



Nottingham & District

# Universal Support Worker (Universal Support - Help to Claim team)

## Job pack

Thank you for your interest in working at **Citizens Advice Nottingham & District**. This job pack should tell you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to work at Citizens Advice.

In this pack you will find:

- Our values
- 3 things you should know about Citizens Advice
- Information about the organisation and role
- The Job Description and Person Specification

**Closing date for applications: Monday 18 March 2019**

**Interview dates: Wednesday 20 and  
Thursday 21 March 2019**

## Our values

**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 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 Citizens Advice

- 1. We're local and we're national.** We have 6 national offices and offer direct support to people in over 290 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.

# Citizens Advice Universal Support – Help to Claim Service

## Background

Universal Credit (UC) is the fastest growing advice issue for the Citizens Advice service and local Citizens Advice (LCA) offices across the country. Since the rollout began we've helped nearly 150,000 people across England and Wales move to the new system. Over the past few years we've worked together as a service to urge government to fix the problems people are having with UC. We've achieved some important changes for our clients so far:

- making the phonenumber free
- reducing the time people are waiting for their first payment
- securing extra funding for Universal Credit in this year's budget.

Evidence from Citizens Advice and other organisations shows that people, especially the most vulnerable, need nationwide, consistent access to the best possible support to make their Universal Credit claim and get the right payments.

In its current configuration, evidence and public feedback shows low claimant awareness and take-up of Universal Support (US) nationally. Given the challenges ahead for UC, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced on 1 October that she has asked Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland to deliver an end-to-end help to claim service delivering nationally consistent and high quality local support for UC claimants. This new service, Universal Support – Help to Claim, will be delivered by LCA offices like Citizens Advice Nottingham & District.

The new US will be available throughout England, Wales and Scotland from April 2019 – in person, over the phone and online (for some areas the new service will begin earlier). The new improved US from April 2019 will help people through the claim process – offering tailored support to help them to use the flexibilities available in UC, helping them to get their first payment on time and making sure

they are ready to manage it when it arrives. Citizens Advice is working with every LCA (each of which is a locally supported registered charity) to deliver this commitment.

Citizens Advice will continue to work closely with jobcentres, local authorities and other partners across the country to build on best practice and deliver joined-up services in a way that makes sense for people in communities and achieves the right results.

## **How the service will work**

There will be 2 main parts to the service:

**Part 1** offers people support to submit their initial claim. Under the current system we know that it's taking many clients up to a week to prepare and submit their claim – causing further delays to payments. This part of the new service is designed to reduce that wait time.

**Part 2** offers people support to complete their full claim and be ready to receive their first payment. This part of the service will help people to submit all the evidence needed to receive their payment and be ready to manage it when it arrives.

The service will be available face-to-face, online and over the phone. We'll assess each client's circumstances and level of need and adapt our support accordingly to make sure people get the support they need in the way they want to receive it.

## **Preserving our impartiality**

In accepting the funding for the US service from the government, Citizens Advice has been clear that it won't in any way affect our impartiality. We'll continue to speak up on UC as we do on all the issues that matter most to our clients. In particular, we want to ensure that the process of moving people from legacy benefits to UC through managed migration works for our clients, including the most vulnerable. Delivering the US service will give us even greater insight into how UC is working and increase the opportunities to raise our evidence with the government.

# Citizens Advice Nottingham & District

Citizens Advice Nottingham & District is a large local Citizens Advice (LCA) covering the area of Nottingham City, Gedling Borough and Rushcliffe Borough.

In the year 2017/18 we helped 10,700 people. We handled £16.6m of debt and raised £1.8m in income for our clients. We have 37 paid staff and 65 volunteers.

UC full service began in October 2018 for Nottingham City and Rushcliffe Borough and November 2018 for Gedling Borough. We expect to begin delivery of the new US service ahead of the full nationwide delivery in April 2019.

To be ready to begin delivery we are recruiting our project team:

- Project Manager (26 weeks fixed term) – will lead on the setting up of the project
- Universal Support Coordinator / Supervisor (fixed term to 31 March 2020)– coordinating the service, supervising and supporting our Universal Support Workers
- Universal Support Workers (fixed term to 31 March 2020) – working with claimants, face-to-face, via webchat and on the phone
- Universal Support Team Administrator (fixed term to 31 March 2020) – keeping everything organised

All new UC claims will be made online (with a few exceptions) and so we will be providing digital assistance. This could be anything from where to use a computer at community venues, to help with part of an application, to full assistance to complete the online application process.

We will work from locations across the area, including Jobcentres, libraries, local authority buildings, existing outreach locations etc to provide face-to-face support. We will provide telephone support and webchat from a Nottingham city location. Potentially we could deliver the service with other LCAs beyond our geographical boundary.

To ensure claimants can access the service quickly, we will develop referral routes and protocols with partner organisations and other stakeholders.

# How the Citizens Advice service works

The Citizens Advice service is made up of Citizens Advice - the national charity - and a network of around 300 LCA members.

