

**Local Trust**  
trusting  
local  
people

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# Head of Secretariat, Commission on Neighbourhoods

August 2024

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Dear applicant,

Thank you for your interest in this post.

Local Trust is the delivery agency tasked with delivering the £285m Big Local grant programme. Big Local is a unique neighbourhood-focused initiative, which in 2012 placed £1.1m of funding directly in the hands of residents of each of 150 deprived communities in England, trusting them to make decisions over the next 15 years about how best to use that funding to improve the places in which they live. Over more than a decade, Local Trust has both helped local people realise their potential to transform their neighbourhoods, but also generated significant learning about what makes places thrive, and how to achieve change a hyper-local scale.

With Local Trust scheduled to wind up its activities in 2026-27, trustees have committed £1m of its remaining funds to support the establishment of a Commission on Neighbourhoods to build on that legacy by considering the future of policy in relation to neighbourhoods, with a particular focus on those suffering from multiple levels of disadvantage.

The Commission will be made up of an expert panel of Commissioners with a high profile Chair, supported by a strong Secretariat. Between autumn 2024 and the end of 2025 it will rigorously examine the role of neighbourhoods in people's lives; quantify and qualitatively explore neighbourhood effects; establish 'what works', drawing on both international and domestic evidence; and produce considered policy recommendations for government and others. In doing so, it should have particular regard to the role and relevance of neighbourhoods in achieving the policy priorities and missions of the new government.

We are looking for a motivated and experienced individual to lead the Secretariat to the Commission. The postholder will need a combination of strong delivery drive; well-developed political sensitivity; exceptional communication skills; proven organisational ability; and a keen understanding of national and local policy environments (in particular in relation to regeneration, local growth, local government, community/civil society or other relevant policy areas),

The post holder will initially be hosted within Local Trust whilst the Commission is established, as part of a wider policy, research and communications directorate. Depending on Commissioners' decisions, the long-term host of the Commission may in due course transfer to an alternative body, possibly an academic institution or other public body.

The ideal candidate – who may be recruited either on a secondment or fixed-term contract basis – will be imaginative and energetic with extensive experience working in

public policy development and delivery. They will recruit and lead a team of four dedicated commission officers; support the Commission Chair to recruit other Commissioners; establish and support delivery of the workplan for the Commission; manage Commission finances, including its Commissioning and administrative budget; liaise and engage with external partners and stakeholders, within government and beyond; draft working papers, reports and other outputs from the Commission; and work to promote the activities and interests of the Commission more widely. Whilst hosting the Secretariat, Local Trust will provide additional communications and policy support where required, but the Commission will be independently chaired and run.

On the following pages, you will find details of the role and the selection process to assist you in completing your application.

# How to apply

To apply, you should submit:

- An up-to-date CV which shows your full career history. We recommend that this is no longer than two pages.
- A supporting statement, with your name at the top of each page, explaining why you are interested in this role, and how you fulfil the person specification. Each section of the person spec should be addressed under clear headings. We recommend that this is no longer than two pages.

Please note that applications can only be considered if both a CV and supporting statement is submitted. If you are applying on the basis of a secondment, please include a statement from your employer indicating they are content to pursue this as an option.

**The deadline for applications is 11<sup>th</sup> September, with interviews on 19<sup>th</sup> September**

**Please send applications to [recruitment@localtrust.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@localtrust.org.uk)**

We are only able to offer feedback to applicants who attend interview stage.

# The Commission on Neighbourhoods

The Commission will help to ensure **neighbourhoods find their place in the new government's agenda** and that policy and practice, secures the improvement of the most deprived neighbourhoods and the prospects of their residents.

## The proposed Commission will:

- Draw together the evidence as to why neighbourhoods need to be prioritised
- Assemble evidence about what works from experience here and abroad (including from Big Local/Local Trust-initiated research)
- Provide a high profile base from which to continue to advocate for a policy and practice focus on neighbourhoods, including the case for community-led change
- Provide analysis, guidance and tools which support neighbourhood working

## The work will have two main stages:

- Commissioning of a rapid evidence review on neighbourhood and community interventions -to be delivered by mid January 2025
- Initial policy report with headline recommendations – April/May 2025
- The second phase of the Commission's work would take place from summer 2025, and would be determined by the spending review outcome – either implementation advice for any new fund or a refocusing back onto medium term policy recommendations ahead of any 2027/8 SR process.

