

# Recruitment Pack: Policy Manager

FEBRUARY 2026



# Contents

3-4

Introductory message from  
the Chief Executive

5

Information about the Role

5-6

About Plunkett UK

6-8

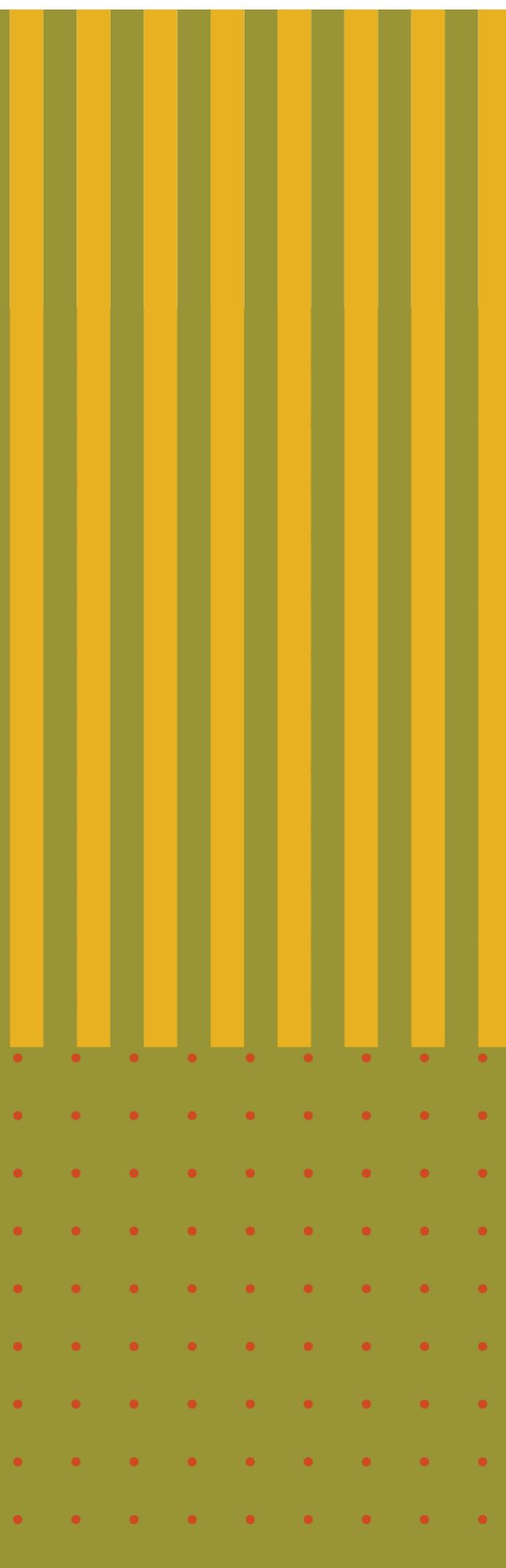
Job Description

8

Application Process

9-10

Benefits and our  
commitment to EDI





# Introductory message from the Chief Executive

## **Thank you for your interest in the role of Policy Manager.**

We are delighted to provide you with an application pack and it is hoped that the information provided will be of interest and help you with your application process.

Plunkett UK is an established charity dating back to 1919, but our focus is firmly on the present and ensuring our work remains relevant to the communities we seek to represent. Our five-year strategy (2022-2026) outlines our ambition to grow the community business sector in terms of size, geographic reach and impact. This is because of the potential the community business model has in transforming the lives of people living in rural communities and the positive contributions they can make to the local economy and to the environment.

Plunkett has always been an organisation that adapts and evolves to ensure its relevance to society and is making the most difference to people, place and planet. I joined the organisation in 2007 and was appointed CEO in 2017. I can honestly say, I have never known Plunkett's support be in such demand as it is today, and this reassures me that we are on the right path.

