

BEFS Job Description

Job title: Communications & Policy Officer

BEFS are looking for a proactive person who will work well remotely, but closely with the team. A person who wants to develop effective communications for not only BEFS as an organisation, but also advocacy messaging for the wider sector; and is keen to provide wider project and policy activity support flexibly.

Flexibility, accuracy, and ability to work enthusiastically and proactively is key.

This will be a learning and development role within BEFS where the successful applicant will have a degree of autonomy in supporting the Communications activity and Policy activity; but will also be welcome at a wide range of Built Environment Policy discussions and meetings to develop their own learning.

Training and support to develop your communications and policy understanding is part of the role, and individual development areas will be discussed and developed over the term of the role.

Reporting to: BEFS Senior Communications Lead and BEFS Policy & Strategy Manager

Hours: **24-30h** These hours can be worked flexibly, as long as there is consistency, and the majority of hours are worked between 8am-6pm. The post holder can work some hours each day, or several days together, or a combination that fits with their other commitments.

Salary: £20,000 -24,000 (FTE) depending on skills and experience

For example, 30h = Salary £16,000 - £19,200

Term: Contract until 31 March 2025.

Pension: 5.5% company contribution of gross salary to a properly constituted pension scheme of your choice with a minimum 2.5% additional employee contribution.

Annual Leave: Annual leave is pro rata the full-time allowance; Full time allowance is 30 days with an additional 5 public holidays (core PH - 2 Christmas, 2 New Year, and 1 at Easter).

Location: The job is home-working based – the team all work remotely, and are based in/around Edinburgh with regular face-to-face meetings expected. Very occasional event support may be required across Scotland, or in the evening.

To apply: Please complete the attached application form (in a Word document, CVs will not be accepted). Send your application attached to an email to: info@befs.org.uk
[The subject of the email should read: Confidential – Job Application – OFFICER]

Deadline for receipt of Applications: 5pm on Wednesday 9 August 2023

Interview date: Tuesday 22 August 2023. Time tbc.

Interviews will be held, in person, in central Edinburgh.

For an informal discussion about the post, please contact Ailsa Macfarlane, BEFS, amacfarlane@befs.org.uk

This role is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund through funding for organisational resilience and the BEFS – Fit for the Future project.

About BEFS

Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS) is the strategic intermediary body for Scotland's built environment sector, bringing together civic, voluntary, and professional organisations that operate at the national level. As an umbrella organisation, BEFS informs, debates and advocates on strategic issues and policies affecting the built environment. Our aim is to communicate the importance of Scotland's built and historic environment to policy makers at all levels of government, private owners and investors, and amongst professionals and voluntary organisations. BEFS are funded via Historic Environment Scotland, and the BEFS – Fit for the Future project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Funding is in place until 31 March 2025.

The role

BEFS Communications & Policy Officer will support the communication and policy activities of the organisation. Working closely with the Senior Communications Lead, Director, and Policy & Strategy Manager. Communicating with our Member organisations, the post holder will be responsible for contributing to, and managing some day-to-day aspects of the breadth of the organisation's (digital) communications channels. Adopting a proactive cross-sectoral approach, the postholder will play a key role in maintaining BEFS profile with policy makers, the sector and wider stakeholders.

BEFS are seeking the right individual - with an excellent turn of phrase, and an eye for detail - to fit into a small, friendly team.



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This role is funded thanks to Organisation Resilience support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and is part of the BEFS – Fit for the Future project.

Key responsibilities

1. Work with BEFS Board and Team in relation to NLHF funded organisational resilience project, including:
 - Work with Consultants on BEFS EDI knowledge and practise
 - Work with Consultants on BEFS strategic framework, governance and business development
 - Supporting related events and advocacy documents
2. Support the Senior Communications Lead in their role, including:
 - Maintaining BEFS Communications – including supporting production of the online Bulletin twice per month (using Mailchimp)
 - Supporting BEFS digital communications, including the website (Wordpress site), social media, and twitter
 - Proactively supporting the Membership through advocacy work on behalf of sector-wide and member initiatives (as directed)
 - Support development of advocacy and communication toolkits
3. Supporting the Policy & Strategy Manager, including:
 - Managing flow of information between BEFS and external stakeholders, including bulletins and reports
4. Lead on specific communications activity, including: Initiate and deliver content for BEFS social media
5. Reporting: contribute to regular reports to funders and BEFS Board
6. Team: participate actively as part of a small team, supporting and working with colleagues as necessary
7. Undertaking other such duties as may be required

Key relationships: colleagues (Director, Policy and Strategy Manager, Senior Communications Lead, and Business Administrator & Membership Manager), 30+ BEFS Member and Associate representatives, BEFS Board members, media contacts, civil servants within Scottish Government, Historic Environment Scotland and National Lottery Heritage Fund.

