

**citizens
advice**

**Staffordshire
South West**



Trustee Candidate Pack

Citizens Advice Staffordshire South West

Thanks for your interest in Citizens Advice. This job pack should give you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to volunteer at Citizens Advice.

We're looking for an ambitious and forward-thinking trustee to help us deliver on our dual mission in the future; giving the advice people need to solve the problems they face and advocating to address their underlying causes.

No one else sees so many people with so many different kinds of problems, and that gives us a unique insight into the challenges people are facing today.

That's why we're here: to give people the knowledge and the confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.

We share knowledge and best practice so people can expect the same quality of support across our service. We also work to fix the underlying causes of people's problems.

Our Values

We're generous

We work together, sharing knowledge and experience to solve problems. We tell it like it is and respect everyone.

We're inventive

We're not afraid of trying new things and learn by getting things wrong. We question every idea to make it better and we change when things aren't working.

We're responsible

We work together, sharing knowledge and experience to solve problems. We tell it like it is and respect everyone.

Three things you should know about being a trustee

Here at Citizens Advice, we couldn't do what we do without our Trustees. Last year, we helped 2.66 million people find a way forward. Without the leadership and direction of our Trustees, none of this would have been possible.

We have over 1600 Trustees across Citizens Advice at a local and national level.

Here's why they're so important...

1. They're vital to the structure of our organisation. As each local office is an independent charity, each office needs a Trustee board, which works in a similar way to a board of Directors. Our Trustees work collectively to make key decisions, set the strategy, and keep us on track with our mission. They help ensure local offices are fulfilling their purpose of helping people and have all the relevant procedures in place. This means they take on a huge responsibility for the overall health and efficiency of our organisation.

2. They're volunteers. Many people don't know that Trustees volunteer their time and experience for free. This shows how generous they are, as being on a board for Citizens Advice is no small commitment, and it is a highly valued role. Our Trustees take on this challenge out of their desire to make society better for everyone. Volunteering as a trustee is very rewarding as our trustees shape the work and direction of our local offices and make a real difference to the clients and communities they serve.

3. They bring a breadth and depth of business and life experience to the role. What makes Trustees so important and influential is they bring so much knowledge and skills from different areas. Many of our Trustees have had long careers, are subject matter experts, or can bring vital insights into how to make Citizens Advice the best it can be through their lived experience. Trustees are supported by Citizens Advice and become part of a team adding their unique skills, experience and knowledge while learning from others too.

Three things you should know about us

1. **We're local and we're national.** We have 6 national offices and offer direct support to people in around 280 independent local Citizens Advice services across England and Wales.
2. **We're here for everyone.** Our advice helps people solve problems and our advocacy helps fix problems in society. Whatever the problem, we won't turn people away.
3. **We're listened to** and we make a difference. Our trusted brand and the quality of our research mean we make a real impact on behalf of the people who rely on us.

How our organisation works

The Citizens Advice service is made up of the national charity and a network of 283 local Citizens Advice members.

Our reach means that 99% of people in England and Wales can access a local Citizens Advice within 30 minutes of where they live.



The Citizens Advice service has had a presence in Staffordshire since 1939. As an Independent charity, our community-based service has always strived to help anyone who needs it. We are well known, well established and a well-respected organisation that has grown and diversified over 80 years.

Citizens Advice Staffordshire South West has 90 volunteers and staff who work with over 10,000 people to address more than 30,000 issues every year, providing free, independent, impartial and high quality advice. Our service gives people the knowledge and the confidence they need to find their way forward – whoever they are, and whatever their problem.

We provide our services from five sites and additional outreach venues across the districts of Stafford Borough, Cannock Chase and South Staffordshire. We deliver our services through a range of access routes including telephone, email and web chat, video calls and face to face so clients can access the service in a way that suits them.

The main areas of advice we provide are welfare benefits, universal credit, debt, housing, fuel poverty, employment and family matters and we are the only service who is there to support everyone whatever their issue. We provide additional specialist casework services for debt. Further specialist services include Victim Gateway, Pension Wise and Energy advice.

We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination wherever we find it, and through our research and campaign work, we speak up on the issues that affect people's lives.

About the role

Our trustees play a vital role in making sure that Citizens Advice Staffordshire South West (CASSW) achieves its core purpose. They oversee the overall management and administration of the charity. They also ensure that CASSW has a clear strategy and that our work and goals are in line with our vision. Just as importantly, they support and challenge the executive team to enable CASSW to grow and thrive, and through this, achieve our mission.

