AWS

OUR future









Senior Place Lead

Candidate Information Pack

Welcome



I am so thrilled that you are interested in joining us to do, what I believe, is the most important work of our lifetime – building a future that we will be proud to hand to future generations, one where every community thrives.

This work is both hugely ambitious and practical. Our vision and dreams are transformative and our belief is that we will only get there by doing the work, getting stuck in, demonstrating that a better alternative is possible and there is a route to get there.

For those of us doing the work, we therefore have to hold both of these things in tension at all times:

- The big ambition and opening up a space of ambition for others
- Practically delivering quality exemplars of this work

One of my aims from the outset was that the experience of engaging with this work needs to be joyful. Social change can be very earnest and at times quite "hair shirted". We want to create spaces that capture the joy of coming together and untap people's sense of the possible. While this work is hard, we hope that if you join us, you will also find it joyful, life affirming and that you will enable others to feel that too.

In the places we work, we're proving what's possible when local people lead and the system gets behind them. We started in Grimsby and have since expanded to Rochdale. Kirkcaldy will be Our Future's first location in Scotland.

We hope that, if you join us, when you look back on your life this will be one of the things you are proudest to have been part of. We're excited to build something transformative together.

Onwards,

Emily Bolton
CEO and Co-Founder



About Our Future

In every town, brilliant people are working to make things better. They spot what's needed, bring others with them, and start creating change. But too often, they're doing it in spite of the system, not because of it.

Our Future exists to change that. We help local people take control of their town's future, together. We support the creation of a shared vision, connect energy and ideas, and help long-term funding flow to what matters most, as decided by the people who live there. At the same time, we use what we learn on the ground to influence national policy and funding so that it better supports citizen-led, place-based change.

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Role overview

We're looking for an experienced, senior place leader who is ambitious for the future of our hometowns, and combines community roots with credibility in rooms with decision-makers.

You'll lead Our Future's work in Kirkcaldy –facilitating a bold, citizen-led strategy, growing new partnerships, and ensuring the energy and ideas already alive in the town can turn into lasting change. Central parts of the role include: connecting what's happening nationally – policy, funding, opportunities – to local ambition and action; working closely with the Local Authority to understand their priorities; and being bold and creative about how money and power can move toward what the community wants.

You'll be someone who can engage decision-makers positively and build genuine partnership, while acting as a critical friend rather than someone who waits for permission. You'll be equally comfortable talking with a council leader, a funder or a resident on their doorstep, and you'll hold a strong, personal belief in the Our Future model and what it can achieve.

Job Description

Location: Based in Kirkcaldy, Fife (essential)

Hours: 35 hours, Monday-Friday

Salary: 60-65K

Reporting to: Operations Director

Contract: Full-time, permanent

Direct reports: Place Associate, Kirkcaldy

Key responsibilities

Place leadership and strategy

- Develop and facilitate a bold, citizen-led strategy for Kirkcaldy, rooted in what matters to the community
- Create a clear project plan that drives momentum and sets clear milestones and holds partners accountable to agreed commitments, while staying agile enough to respond to new opportunities as they arise
- Grow the movement by building belief in collective action, widening participation and connecting people who care about their place
- Organise inclusive and energising events that are joyful, designed so everyone takes part as an equal, and help build shared purpose, trust and momentum
- Uphold a strong commitment to quality in everything the Kirkcaldy place team produces and delivers
- Bring expertise in developing local governance, systems and delivery infrastructure that can sustain long-term change

Connecting national to local

- Connect national policy, funders and opportunities to local ambition and action in Kirkcaldy
- Represent Kirkcaldy's ambitions confidently in national conversations, and bring key decision makers to the town to strengthen Kirkcaldy's vision
- Build relationships with funders and national partners that open up opportunities for the place

