



# Outline of the role for a Volunteer Generalist Adviser

**The adviser is a member of a team of voluntary and paid local office staff who provide a free, confidential, impartial and independent service to the public.**

## **Purpose of the role:**

Working within the aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice Service:

- to provide an effective and efficient advice and information service
- to help influence government and other organisations by informing them of the effect of their actions on the lives of clients (Research & Campaigns)

## **Ways of working:**

- Give a service that complies with Citizens Advice principles
- Actively support Citizens Advice equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policies
- Contribute towards a safe and positive working environment
- Give a service which meets the need to maintain quality

## **Working with Clients:**

Talk to clients over the phone or face to face in a way that is both confidential and impartial:

- Enabling the client to explain, explore and clarify the problem
- Supporting clients to take action to resolve their problems, which might include drafting or writing letters making phone calls or carrying out benefit checks
- Identifying discrimination through pro-active questioning
- Concluding the interview in a positive manner by making appropriate referrals, agreements and case records

### **Working to influence change (Research & Campaigns):**

Contribute to the Citizen Advice service's work of exercising a responsible influence on policies, both local and national, which affect the lives of clients by:

- Identifying enquiries which have policy implications for a number of clients
- Raising issues following appropriate procedures
- Assist with local Research & Campaigns work such as surveys and local campaigns

### **Equal Opportunities:**

Contribute towards the Citizens Advice Equal Opportunities and Positive Action policies by providing an impartial and non-judgemental service to all clients:

- Identifying possible breaches of Equal Opportunities legislation, policy and practice and advising the client accordingly
- Taking part in Research & Campaigns exercises focused on Equal Opportunities issues
- Challenging behaviour which indicates discrimination
- Assisting Citizens Advice Shropshire in making the service accessible to all clients irrespective of race, gender, sexual orientation and disabilities

### **Developing your own practice:**

- Assessing own practice to identify own training and development needs
- Being assessed by the manager, advice session supervisor or trainer.
- Learning through training and reflecting on practice
- Keeping up to date with the information resources, including changes and additions, legislation and policies and procedures
- Keeping informed about the local community, local and national issues, developments and changes.
- Using and keeping up to date with relevant IT systems

### **Person Specification:**

You don't need specific qualifications or skills, but you'll need to:

- be non-judgmental and respect views, values and cultures that are different to your own
- have good listening skills
- have excellent verbal and written communication skills
- have good maths and IT skills
- be able to understand information and explain it to others
- be willing to learn about and follow the Citizens Advice aims, principles and policies, including confidentiality and data protection
- be willing to undertake training in your role
- be prepared to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively

**Full training will be given including a blend of self-study, group sessions and observations, with a minimum commitment of 2 days per week during training.**