Board members have a collective responsibility. This means that trustees always act as a group and not as individuals.

Duties

- Support and provide advice on CASSW's purpose, vision, goals and activities. Approve operational strategies and policies, and monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Oversee CASSW's financial plans and budgets and monitor and evaluate progress.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- Ensure that key risks are being identified, monitored and controlled effectively. Review and approve CASSW's financial statements.
- Provide support and challenge to CASSW's CEO in the exercise of their delegated authority and affairs.
- Keep abreast of changes in CASSW's operating environment.
- Contribute to regular reviews of CASSW's own governance. Attend Board meetings, adequately prepared to contribute to discussions.
- Use independent judgment, acting legally and in good faith to promote and protect CASSW's interests, to the exclusion of their own personal and/or any third party interests.
- Contribute to the broader promotion of CASSW's objects, aims and reputation by applying your skills, expertise, knowledge and contacts.

What we are looking for

We are looking for people willing to bring energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the role, and who will broaden the diversity of thinking on our board. You do not need previous governance experience – we will provide a comprehensive induction, training and online learning. We particularly want to recruit more women, young people and candidates from ethnic communities to increase the diversity across the board. We are looking to recruit people with skills and experience in the following:

- Human resources/Employment
- Business development/Strategy
- Income generation
- Law/legal

Personal skills and qualities

- Willingness and ability to understand and accept their responsibilities and liabilities as trustees and to act in the best interests of the organisation.
- Ability to think creatively and strategically, exercise good, independent judgment and work effectively as a board member.
- Effective communication skills and willingness to participate actively in discussion.
- strong personal commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. Enthusiasm for our vision and mission.
- Willingness to lead according to our values, aims and objectives
Commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Time Commitment

- The board meets 4 times a year.
- Trustees will also ideally join a subcommittee. These meetings take place prior to board meetings. The sub groups are: Finance & Resources, Quality & Performance and Executive group.
- Attending any additional away day/planning meetings (usually bi-annually). Participating in the annual membership self assessment of the service (this usually takes 2-3 hrs time).
- Trustees meet both remotely or in person at our Stafford office. Remote attendance can be supported when needed.

Terms of office

Trustees are appointed for a three year term of office, renewable for three further terms to a maximum of twelve years.

This is a voluntary position, but reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

Political impartiality

An important part of the principle of impartiality is that Citizens Advice staff and volunteers are seen to be upholding the principle of party political impartiality.

To avoid possible misunderstanding or possible conflicts of interest, guidelines have been established on staff and volunteers taking part in party political activities. If you currently hold, or are intending to stand for local or national party political office, we will expect you to tell us about this if shortlisted for interview.

Equality and Diversity

Citizens Advice recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges unfair discrimination. We recognise that people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and we wish to encourage and harness these differences to make our services more relevant and approachable. Citizens Advice will not discriminate or tolerate discriminatory behaviour on the grounds of race, colour, sex, transgender, disability, nationality, national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, marital/partnership or family status, sexual orientation, age, social class, educational background, employment status, working pattern, trade union membership or any other irrelevant factor in any aspect of employment.

To help us achieve this, we aim to make our recruitment process as fair as it can be. We also offer support to disabled candidates to make sure no one loses out on a role because of their condition.

We judge the application, not the person. This makes sure each person's response is judged on its merits and not on their background.

We offer a guaranteed interview scheme. If you have a disability and your application meets the minimum criteria for the post, we'll interview you for it.

We're committed to changing attitudes towards disability, and making sure disabled people have the chance to fulfil their aspirations.

We're committed to progress on age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation and broader equality and human rights issues.

Our commitment to equality runs through everything we do.

Dignity at work

Citizens Advice is committed to providing a culture in which all staff value each other and are able to work together to their full potential in an inclusive environment free from harassment, bullying and other unacceptable forms of behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour in the workplace will be actively dealt

with, all complaints will be taken seriously, confidentiality will be respected and victimisation of those that raise complaints will not be tolerated.

Our values include commitments to work together and value each other – all our trustees are expected to have read and understood our Dignity at Work Policy and to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles.



To Apply:

Please send your CV together with a covering letter. We will then contact you to arrange an informal chat, prior to an interview with the Chair and members of the Board.

**Please submit to:
recruitment@citizensadvice.org.uk**

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