**Hear Us**

**QUALITY MANUAL**

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SECTION D: People Management

D.3.1 Job Description: Welfare Rights Advice Project Advisor – Application Pack

Hear Us supports adults with mental ill health to access financial, health and social inclusion support in Croydon. We challenge restrictive and coercive healthcare practices, and negative perceptions associated with mental illness, helping to reduce stigma and discrimination.

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| Recruitment Start Date:  | 07/07/2025 |
| Application Deadline Date:  | **08/08/2025** |
| Shortlist Date: | **15/08/2025** |
| Interview Date: | **29/08/2025** |

**History of Hear Us:** In 1992, a mental health service user community group called Crocus was formed. In 2000, Crocus transformed into Hear Us and Hear Us became a charity in 2009 to provide services for people with serious mental illness in Croydon.

Hear Us is Croydon’s only service user group for people with severe and enduring mental illness. We are a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation (DDPO) and 100% service user run. This strength gives us a unique insight into the barriers faced by our service users, particularly those also experiencing drug & alcohol misuse or leaving prison. We provide specialist peer support and personal support for our service users who are people with complex mental health issues living in the London Borough of Croydon. We have developed an excellent reputation within the mental health community and supporting services for delivering highly respected service user led and run specialist peer support services. Our practical activities help people to cope better with daily living and help to address financial, social, emotional and physical needs.

**Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP)**

Since 2012, our advisors have provided support to people with severe and enduring mental health conditions to apply for and maintain their welfare benefits and other entitlements. After assessing an individual’s needs, we can provide food bank referrals and referrals to other organisations that provide access to social inclusion services, or access to services that support debt and crisis. We encourage people to ‘do it for themselves’ where they can, so they can grow in self-confidence and soft skills (improving employability) and therefore maintain their health and wellbeing.

We have helped over 3000 people with severe mental illness to access the support and income that they are entitled to. Many need additional support, such as help to read letters or complete forms, where literacy is limited. Others face further problems, such as dealing with drug and alcohol abuse, which means they may face more hurdles, including the prejudices and judgements of others, which make claiming benefits problematic.

Helping people to secure their benefit entitlements enables them to feel more in control of their lives and take part in their communities and can relieve some of the burden of poverty and/or debt that so often leads to a downward spiral of both mental and physical health. We provide a holistic service, signposting people to other resources in the borough, including health and wellbeing opportunities, education, voluntary work, and access to talking therapies.

We receive referrals from Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs), GP surgeries, job centres, care homes, residential hostels and other voluntary organisations. We also accept self-referrals.

**We can help in the following areas:**

#### **1. Address and resolve immediate financial distress.**

#### **2. Support by helping to improve financial security.**

#### **3. Increased Social Inclusion (Inc. access to preventative services).**

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| **SECTION D3.1.6. WRAP Advisor** |
| **Post:** | **WRAP Advisor** |
| **Accountable to:** | WRAP Manager |
| **Managed By:** | WRAP Manager |
| **Hours:** | 16 hours per week |
| **Pay:** | £29,293.66 (£12,667.53) Pro Rata  |
| **Length of Contract:** | This post is offered on a 3 year contract with the possibility of extension, subject to funding. |
| **Based at:** | Based mainly at Orchard House, 15A Purley Road, South Croydon, CR2 6EZ, although required to work at other sites within Croydon as requested by the manager. |
| **Flexible Working** | The post-holder can apply for flexible working if they have worked continuously for Hear Us for at least 26 weeks.  |
| **Working off-site:** | Working across Croydon and surrounding boroughs. The work may include visits to client’s homes, hostels, hospitals or similar venues. |

**Purpose of Post:** Hear Us is a mental health user group for the London borough of Croydon.  We are a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation (DDPO). Our AQS (Advice Quality Standard) accredited Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP) is a peer support project, supporting Croydon’s mental health service user community to navigate the DWP (Department of Work and Pensions) welfare system and other services. The post holder will deliver peer support, which enables, empowers, and provides service users with clear boundaries and does not create dependency upon the service. We want our clients to become self-reliant and be able to maintain their own finances and claims. The post-holder will support our clients to access food banks and mobility schemes.

Due to the nature of this work, the post-holder must work strictly within Hear Us AQS policies and procedures regarding confidentiality and case management.