## Budget

The Commission will have an initial operating budget of £1.1m, fully funded by Local Trust and available as needed.

# The Commission on Neighbourhoods

This funding will cover the cost of employing and supporting Commissioners, Chair, the Commission Secretariat, together with a small commissioning budget.

In addition to that commissioning budget, the Commission will benefit from the outputs of a range of independent research into neighbourhood policy and practice that is due to report during 2025.

Dependent on decisions of Commissioners, the Secretariat may lead engagement with other funders to secure additional funds to support additional research, or activities in support of the Commission's workplan.

# Job description

<b>Job title</b>	<b>Head of Secretariat</b>
<b>Accountable to</b>	<b>Chair of Commission on Neighbourhoods</b>
<b>Duration</b>	<b>18-month fixed term contract</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>£64,000-£67,000 depending on experience</b>

**Main job role** – leading the team that will provide the independent secretariat to the New Commission on Neighbourhoods

## **Job description (key duties)**

1. Provide exceptional support to the Chair of the Commission and the Commissioners.
2. Develop the Commission's call for evidence
3. Develop a communications plan to disseminate and promote the call for evidence
4. Oversee the gathering and summarising of evidence ahead of providing it to the Commissioners
5. Organise six stakeholder events across the first year of the Commission
6. Organise three small launch events and one major launch event with high profile press and media coverage
7. Arrange visits for Commissions to neighbourhoods
8. Coordinate Commission meetings
9. Engage with stakeholders in Whitehall, local government and beyond
10. Draft Commission outputs as necessary
11. Organise and deliver evidence sessions/ roundtables/ hearings
12. Run an 'expert by experience' advisory group

## **Person specification**

### **Essential**

1. Educated to degree level or equivalent.
2. Experience of working on public policy in a relevant area
3. At least three years managing a delivery-focused team
4. Demonstrable experience and/or understanding of managing press and media relationships
5. Demonstrable experience in stakeholder communications and relationship management
6. Able to exercise political sensitivity, with a high-level understanding of current political dynamics
7. Excellent writing and analytical skills.
8. An ability to summarise complex information at speed
9. Strong verbal presentation skills.

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10. An ability to build strong relationships of trust with peers and external organisations.
11. A track record in developing effective partnerships.

## Desirable

1. Knowledge of current policy environment in relation to some or all of regeneration, local growth, local government and/or community/civil society
2. Accredited project management training or experience of project implementation/delivery at a comparable scale
3. Understanding of the challenges of delivering change in a community setting
4. Experience of seeing a project through from the outset and establishing a new team

## Local Trust terms and conditions

### Salary

- Annual salary for the role is depending on skills and experience. Other staff benefits include excellent development opportunities, time off for volunteering (two days per annum), interest-free travel season ticket loan and an additional 3 days leave for use between Christmas and New Year.

### Pensions

- There is a salary exchange pension plan, with an employer contribution of 10%.

### Hours

- The full-time hours of work for this post are 36 hours based around usual business hours. However, given the work of the organisation and the nature of the post, some flexibility will be necessary, including occasional evenings and weekend work. Some travel within England will be required.

### Holidays

- 25 days' annual leave plus public holidays. Three additional days are also given for office closure between Christmas and New Year.

### Probation

- This is an 18 months fixed-term post subject to the successful completion of a 2-month probationary period. During this time your performance will be reviewed. At the end of the period, you will either be confirmed in post, the probationary period extended or in the case of unsatisfactory performance your employment will be terminated.

### Notice

- During the probationary period, notice is two weeks on either side. After satisfactory completion of the probationary period, this will be extended to 2 months' notice on either side.

### Location of post

- This post is, initially, based at Local Trust's offices at Borough, London and we are moving offices to near Bermondsey Street in November 2024.



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- We are currently operating a hybrid working policy where office-based staff work from the office at least 2 days per week. Depending on decisions of Commissioners, it is possible an alternative organisational host may be identified as part of the early work of the Commission.