Planning Aid **Wales**
Cymorth Cynllunio **Cymru**

Chief Executive

Job Description & Person Specification

Reports to:	Planning Aid Wales Management Board
Salary / benefits:	£48,000–£55,000 per annum (pro rata if job share), dependent on skills and experience. <9% matched pension contributions (NEST). 28 days' leave + bank holidays. Appropriate professional fees paid.
Location:	Fully remote, with occasional travel across Wales and elsewhere as required.
Hours:	Full-time, 37hrs per week. Applications for a job-share arrangement will be considered for suitable candidates.

About Planning Aid Wales

Planning Aid Wales (PAW) is a specialist, independent national organisation with the agility to work across communities, the planning profession, government, local authorities and the wider development sector.

PAW is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. Our charitable purpose is to promote and facilitate meaningful community engagement in the planning process in Wales, helping people and communities to have a voice and play an informed part in decisions affecting their places.

We are positive about planning and its potential to create better places, while providing an independent voice for meaningful community involvement. Our role is not to support or oppose development, but to help make planning more informed, inclusive, accessible and effective.

PAW is governed by an independent Management Board of volunteer Trustee Directors, which provides strategic direction, financial oversight and governance. More information about the Management Board is available at www.planningaidwales.org.uk/about-us/our-people/management-board/

Over the coming years, Planning Aid Wales' priorities include:

1. Grow our profile as Wales' leading source of Place Plan expertise & support
Build on our experience to develop a distinctive PAW approach, supporting communities, Town and Community Councils and LPAs from early engagement through to plan preparation, adoption and delivery.

2. Champion meaningful engagement as an integral part of good planning.
Promote earlier, continuous and proportionate engagement that builds trust, improves understanding and adds value to plans, projects and places. Develop approaches that reach young people, underrepresented groups and those less likely to participate through conventional methods.

3. Provide national leadership on good engagement practice.
Develop PAW as a centre for expertise, guidance, training and practical support; identify and share good practice and work across the sector to improve the consistency and quality of engagement in Wales.

4. Innovate in how people engage with planning.
Combine effective face-to-face engagement with digital tools, mapping, visual communication, video and emerging technologies to make planning easier to understand and participation more accessible.

5. Grow a resilient, entrepreneurial and responsive organisation.
Build partnerships, develop new services and commissioned work, diversify income and respond quickly to emerging opportunities, while protecting PAW's independence, reputation and charitable purpose.

Purpose of the role

The Chief Executive will provide strategic and operational leadership for Planning Aid Wales, working with the Management Board to deliver the charity's mission, priorities and long-term financial and organisational sustainability.

The postholder will combine strong organisational leadership with professional credibility in planning and community engagement, promoting PAW's distinctive role within the Welsh planning system.

Key responsibilities

Organisational leadership and business development

- Lead the organisation, staff team and day-to-day operations of PAW.
- Ensure PAW is effectively managed as a charity and company, working with the Board to meet its governance, regulatory and charitable responsibilities.
- Work with the Board to develop strategy, business plans, budgets and organisational priorities.

- Develop new business, commissions, partnerships and funding opportunities that support PAW's charitable purpose.
- Maintain effective financial management, forecasting, risk management and internal controls.
- Lead on HR, staff development, recruitment and performance management.
- Maintain effective organisational policies, systems and regulatory compliance.
- Manage relationships with Welsh Government, funders, clients and key partners.
- Ensure PAW's core services and commissioned projects are delivered effectively and to a high standard.

Planning, Place Plans and community engagement

- Provide professional leadership on planning and community engagement in Wales.
- Develop PAW's expertise and profile in Place Plans and place-based community planning.
- Lead and, where appropriate, directly deliver significant engagement projects, training and commissions.
- Promote meaningful, inclusive and proportionate engagement throughout planning processes.
- Develop guidance, training and practical support for communities, planners, elected members and other sectors.
- Identify, develop and share good practice in engagement across Wales.
- Represent PAW in policy discussions, consultations, professional forums and public events.
- Maintain a positive and constructive approach to planning and the contribution of the profession to better places.

Digital engagement, communications and profile

- Provide leadership on PAW's digital capability, online services and use of emerging technology.
- Lead the development and management of PAW websites and online engagement platforms, including commissioning and managing external suppliers where required.
- Oversee PAW's IT services and systems, including IT contracts, cyber security and relationships with external providers.

- Promote effective use of mapping, visual communication, video and other accessible engagement tools.
- Ensure technology supports inclusion and accessibility rather than creating barriers to participation.
- Raise PAW's profile across planning, government, communities and the wider public and third sectors.
- Act as a spokesperson for PAW where appropriate.

Person Specification

Essential

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Senior leadership or management experience, preferably within a charity, third-sector or similarly governed organisation, including responsibility for people, budgets and organisational delivery.
- Understanding of charity governance and the respective roles of a Trustee Board and Chief Executive.
- A strong understanding of planning in Wales, or relevant experience and knowledge sufficient to provide credible leadership within the Welsh planning sector.
- Significant experience of community or stakeholder engagement.
- Ability to develop new business, partnerships, commissions or funding opportunities.
- Strong project and programme management skills.
- Excellent written, verbal, presentation and facilitation skills.
- Ability to build effective relationships across government, local authorities, communities, professional bodies and other sectors.
- Sound financial, risk and organisational management skills.
- Confidence using digital technology and an understanding of its potential for communication and engagement.
- Ability to work strategically while remaining comfortable with hands-on delivery in an agile organisation.
- Sound judgement, political awareness and commitment to PAW's independence and impartiality.
- Commitment to equality, inclusion and meaningful community participation.

Desirable

- Membership of the RTPI or another relevant professional body.
- Experience of Place Plans, placemaking or community-led planning.
- Experience of working with a trustee or non-executive Board.
- Confidence leading digital services and projects, including working with websites, online platforms, IT systems and external technology providers.
- Welsh language skills.

Level of authority

The Chief Executive is responsible to the Management Board for the effective leadership and management of Planning Aid Wales and will operate within authority delegated by the Board.

The postholder will have responsibility for organisational budgets, staff management, contracts, commissioned work and external representation, within agreed policies and financial controls.

How to Apply

Please complete and return the application form to info@planningaidwales.org.uk by 5pm on **Monday 30 November 2026**.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a **face-to-face interview at Cardiff University on Monday 14 December 2026**.

Candidates are asked to ensure they are available on the interview date before applying.