Duties:

The post-holder will maintain a manageable caseload of clients needing support with their welfare rights and benefits. **The role is to support** the WRAP Team with the following:

1. To carry out an initial client assessment, identifying any issues with their benefits and any claims they can make to maximise their income.
2. Provide casework (including challenging decisions) for welfare benefits available to clients with mental health difficulties and their carers: i.e. Personal Independence Payments, Universal Credit, Employment and Support Allowance and Housing Benefit.
3. Provide information and advice as appropriate about issues related to a client’s particular situation.
4. Provide advice and casework for mobility and discretionary schemes and personal grants that could be of benefit to clients.
5. Take referrals directly from service users, carers or staff from other agencies (encouraging use of our online referral form)
6. Signpost and refer clients to agencies that assist with transition from hospital to community living, or to tackle social isolation and improve mental wellbeing.
7. Maintain records in accordance with Hear Us policies and procedures, including the handling of confidential and private documents and keeping written and computer records up to date and secure.
8. Liaise with GPs, CMHT’s and other agencies to obtain supporting documents, by telephone, letter and e-mail.
9. Taking confidential telephone messages from clients and outside agencies.
10. Take part in weekly WRAP team meetings regarding case allocation, and stay up to date with changes in benefits legislation.
11. Attend regular supervision and yearly appraisals with line manager.
12. Assist WRAP manager to write reports and evaluate the project for funding bids and to support and promote the project.
13. Collect and distribute flyers and leaflets for signposting purposes.
14. Attend Hear Us staff meetings, staff development days, and other Hear Us events (e.g. Hear Us Open Forum) where directed by line manager.
15. Attend identified training and other personal development activities that will support you in this role.
16. Develop and maintain healthy working practices for yourself, with clear personal and professional boundaries.

Person Specification

Applicants should meet all the essential skills, knowledge and experience criteria to complete the job description outlined below. Meeting desirable criteria will be a further asset.

Outlined below are the skills, knowledge and experience required to carry out the duties on the job description. Applicants must be able to meet all the essential criteria. Meeting the desirable criteria will be a further asset. Please bear all the criteria in mind when completing your application form. Make sure that you give examples and demonstrate that you meet the criteria.

Essential Criteria:

Candidates must be able to demonstrate that they:

1. Have personal experience of mental distress and/or personal experience using the mental health system as a service user.
2. Have a basic understanding of Disability and Welfare Benefits and a broad understanding of the range of holistic wellbeing services in Croydon and the surrounding area.
3. Have at least one year's experience of working within an office environment.
4. Have good IT skills and experience of using MS Office (e.g. Outlook, Word, Access, Excel and Teams), and a commitment to further training as required.
5. Can communicate with people from a wide range of backgrounds, including mental health service users in distress, senior health practitioners and social care officers, by telephone, video calls and in writing.
6. Have experience of promoting equity and inclusion for anyone experiencing discrimination or its effects.
7. Can work on their own initiative and contribute to team working.
8. Have good time management, task prioritisation and organisation skills.
9. Can demonstrate an understanding of Hear Us values, in particular a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.
10. Can demonstrate an understanding of confidentiality and data protection, in line with Hear Us policies and procedures.

Desirable Criteria:

1. Experience of working in a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation (DDPO)
2. Knowledge of the mental health service user/survivor movement and its impact on mental health in the UK.
3. Knowledge and experience of working in the voluntary/community sector.
4. Ability to be open and honest about your own mental wellbeing as relevant to the role, and to ask for support from colleagues and manager where needed.

The Hear Us Trustee Committee, in consultation with the WRAP Manager, Deputy CEO and the Chief Executive Officer, may review this job description. The job description is not an exhaustive document and may be subject to change or revision in the future. This will be done in consultation with the post-holder.

APPLICATION FORM: PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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| Please complete and return this form to our CEO Tim Oldham via email tim@hear-us.org or Post to Hear Us, Orchard House, 15a Purley Road, South Croydon, CR2 6EZYou can also complete this form on-line at: www.hear-us.org/about-us/vacanciesOr Scan this QR Code to access on-line form |  |
| Position Applied for: | **Hear Us WRAP Advisor** |
| Reference Number: | HUC-WRAP-PA |

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| Personal Details |
| **Name** | Title:  |  |
| Forename(s): |  |
| Surname: |  |
| **Contact Information** | Address: |  |
|  | Post Code: |  |
|  | Email: |  |
|  | Tel #: |  |
|  | Mobile #: |  |

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| Are there any restrictions on you taking up the Role? |
| **Yes:**  | [ ]  | **No:** | [ ]  |  |
| **If Yes, Please Provide Details:** |

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| Education & any relevant qualifications and courses(please complete in full and use a separate sheet if necessary) |
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| Dates | Schools/College/University | Qualifications Gained |
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| **Current, Last Employment** (please complete in full and use a separate sheet if necessary) |
| Last/Current Employment | Name of Employer:  |  |
| Address: |  |
| Dates of Employment: | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Job Title: |  |
| Duties: |  |
| Reason for Leaving: |  |
| Notice Period: |  |