BEFS is an equal opportunities employer.

Person specification

Applicants should be confident communicators with strong written and inter-personal skills, and experience of using a wide range of (digital) communication methods including websites, social media, news releases, and press liaison.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the key issues affecting the existing and historic environment, with knowledge of the main players and lead organisations in the wider built environment sector.



If invited to interview, you will be asked to demonstrate how your experience meets the requirements of the post. We will look for evidence of past experience, and your approach to the key responsibilities outlined above.

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<p>Experience of digital communications, content management systems for web (Wordpress), social media and other engagement channels (Twitter)</p> <p>Highly computer literate e.g. Microsoft 365, Wordpress, Mailchimp, Eventbrite</p> <p>Excellent command of the English language with exceptional writing, editing, proof-reading, and demonstrable attention to detail</p> <p>Strong organisational and time management skills; ability to work autonomously</p> <p>Enthusiastic and positive team player, committed to own personal development and training</p> <p>Interest in policy development and policy within the built and historic environment</p> <p>Confident and effective communicator</p> <p>A degree-level qualification in a communications discipline or relevant experience of 1+ years</p>	<p>Familiarity with image and design software, such as Adobe Creative Cloud (specifically Photoshop, Publisher, Illustrator) or similar</p> <p>Experience of working with committees and engaging with organisations and individuals remotely</p> <p>Experience of preparing publicity material – artwork and graphic design</p> <p>Experience of working for a small, busy organisation</p>

BEFS expects all applicants to support the values, ethos and objectives of BEFS, demonstrating credibility and integrity and proactively committed to championing equality, diversity and inclusion.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a right to work in the UK.

BEFS Activity Plan 2022-25 (overview)

PROJECT ACTIVITY	DETAIL
Work with BEFS Board and Team in relation to NLHF funded organisational resilience project	<p>Work with Consultants on BEFS EDI knowledge and practise.</p> <p>Work with Consultants on BEFS strategic framework, governance and business development.</p> <p>Including supporting related events and advocacy documents.</p>
POLICY Consultation processes and responses Engagement and advocacy on behalf of membership with Scottish Government, Scottish Parliament, HES, Local Authorities, Scottish Land Commission, and further stakeholders and decision-makers	<p>BEFS responds to a wide variety of consultations, Calls for Views, and related surveys on behalf of Members and the sector. BEFS responses are informed by Member expertise.</p> <p>Over the last three years this was 46 submissions. In that time BEFS was also called to brief the Parliamentary Committee on Local Government, Housing and Planning in relation to coming priorities for the Parliamentary session.</p>
POLICY Events Inform policy development. Enhance sector capacity for strategic policy development	<p>BEFS will further collaborate and respond to developments in: Planning (NPF4); Community/Land/Place legislation; and policies related to climate change and a green/economic recovery – meaningfully positioning the historic environment contribution across policy fields.</p> <p>SG have stated that NPF4 will be the <i>spatial planning response to the climate emergency</i> – BEFS will continue to advocate for policies which support the role of the sector role within climate response.</p>
LOBBYING Events and Communications Scottish Parliament – engage on built & historic environment legislative agendas	<p>Reactive and adaptive targeted briefings introducing Members to the new (and existing) MSPs focusing on constituency case studies, highlighting benefits, and expressing how using and maintaining our existing places provide positive outcomes for people across legislative agendas.</p> <p>Wider focus for those in Ministerial and Cabinet roles – using Scotland wide statistics.</p>
LOBBYING Local Elections Communications	<p>The opportunity to lobby in relation to the Local Elections will mean that BEFS connects with all Community Councils, building on previous work.</p> <p>This will amplify the importance of our local communities and places, neighbourhoods where our existing environment will have an opportunity to improve active lives and provide sustainable homes.</p>