I am particularly proud to be leading Plunkett through its next chapter and diversifying our income streams through corporate partnerships and earned income via membership and consultancy. We have recently launched our vision and action plan for making the countryside a more welcoming and inclusive place for a diverse society to live, work and visit. We actively push for change, through our policy and advocacy work with government departments, ministers, think tanks and local authorities across the UK – representing our members and enabling a more supportive environment for community businesses to set up and thrive.





With these exciting plans ahead of us, we are looking for new staff to join us who are passionate about what we do and are equally excited about the journey ahead of us. It doesn't matter what your role is at Plunkett, we are a team who work and support one another to achieve our goals. Everyone has a voice at Plunkett, and if successful, you will be encouraged to use yours and influence our internal culture as well as our future growth and external impact.

As CEO, I believe in working hard, and set a culture of high quality leadership with ambitious but obtainable targets. It is also my role to ensure everyone is given the opportunity to learn, develop and thrive. But I also strive to create an environment which is fun and rewarding to be part of.

Finally, thank you once again for your interest in Plunkett UK and the position available. I hope that this introductory letter has given you a clear sense of our culture and ethos as well as a feel of what we are looking for. If you decide to apply, we do appreciate how long it takes to apply for jobs and you can be sure we will take time and care in reading your CV and supporting statement.

We look forward to hearing from you and exploring your future with us through our selection process.

Yours faithfully,

**James Alcock**  
**Chief Executive**



## Information about the role

Job Title:	Policy Manager
Location:	Flexible: office based, remote or a combination of both will be considered. Travel to the office may be required for key meetings or team days.
Reporting to:	Chief Executive
Responsible for:	n/a
Salary Range:	£28,000 - £46,015
Contract:	Full time – Permanent

## About Plunkett UK

Plunkett UK, the operational name for Plunkett Foundation, is a national charity supporting people in rural areas to set up and run successful businesses in community ownership. We do this to achieve our UK-wide vision for resilient, thriving and inclusive rural communities.

### What is a community business?

Community-owned businesses are owned and controlled by community members, who each have an equal and democratic say in how the business is run. They can be any type of business ranging from village shops, pubs and cafes, through to woodlands, fisheries and farms.

### Why do we believe that community businesses are a ‘Better form of Business’?

Plunkett UK has promoted the community ownership model for over 100 years because of its track record for delivering better businesses for people, communities, the economy, and the environment.

We help community businesses to:

- Provide a wide range of services and amenities that communities value and need – enabling people to live independently, particularly in areas of market failure
- Stimulate the rural economy through localised supply chains
- Create access to employment and training and volunteering opportunities- often supporting people who are excluded from the labour market
- Tackle climate change through environmentally responsible behaviours
- Promote equity, diversity and inclusion by creating safe and welcoming spaces for all

Once trading, community-owned businesses rarely fail, having a five-year survival rate of 97.5% and over twenty-year survival rate of 94%.

### How we work:

Plunkett operates as one team. This means that every member of staff is expected to support Plunkett as a whole, and as and when required, this means helping others to meet important targets or complete organisation-wide initiatives. As such, there will be times when you are asked to work on tasks outside of your job description – but it also means that the whole of Plunkett is there to support you when required.

We strive to live up to our values, and be committed, inspiring, inclusive and collaborative in the way that we work – both internally and externally – and we welcome applications from like-minded individuals. As a member of the Plunkett team, you will demonstrate a knowledge, understanding and commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and its application in all that we do.

## Job description

### Job Purpose

The Policy Manager will champion Plunkett UK's policy and public affairs work, ensuring that the voices, experiences and priorities of rural community-owned businesses are effectively represented in local, regional and national policy discussions. The role holder will advocate for a supportive policy, legislative and funding environment in which the community-owned business sector can flourish.

A core element of this role is developing strong, trusted relationships with Plunkett's community business members. The postholder will take a **"listen first, act second" approach**, grounded in regular consultation and engagement, to understand members' needs and translate these into clear, evidence-based policy positions and advocacy.

The role is focused on influence rather than management, and will work closely with the CEO and colleagues across the organisation to support Plunkett's strategic objectives.