Partnership and the Local Authority

- Work with the Local Authority to understand their priorities and find genuine common ground
- Positively engage decision-makers and build trusted relationships, while being willing to act as a critical friend rather than seeking permission
- Connect as equals with anyone – from council leaders and funders to residents – building credibility and trust across very different audiences
- Build and maintain strong relationships across sectors, including community, business, local government and funders
- Spot opportunities to connect people, align efforts and unlock change

Team development and culture

- Line manage and develop the Kirkcaldy Place Associate
- Help build a working culture that reflects Our Future's values: generous, practical, relational and ambitious
- Work with others to create simple and supportive ways of working that help people thrive

Experience and skills

We're open about where you've come from. You may have worked in community development, local systems, public service, local government or place-based change. What matters most is your seniority of judgement, how you work with others, and your commitment to creating lasting impact.

- Substantial experience leading place-based or community strategies or programmes at a senior level
- A track record of building credible, effective relationships with local authorities, funders or other decision-makers
- Strong project and planning skills, with the ability to create and drive a clear plan while adapting quickly to new opportunities
- Great communication and relationship-building skills, with a calm, confident presence across very different settings
- Experience of managing people and creating inclusive environments where people feel trusted and motivated
- A practical mindset and the ability to turn vision into action on the ground

Knowledge and understanding

- Understanding of what helps communities thrive and how to support citizen-led change
- Familiarity with civic systems, local infrastructure or participatory approaches, including Scotland's place-based policy landscape
- Lived or professional experience in Kirkcaldy or Fife is highly desirable
- A strong commitment to equity, inclusion and local ownership
- A genuine belief in the Our Future model, and the ability to bring others along with that belief
- Strong appreciation of how to connect local action to wider policy and investment

Personal qualities

- Confident and credible. You connect as equals with anyone, from decision-makers to residents
- Courageous. You're willing to be a critical friend and challenge constructively, rather than wait for permission
- Warm and relational. You believe in people, build trust quickly, and value their stories and strengths
- Tenacious and thoughtful. You stay the course and act with care
- Practical and adaptable. You drive momentum and focus on progress, not perfection
- Collaborative and humble. You lead with others, not over them
- Positive and persistent. You believe in what's possible and help others believe it too





What we can offer

This role is offered on a 5-day week basis (35 hours, Monday-Friday). We are open to flexible working requests, including compressed hours across 4 days, and will consider these on a case-by-case basis in line with the needs of the role.

We prioritise wellbeing and flexibility, but we're also a small and agile team. When key moments or deadlines come around, we all pitch in and support each other.

- **Five weeks annual leave plus bank holidays and extra time off over Christmas**
- **A 10% employer pension contribution, with a 3% employee contribution**
- **A values-led culture built on trust, flexibility and shared purpose**

Whenever we start work in a new place, we treat the first year as a genuine test of whether our model is the right fit – this is true everywhere we go, not just in Kirkcaldy. We want to be upfront: at the end of that period, we'll make an honest assessment together about whether to continue, adapt, or step back.

This is a permanent contract, not a fixed-term one – but we think it's fair to tell you candidly that there is some uncertainty involved.

Requirements of the role

- Based in Kirkcaldy, Fife or close by
- The ability to travel independently is essential – including access to a car and a full UK driving licence
- Willingness to travel regularly to Our Future's other location and to London, and to events nationwide as required
- Right to work in the UK

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We want Our Future to reflect the diversity of the communities we work with. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds and lived experiences. If you're excited by this role but unsure whether you meet every requirement, please consider applying or getting in touch for a conversation.

How to apply

Please contact Alan Surgeon or Donna McKay at AWS Executive to arrange a confidential discussion about the vacancy.

E: ourfuture@awsexecutive.com

Recruitment Timeline

Closing date: Monday 30th November 2026
Interviews: week commencing 7th December 2026

Please submit a tailored CV and covering letter via the microsite link below, demonstrating how your knowledge, skills and experience align with the requirements outlined in the job pack.

Microsite link: https://awsexecutive.com/seniorplacelead-ourfuture/

OUR future

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