	BEFS will work in collaboration across the sector on advocacy messaging for the elections in Local Areas in relation to cultural heritage. Highlighting the benefits of spend in this area.
<p>MAINTENANCE Shared secretariat with Under One Roof, for Cross Party working group on Tenemental Maintenance</p> <p>Sector Advocacy & Messaging</p>	<p>The Maintenance agenda has a Scottish Government workplan. A reconvened working group has been formed by MSPs and work continues with BEFS and Under One Roof as secretariat.</p> <p>Progress is dependent on the work of Scottish Law Commission in accepting the Scottish Government developments and actions in this area. BEFS will support this work and any interim measures in relation to potential forthcoming legislation.</p> <p>This work develops not only the positive attributes that existing buildings provide in an environmental sense, but also highlights the potential for skilled employment (providing skilled employment directly supporting green recovery), and community benefits through warmer homes and improved places.</p>
Working with Scottish Traditional Buildings Forum & HES	<p>BEFS actively works with the Scottish Traditional Building Forum, valuing their role in highlighting the necessary skills and materials needs in relation to maintaining our places.</p> <p>BEFS will continue to work with HES in relation to the Traditional Building Health Check scheme, and will continue to lobby that the scheme as a stepping-stone solution in relation to the wider tenement maintenance Scottish Government Workplan above.</p>
Support of Parliamentary Working groups	<p>BEFS has regularly been an active participant of Parliamentary Working Groups in relation to: Architecture & The Built Environment; Construction; Culture; and Towns & Town Centres.</p> <p>In the current funding cycle BEFS worked with the sector professions – including ICE, RIAS, RTPI, RICS and Landscape Institute Scotland on a joint statement, launched at the A&BE CPG – supporting joined up policy making and collaborative action.</p>
Thought Leadership ‘challenge’ events – including Horizon Scanning and solution finding events.	<p>Encouraging sector-wide discussion and debate – enabling clearer approach to policy, and better articulation of the benefits of heritage.</p> <p>Enabling solutions to be brought forward, challenged and refined.</p>

	Providing a neutral space to explore strategic challenges to the sector, now and in the future.
<p>OPiT - Sector Strategy Development - series of events</p> <p>OPiT has now been superseded by <i>OPOF – Our Past, Our Future</i> – and BEFS work will be aligned to that strategy, and supporting sector engagement and delivery.</p>	<p>BEFS has sat on the OPiT: Built Heritage Investment Group, Skills Group, and Climate Change Group, as well as the CEO Forum. BEFS Chair has also attended the Strategic Historic Environment Forum (SHEF).</p> <p>BEFS aids facilitation and collaboration, supporting the successful implementation of the sector strategy through workshops, working groups, stakeholder engagement, advocacy and events.</p> <p>Within the period 2022-2025 the Strategy for the Historic Environment, Our Place in Time will come to its designed end. BEFS has worked extensively with the sector, and HES, to ensure that the next strategy reflect sector need, and fully realise sector opportunities to deliver positive outcomes across portfolios; supporting sustainable places for the future.</p>
<p>OPiT Built Heritage Investment Group</p> <p>&</p> <p>OPiT Climate Change Group</p>	<p>BEFS continues to work with the Project Manager for the OPiT BHIG and Climate Change Group striving to amplify the work of the group, and find further mechanisms to demonstrate how the existing built environment provides solutions and jobs.</p> <p>Prioritisation work culminated in the Sustainable Investment Toolkit - a toolkit enabling those working with an asset to assess it across a number of categories which meet the sustainable pillars of: society, economy, environment and culture. This work continues and a formal toolkit launch is expected in Spring 2023.</p>
<p>OPiT Skills Working Group</p>	<p>Gathering information from Members and Associates to assess needs/sector development around skills provision. Greater capacity for sector to engage with skills provision needs. BEFS will work to widen the understanding that those skills are seen as integral to meeting net zero targets.</p>
<p>Sector Recovery support – communications and connections</p>	<p>Support continued and enhanced partnership working across the sector, as was developed and expanded during the Covid emergency. Considering sector connecting activity which assists aligning innovation with the new reality.</p> <p>We appreciate thinking may need to be wider in terms of sustaining and developing cultural-heritage infrastructure. BEFS will work with Culture Counts to share information clearly across the cultural and heritage sectors. Highlighting the interconnectedness of arts, creative industries, and place;</p>

