but the local authority threatens closure of rural schools and we want to provide support where we can to ensure school provision is stable.
2. Developing proposals and securing strategic investment for wraparound childcare for pre-school and primary school ages (breakfast clubs, activity clubs etc). Delivered in partnership with the Council i.e using school buildings and possibly staff - to help strengthen long term utilisation of nurseries and primary schools.
3. Developing additional social activity programmes to enhance secondary school pupil after school experiences.
4. Develop proposals for a Glenkens Skills and Learning Hub, developing innovative learning models for rural locations, developing skills training with local employers and building on the success of the Skills Fair of 2025. This Hub would:

a. Help young people get skills and qualifications that support the local economy
b. Support older adults to keep learning, re-training or gaining qualifications locally
c. Support employers in the area by up-skilling a local workforce in response to their needs
d. Strengthen the local economy and respond to climate and nature challenges
e. Be complimentary to similar initiatives in Carsphairn and across the region.

At the end of the funded period (end March 2027), the project will have:

- undertaken extensive community engagement in alignment with the development of the new Community Action Plan
- engaged deeply with local schools, teachers and Education Department
- engaged with Parents and Parent Councils
- delivered a Skills Fair in September
- engaged with local employers
- explored funding models
- established a project development pathway for the Skills and Learning Hub.

Key Responsibilities

Project Development and Delivery

- Understand local needs through absorption of the Community Action Plan and refresh process, Local Research document and Local Place Plans to inform alignment of projects with CAP themes.
- **Design and develop projects which support long term stable provision of rural education, skills development and life-long learning in the Glenkens.**
- Support project development opportunities with community organisations across the Glenkens
- Deliver activities, workshops, events and outreach sessions, including facilitation of the Glenkens Skills and Jobs Fair.
- Understand and signpost current opportunities around access to training, volunteering, employment and further education.
- Contribute to organisational learning and future programme development.

Partnership Working

- **Build and maintain positive relationships with parents, schools, colleges, training providers, employers, education department and community groups.**
- Foster collaboration between local employers and young people to increase awareness of career pathways – including facilitation of Glenkens Skills and Jobs Fair.
- Represent the organisation at meetings, networks and partnership forums.
- Promote opportunities for employers to engage in community and skills development initiatives.

Funding and Reporting

- Assist with identifying funding opportunities and contribute to grant applications.
- Development of funding strategy for individual projects, including Skills and Learning Hub.
- Prepare reports for funders, CAP Steering Group and Chief Executive.

- Ensure accurate records are maintained in accordance with funders needs, organisational policies and data protection requirements.

Community Engagement

- **Engage with local parents, residents, volunteers, stakeholders and CAP refresh consultants to understand community priorities.**
- Attend and deliver community engagement sessions on project development proposals.
- Ensure that community based skills and learning are embedded within the CAP refresh.
- Promote projects through social media, newsletters, presentations and community events.
- Encourage participation from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups.
- Support volunteers involved in project delivery.

General Responsibilities

- Work in accordance with organisational policies and procedures.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of work.
- Ensure compliance with health and safety requirements.
- Undertake training and professional development as required.
- Carry out any other duties reasonably consistent with the post.

Expected Outcomes

By the end of March 2027, as part of the CLLD funded period, the Development Officer will have produced a Delivery Plan for Education and Learning in the Glenkens, which will include:

a. Engagement report on discussions with parents, teachers, head-teachers, education managers and employers around extent of need.
b. Options appraisal of areas where communities could provide wrap-around support to the statutory provision of education - pre-school, primary & secondary and also where leavers and adult learning can be supported.
c. Explored with the Education Department, a pilot collaboration initiative for the Glenkens
d. Agreements in principle with local employers for skills development opportunities placements, internships, apprenticeships, employment
e. A funding strategy for the various stages of the proposals

Thereafter and additionally, the Development Officer will contribute to:

- Increased participation in skills, training and employability activities.
- Stronger partnerships between community organisations, education providers and employers.
- Successful delivery of funded projects and achievement of agreed outcomes.
- Enhanced community capacity and resilience.

Person Specification

It is recognised that no single person will meet all of this criteria – applicants should be reassured that a flexible approach will be taken and applications are encouraged.

	Essential	Desirable
EXPERIENCE	Experience of developing or delivering community, education or skills-based projects	Relevant experience across either pre-school, primary, secondary or tertiary education sectors.
	Experience of community and stakeholder engagement and consultation.	Experience of engaging education department / parent councils
	Experience of funding applications and project budgeting.	Experience of delivering third sector projects from conception to fundraising to reporting.
	Experience of volunteer management.	Facilitation skills.
KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS	Understanding of community development principles and commitment to supporting community-led development.	Knowledge of the Glenkens and rural communities and a clear understanding of the challenges and opportunities it brings.
	Understanding of issues facing rural education	Knowledge of alternative learning methods (distance, online, hybrid, informal and non-formal)
	Strong organisational and time management skills.	
	Competent IT skills, including Microsoft Office and digital communication platforms.	Confident in appropriate use of AI to support role delivery.
	Ability to work independently and as part of a team.	
PERSONAL QUALITIES	Able to work and integrate effectively with a wide range of people	familiarity with the dynamics of rural communities
	Flexible and adaptable approach to work.	Energetic, proactive and solution focussed.
	Excellent interpersonal, communication and presentation skills	Able to maintain a culture of collaborative, empathetic working with a wide range of clients and audiences.
	Understanding of safeguarding, equality and inclusion principles.	
	Able to work occasional evenings and weekends.	A full driving licence and access to a vehicle

Basic Terms and Conditions

Salary: £25,710 @ 1.0 FTE pro rata to 0.6 FTE = £15,426 per annum payable monthly in arrears through PAYE. Employee status assumed, but negotiable. Fixed term to 31 March, but with an expectation of securing funding to enable permanent contract.

Hours: 21 hours/week = 0.6 FTE. Mostly over weekdays but some weekend and evening working will be required for meetings and public events.

Probationary Period: 3 months

Pension: GCAT operates a NEST pension scheme (automatic enrolment after a successful probationary period of 3 months).
The payments into your pension are:

- Your contribution - 5.00% of your pensionable pay.
- Our contribution – 3.00% of your pensionable pay.

Holiday: 32 days including public holidays pro rata = 0.6FTE x 32 Days = 19 days.

Base Location: The CatStrand, New Galloway, DG7 3RN. Flexible working offered.
At least 50% of your working days a week will be required in the office.
Home working is an option for the rest of the time.

How to apply

Applications should consist of a current CV and supporting statement. The supporting statement should be no longer than 2 sides of A4, setting out your suitability for the role.

Please include contact details for two references (these will only be contacted if an offer is made).

Send applications by email to: andrew@catstrand.com

Closing date: **12 noon on Friday 28th August 2026**
Interviews: **Thursday 3rd September 2026**
Preferred start date: **September 2026**

For further information or to discuss the role, please contact Andrew McConnell, GCAT Chief Executive, Glenkens Community & Arts Trust on andrew@catstrand.com or by phone: 01644 420374.

August 2026