



# Welfare Benefits Adviser/ Caseworker

(Trainee position considered for the right candidate)

## Job pack

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

In this pack you'll find:

- How Citizens Advice Swindon works
- The role profile and person specification
- Terms and conditions
- What we give our staff

### **Want to chat about this role?**

If you want to chat about the role further, you can contact us by emailing [caroline.davies-khan@caswindon.org.uk](mailto:caroline.davies-khan@caswindon.org.uk) and we will organise a time to answer your queries.

**Closing date for applications: Monday 2nd December 24**

**Interview dates: Wednesday 11, Thursday 12 December 24**

As a member of the Citizens Advice service, Citizens Advice Swindon (CAS) provides free, confidential, independent and impartial advice and information to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. Whoever they are, whatever the problem. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

## **Our values**

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

**We're generous** - We work together, sharing knowledge and experience to solve problems. We tell it like it is and respect everyone.

**We're responsible** - We do what we say we'll do and keep our promises. We remember that we work for a charity and use our resources effectively.

## **3 things you should know about us**

### **We're local**

We have offices in Swindon and deliver outreach sessions for clients across the borough. Last year, we supported over 8,500 clients with more than 27,000 issues, including Welfare Benefits, Money Advice, Energy, Housing and Immigration.

### **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.

### **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.

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.

# What's it like at Citizens Advice Swindon?

We operate a multi-channel service offering advice over the phone, by email and face to face. Based in Sanford House in Swindon; a voluntary sector hub that includes Livewell Swindon, Swindon Mind, Swindon Carers Centre, Healthwatch Swindon, Swindon Advocacy Movement, Wiltshire Law Centre and more.

Our current staff team is made up of 30 paid staff and over 50 volunteers.

We work in a blended way with a mix of home and office working depending on the requirements of the role. We care about our employees' mental wellbeing and want to ensure everyone can achieve a healthy, happy work-life balance. We are committed to developing our staff and we work with our staff to support them with their personal and career development.

We have a commitment to a culture of learning and working together to problem solve and share learning experiences.

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.

You will be joining a dedicated, and talented team of people who are deeply passionate about helping individuals and communities, and delivering services which improve people's lives.



## The role

<b>Role</b>	Welfare Benefits Adviser/Caseworker (Trainee position considered for the right candidate)
<b>Salary</b>	£25,608-27,783 pro rata (depending on experience) Trainee £24,897 pro rata
<b>Hours</b>	30 hours per week
<b>Location</b>	Swindon
<b>Reporting to</b>	Benefits Team Manager

### Key Work Areas and Tasks

#### Advice & Casework

- Deliver specialist welfare benefits advice or casework for clients referred by our generalist service or external partners
- Act for the client where necessary by calculating, negotiating, drafting or writing letters and telephoning.
- Negotiate with third parties as appropriate.
- Ensure income maximisation through the take up of appropriate benefits and grant applications.
- Prepare and present cases to the appropriate statutory bodies, tribunals and courts as appropriate (including representation and attendance at first tier tribunals)
- Assist clients with other related problems where they are an integral part of their case and refer to other advisers or specialist agencies as appropriate.
- Ensure that all casework conforms to the CA Swindon's Office Manual, the Advice Quality Standard and Specialist Quality Mark.
- Maintain case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring, report preparation and recording of outcomes.

- Ensure that all work conforms to CA Swindon's systems and procedures.

### **Research and Campaigns**

- Monitor advice enquiries, contributing to research and campaign projects locally, and across the Citizens Advice network

### **Professional development**

- Undertake role appropriate training as agreed with line manager
- Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager.
- Attend supervision sessions with your line manager at agreed periodic intervals.

### **General Duties**

- Work cooperatively with colleagues and encourage good teamwork, clear lines of communication and common practices within the organisation.
- Contribute to a positive working environment in which equality and diversity are championed, dignity at work is upheld and staff and volunteers perform optimally.
- Attend regular internal training and meetings.
- Work to foster good relationships with external organisations.
- Promote the aims, policies, and membership requirements of the Citizens Advice service and Citizens Advice Swindon.
- Make recommendations for the local office research and campaigns based on trends in case reviews and supervision.
- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for your own safety and that of colleagues.
- Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the advice service.



## Person specification

### Essential

1. A developed understanding of the welfare benefits system, especially disability benefits, including the criteria and the processes for challenging decisions.
2. Recent experience of delivering advice in a social welfare setting
3. Sensitivity to the needs of the client group.
4. Understand the issues involved in interviewing clients.
5. Effective oral and written communication skills with particular emphasis on negotiating and representing, and preparing reviews, reports and correspondence.
6. Confidence in liaising with external agencies as required.
7. Ordered approach to work including prioritising own work, meeting deadlines and managing a caseload.
8. Numerate to the level required by the tasks.
9. Ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively and a willingness to challenge constructively.
10. Ability and willingness to work as part of a team.
11. Ability to monitor and maintain own standards.
12. Understanding of and commitment to the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice service and its equality and diversity policies.

### Desirable

1. Recent and ongoing experience of undertaking welfare benefits casework, including tribunal representation.
2. Proficient in the use of Google applications such as Google Drive, Sheets and Docs.

In accordance with Citizens Advice national policy, the successful candidate may be screened by the DBS. However, a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to your being able to take up the job.



## Terms and conditions

Salary: £25,608-27,783 pro rata (depending on experience)  
Trainee £24,897 pro rata

Hours: 30 hours per week

Location: Working from office and home



## What we give our staff

- 25 days paid holiday per year plus Bank Holidays pro rata, and a discretionary 3 additional days between Christmas and New Year
- 5% employers contribution to workplace pension scheme with 3% employees contribution
- A commitment to Continued Professional Development Access to Citizens Advice national training programme
- Opportunity to work as part of a national network of Citizens Advice offices
- Employee Assistance Programme including 24hr helpline support and legal advice
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Support from Togetherall
- Perks and savings via our partnership with Telus Health, these include savings on cinema tickets, giftcards and cashback on some purchases