	to sustain economic, wellbeing and other social outcomes. Supporting a sector approach towards investment beyond a thematic or prioritised asset approach.
Built Environment Data – events and continued development	<p>Over the last year BEFS have held an event on sector building data projects and wish to develop this thinking. There is acceptance of the need for data to evidence policy making, and sector sustainability. BEFS believes collaboration on these issues, and the continued lobbying in relation to the potential (and original intent) in relation to ScotLIS is essential to understanding the skills and materials need and further evidencing the role our sector can play in a green recovery and a sustainable future.</p> <p>A new paper commissioned by David Hume Institute and BEFS was launched in spring 2023 and there are hopes for a short-life working group to continue this work.</p>
Advocacy	<p>Consistent advocacy messages which reframe the sector as an essential part of social solutions, community sustainability, community wellbeing, climate solutions, sustainable growth and COVID regeneration.</p> <p>Ensure our existing places are understood as essential to a just, green transition, and a green recovery.</p> <p>Ensure maintenance agenda, EPC ratings, and appropriate interventions in relation to retrofit all bring with them skills, training, and employment opportunities as well as the potential to provide warmer homes, thriving high streets, and more sustainable workplaces.</p>
BEFS communications and online engagement (press engagement, bi-monthly bulletin, website, blog posts, social media engagement)	<p>BEFS produces a bi-monthly bulletin, featuring blogs from across the sector, has an active social media presence on Twitter and LinkedIn and engages with Press regularly. BEFS readership/followers across all media continues to grow and BEFS Bulletin is frequently listed as a source of trusted information by other organisations.</p> <p>BEFS communications are adaptable – during the COVID Emergency BEFS was able to produce additional Bulletins focusing on Sector Funding, Advice and Organisational updates.</p>
ENGAGEMENT Culture Strategy and National Partnership for Culture	BEFS Membership fed-in to the development of the Culture Strategy. BEFS was previously asked to both feedback on briefing papers for a series of workshops led by the NPC, attend the events, and also to also gather Member views on the outcome papers from those workshops and feedback.

<p>BEFS WORKING GROUP Places of Worship Forum (POWF)</p>	<p>The working group was established in 2021 to deal with the heightened concerns around the future of ecclesiastical heritage. Involving owners, funders, and those giving advice to owners, this group provides neutral, non-denominational, organisation and facilitated discussions; looking at strategic outcomes for places of worship.</p> <p>Chaired by Sara Crofts, ICON. The group continues to form a strategic pathway document for sites beyond worship. Meets quarterly.</p>
<p>BEFS WORKING GROUP Historic Environment Working Group (HEWG)</p>	<p>This Working Group meets quarterly. A large percentage of BEFS Members regularly attend. At these meetings sector-wide updates are given and strategic topics are discussed. These discussions frequently inform policy responses.</p> <p>BEFS has previously supported the development of HES Corporate Plan, HEPS, and HES Grants refresh, through initial discussions in these groups. Further supporting events and meetings are formed to suit sector need. BEFS expects to support HES with sector events for the Grants Refresh programme in the coming grant period.</p>
<p>BEFS WORKING GROUP Conservation Officers Group (COG)</p>	<p>Group formed in 2021 to enable: Signposting to Member and stakeholder skills and research; budget awareness; support the interaction of those in roles related to Local/Planning Authority Conservation. Considerable interest and engagement with this group has demonstrated the need for the connecting, sharing, and learning environment which BEFS has formed online (via Teams), and which BEFS supports as secretariat. Meets quarterly.</p>
<p>MEMBERSHIP The function of BEFS for knowledge exchange and interdisciplinary / cross-sectoral networking</p>	<p>BEFS is a membership forum and a 'safe space' for knowledge exchange and interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral networking. Mapping of activities in the historic environment sector to enhance collaboration among organisations. This enhances sector-wide capacity for strategic policy development.</p>
<p>BEFS online offer: Working Group pages, COG Team, POWF Team</p>	<p>BEFS developed its online presence in 2020 with the Members' Forum and HEWG page. BEFS continues to ensure that online communications, networks, and facilities for Members are continually enhanced. The use of Microsoft Teams for the Conservation Officers Group and the Places of Worship Forum, enables communication and resource access most suitable to local authorities. Increasing accessibility and networking in a way not previously possible.</p>