You will be expected to carry out any other duties that may reasonably be required in line with your main duties. All Plunkett staff members are expected to adhere to Plunkett's policies and processes.

## Principal Accountabilities

### Policy development and advocacy

- Represent Plunkett UK and advocate for the community business model in policy-focused meetings, events and forums
- Identify, build and maintain relationships with key political and policy stakeholders at national and regional level
- Monitor policy, legislative and funding developments relevant to community-owned businesses and rural communities
- Monitor policy, legislative and funding developments relevant to Plunkett's 'place-making' activities
- Shape and communicate clear policy positions that support a positive operating environment for rural community-owned businesses
- Provide policy briefings, insights and recommendations to the CEO, Executive Team and colleagues as required

### Member engagement and consultation

- Build strong relationships with community business members to understand their lived experience, challenges and priorities
- Establish regular and meaningful consultation mechanisms with members, ensuring diverse voices are heard
- Take a listening-led approach to policy development, ensuring advocacy is grounded in member insight and evidence
- Translate member experience into compelling policy narratives and consultation responses
- Address policy, regulatory and operational barriers faced by individual community-owned businesses, working on behalf of members to resolve issues through targeted engagement with relevant organisations, regulators and decision-makers.

### Data and evidence

- Coordinate and synthesise member input into external policy and legislative consultations
- Work with Plunkett's CRM manager to ensure we are collecting good quality data on the performance, impact and characteristics of all rural community businesses setting up and trading in the UK
- Support the use of data and insight to demonstrate the impact and value of community-owned businesses

### Lead on the production of our research and report publications:

- Lead on the production of our 'Better Business Reports' – Plunkett's flagship publication recording the achievements and characteristics of the rural community business sector
- Design, research and draft other relevant research publications as required
- Coordinate the delivery of associated events and campaigns to promote our research and raise our profile to target audiences

### Organisational contribution

- Work collaboratively across teams to ensure policy work is aligned with organisational priorities
- Maintain Plunkett UK's reputation and apolitical stance in all policy and external engagement
- Carry out any other duties that may reasonably be required in line with the role

### Person Specification

#### Knowledge and experience

- Good working knowledge of UK policy-making processes and political structures at national and/or regional level
- Experience of policy development, public affairs or advocacy, ideally within the charity, social enterprise or community sector
- Understanding of rural issues, community ownership or place-based policy is desirable

#### Skills and attributes

- Strong listener: able to build trust and genuinely engage with stakeholders to understand their perspectives
- Influential communicator: able to translate complex issues into clear, persuasive policy messages
- Collaborative: enjoys working across teams and building positive external relationships
- Analytical: able to interpret evidence, research and consultation responses to inform policy positions
- Proactive and organised: able to manage priorities, spot opportunities and take initiative
- Values-driven: committed to equity, diversity and inclusion and to representing communities authentically

## To apply for the role

**Please submit an up-to-date CV and covering letter**, including a supporting statement of no more than 2 sides of A4 outlining your suitability for the role according to the job description.

**Please send your application to:** [hr@plunkett.co.uk](mailto:hr@plunkett.co.uk)

**Closing date for applications:** 5pm on Thursday 19 March 2026

**Interview date:** First stage interview will be held on Monday 30 March 2026 via video conference. Second stage interviews will be held at Plunkett UK's offices in Woodstock, Oxfordshire (likely to be w/c 7 April 2026).

**Use of AI:** It's 2026, and most of us use AI to help with writing in some way. We get it – and to be transparent, AI helped us put this pack together too! But when it comes to your cover letter, we want to get a sense of you: *what motivates you, what you care about, and why this role speaks to you.*

AI can be great for sparking ideas, but it can also smooth out personality and replace it with generic phrases. So, feel free to use it as a tool – but don't let it take over. We'd much rather read something genuine and personal than something perfectly polished but anonymous. A cover letter with your real voice is far more valuable to us than one that sounds like it was written by a bot.