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| **Previous Employment**(please complete in full and use a separate sheet if necessary) |
| Previous Employment | Name of Employer:  |  |
| Address: |  |
| Dates of Employment: | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| Job Title: |  |
| Duties: |  |
| Reason for Leaving: |  |

**Please feel free to elaborate on this in your personal statement.**

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| **Current Membership of Professional bodies (i.e. CIPD)** |
| Please note any professional bodies you are a member or registered with: |
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| **Other Employment**  |
| Please note any other employment that you would continue with if you were to be successful in obtaining the position: |
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| **Leisure** |
| Please note here your leisure interests, sports and hobbies, other pastimes, etc.: |
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| References 1 (please note here two persons from whom we may obtain both character and work references) |
| Title:  |  |
| Forename(s): |  |
| Surname: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Post Code: |  |
| Contact No.  |  |
| Email Address:  |  |
| Position Held |  |
| May we approach the above before the interview?  | Yes | [ ]  | No | [ ]  |

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| References 2 (please note here two persons from whom we may obtain both character and work references) |
| Title:  |  |
| Forename(s): |  |
| Surname: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Post Code: |  |
| Contact No.  |  |
| Email Address: |  |
| Position Held |  |
| May we approach the above before the interview?  | Yes | [ ]  | No | [ ]  |

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| Personal Statement |
| Please detail here your reasons for this application, your main achievements to date and the strengths you would bring to this post. Specifically, please detail how your knowledge, skills and experiences meet the requirements of this role (as summarised in the person specification). Please use no more than 1000 words max; please use additional pages if necessary) |
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| POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST |
| If you consider that you have any conflicts of interest in applying for this post, please identify what these are and how you would manage them. |
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| Criminal Record |
| The amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provide that certain convictions and cautions are considered ‘protected’ when applying for certain jobs and activities. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and employers cannot take them into account if they are disclosed. Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found on the Ministry of Justice website. Please detail any criminal convictions except those 'spent' or otherwise ‘protected’ under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. If you have none, please state. Appointment is dependent upon obtaining a satisfactory Disclosure & Barring Certificate from the Disclosure & Barring Service. |
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| Data Protection  |
| 1. We are aware of our obligations under data protection legislation, including the obligation to collect only the data that is required for our specific purpose. The information collected in this application form is specific to our recruitment exercise and necessary for the performance of the role that you have applied for. If you are recruited for the role you have applied for, or any other role we offer you, the information provided will then be used for the purposes of your employment with us, together with further information collected upon recruitment for those purposes.
2. We will treat your personal information with utmost integrity and confidentiality. Our data protection policy sets out our approach to ensuring that your data is processed in line with the data protection principles within current data protection legislation.
3. Our privacy notice for job applicants gives you information on, amongst other things, the data we will hold about you during the recruitment exercise and what we use it for.
4. You can view the privacy notice at www.hear-us.org/privacy-statement.
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| Declaration (please read this carefully before signing this application) |
| 1. I confirm that the information provided in this application is complete and correct and that any untrue or misleading information will give my employer the right to terminate any employment contract offered.
2. Should we require further information and wish to contact your doctor with a view to obtaining a medical report, the law requires us to inform you of our intention and obtain your permission prior to contacting your doctor. I agree that the organisation reserves the right to require me to undergo a medical examination.
3. I agree that should I be successful in this application, I will, if required, apply to the Disclosure & Barring Service for a Disclosure & Barring Certificate. I understand that should I fail to do so, or should the disclosure not be to the satisfaction of the company any offer of employment may be withdrawn or my employment terminated.
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| Signed: |  | Date: | Click or tap to enter a date. |

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| **Dates you are unable to attend an interview and any reasonable adjustments required for an accessible interview.** |
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**Equity and Diversity Monitoring Form**

**Hear Us Croydon is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. We would appreciate your help in ensuring we meet this commitment by filling out this form anonymously.**

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| **ETHNICITY:**  | CLICK AND SELECT YOUR ETHNICITY |
| **GENDER:** | CLICK AND SELECT YOUR GENDER |
| **SEXUALITY:** | CLICK AND SELECT YOUR SEXUALITY |
| **RELIGION:** | CLICK AND SELECT YOUR RELIGION |
| **DISABILITY:** | CLICK AND SELECT YOUR DISABILITY |

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM. THIS WILL BE SEPARATED FROM YOUR APPLICATION BEFORE SHORTLISTING**