## Our commitment to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Our approach to EDI goes beyond 'protected characteristics' to thinking more broadly about inclusion. Every individual will think and feel differently and we believe that these differences should be embraced, and individual needs taken into account. Additionally, the makeup of the rural communities we work with leads to their own particular diversity and exclusion challenges and opportunities compared to urban areas. Our commitment to EDI, both internally and externally, has been tailored to Plunkett and the communities we serve.

## Plunkett benefits

### Pension

Plunkett UK operates a workplace pension scheme. Plunkett currently contributes 6% of your gross basic salary to the scheme.

In addition, a salary sacrifice scheme is available which gives you the option to exchange part of your salary for pension contributions. This is an 'opt in' scheme which means you will not be automatically enrolled into this scheme.

### Life Insurance

Plunkett operates a non-contributory life insurance scheme. In the event of the death of an employee, the insured sum (currently 3 times salary) will be payable to the named beneficiary(ies). This scheme is arranged with MetLife for the benefit of permanent full-time and part-time employees between the ages of 18 and 65 only.

### Living Wage

We believe in rewarding staff fairly for the jobs that they do, and fostering a positive working environment, and we believe that our salaries and terms and conditions reflect this. We are a Living Wage-accredited employer, meaning all our staff and contractors are paid at least the Living Wage.

### Annual Leave

The average UK holiday entitlement including public holidays is 33.5 days.

Plunkett's holiday entitlement is **35 days**. All Full Time Plunkett employees are eligible for 27 days' paid holiday in addition to the 8 statutory bank holidays (Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, May Bank Holiday, Spring Bank Holiday and Summer Bank Holiday). Part Time Employees' holiday entitlement is calculated on a pro rata basis

### Long Service Leave

Plunkett provides long service leave as follows:

- An additional two days awarded following five years' service
- A further two days after ten years' service
- A final two days after fifteen years' service i.e. maximum 33 days paid holiday excluding statutory holidays and calculated pro rata to the hours you work.

### Birthday Bonus

In addition to holiday entitlement, we offer an additional day's leave on or around staff birthdays. This is a discretionary benefit which is reviewed annually.

### **Volunteering Days**

We offer staff the opportunity to volunteer for up to 14 hours per annum within their working time. This may be used in their own community, at a community business or by serving on a board of trustees for a charity of their interest.

### **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**

An EAP is a confidential service offering support and guidance on a wide range of personal or professional issues that may affect your health and wellbeing. This is a discretionary benefit.

### **Flexibility in working**

We offer ad-hoc flexibility on request to enable staff to accommodate personal events and appointments and commitments as required. To arrange this please speak to your line manager. With effect 2 October 2024 this includes flexibility to manage your contracted working hours between the hours of 8 am till 18.00 pm (Monday to Friday).

### **Training**

Plunkett believes that well trained employees are key to business success and is committed to developing its staff. Training needs will be discussed with your manager during annual performance reviews, but you are encouraged to discuss training with your manager if / when the need arises. A generous annual training budget is developed based on individual, department and organisational needs.

### **Mental Health First Aider (MHFA)**

Plunkett considers your wellbeing and mental health to be very important. We have invested in colleague training; Mary Boullin is our current MHFA.

### **Christmas Party**

Plunkett organise and fund an annual 'staff only' event provided during working hours.

### **Office environment**

We provide a pleasant and modern working environment. This includes a well-equipped kitchen which provides tea/coffee and milk free of charge; a breakout area for lunch and breaks; and a garden area which is maintained by staff volunteers. The office is also based a short walk from services in Woodstock and surrounded by public footpaths offering local walks in the open countryside and Blenheim Palace parkland.

### **Parking/Transport**

Woodstock is served by good public transport links and the office has some on-site parking.

The Quadrangle, Banbury Road, Woodstock,  
Oxfordshire, OX20 1LH

01993 630022

[info@plunkett.co.uk](mailto:info@plunkett.co.uk)

[www.plunkett.co.uk](http://www.plunkett.co.uk)

Plunkett Foundation is a registered charity, numbers CC 313743 (England and Wales) and SC 045932 (Scotland). It is a company limited by guarantee, registered number 00213235.