The national charity includes:

- 800 national staff working in one of 6 offices (or as homeworkers), or as part of the Witness Service from over 240 courts across England and Wales
- 3,000 Witness Service volunteers

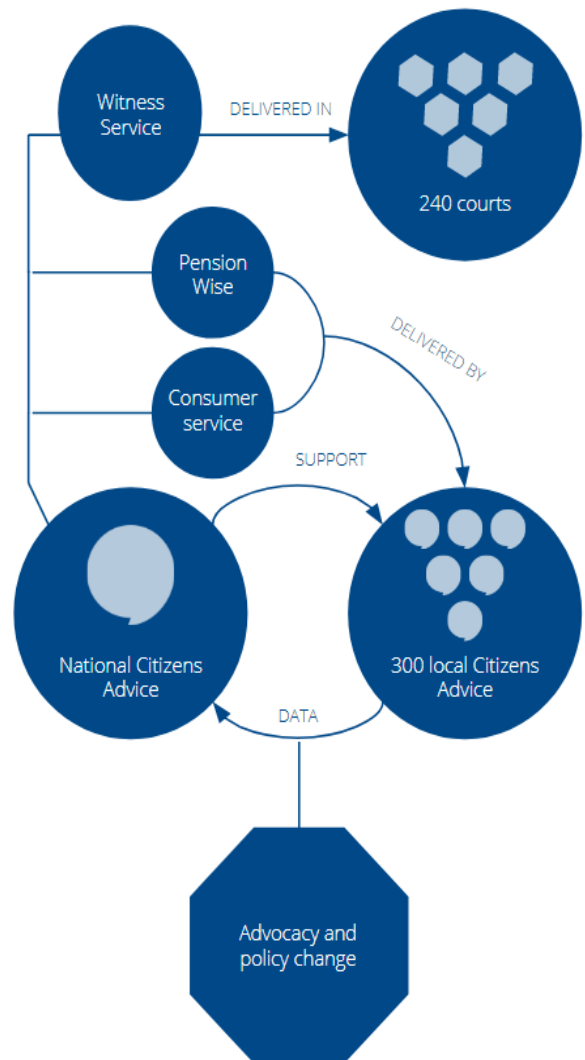
The local network members are all independent charities, delivering services from:

- over 600 local Citizens Advice outlets
- over 1,800 community centres, GPs' surgeries and prisons

They do this with:

- 6,500 local staff
- over 23,000 trained volunteers

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





## Universal Support Worker (Universal Support Help to Claim team)

We are looking for people to join our new Universal Support Help to Claim team. The team will provide an effective and efficient support service for first time Universal Credit claimants. The service includes the provision of advice, information and digital support via face-to-face, telephone and digital channels, aimed at helping claimants through to the first payment of Universal Credit.

The Help to Claim service will operate Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm. Successful applicants will work up to 37 hours per week.



### Job description

<b>Job title:</b>	Universal Support Worker (Universal Support - Help to Claim Team)
<b>Contract term</b>	Fixed term to 31 March 2020
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Coordinator / Supervisor
<b>Salary:</b>	£18,870 p.a.
<b>Hours:</b>	Up to 37 hr. p.w. (variable)
<b>Employers' Pension contribution:</b>	5%
<b>Location:</b>	Based in Nottingham city centre and working across Nottingham City, Gedling Borough and Rushcliffe Borough
<b>Purpose of the job:</b>	To contribute towards the effective delivery of the Universal Support (Help to Claim) service by providing telephone, webchat and face-to-face support to Universal Credit claimants.

## **Main duties and responsibilities**

### **Service delivery**

- Contribute to positive working relationships with a range of agencies, including the DWP
- Engage with clients to assess individual support needs to determine the most appropriate level of service
- Actively promote the use of self-help information or assisted access to digital information as appropriate
- Support and assist clients to:
  - access appropriate websites and identify relevant forms and self-help information
  - access, download and print off relevant information
  - complete online claim forms
  - develop the skills and confidence to access digital services
- Where assisted digital access will not meet the client's needs, assist them to start their Universal Credit claim. This may include:
  - setting up a personal email account
  - setting up a new bank account
  - accessing online gateway and setting up a Universal Credit account
  - assisting the client to complete the tasks required
- Where a valid claim has been accepted, supporting the client until such time as they receive their first payment. This may include:
  - helping the client verify their identity
  - providing and uploading any additional information or evidence that the DWP may require
  - setting up an account
  - making or reviewing online journal entries
  - notifying any change of circumstances
  - preparing for DWP work coach appointments
  - providing basic budgeting support including accessing emergency financial support e.g. foodbank vouchers

### **Research and campaigns**

- Assist with research and campaigns work by providing information about clients' experiences related to the project
- Collect evidence to highlight any problem areas
- Provide case studies to demonstrate the impact of the project
- Assist with compiling reports for the Research & Campaigns team on the impact of Universal Credit



### **Administration and monitoring**

- Maintain case records for the purpose of continuity, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation
- Ensure that all work conforms with the systems and procedures in place

### **Professional development**

- Keep up to date with legislation, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate training
- Read relevant publications
- Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager
- Prepare for and attend supervision sessions / team meetings / staff meetings as appropriate

### **Other duties and responsibilities:**

- uphold the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice service and its equal opportunities policy
- abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues
- carry out any other relevant administrative and support duties required to ensure effective delivery of the Universal Support Help to Claim service
- complete the training required to comply with quality assurance processes



## Person specification

- Knowledge and experience of welfare benefits advice (desirable)
- Proficient in IT and experience of providing digital support
- Effective oral and written communication skills
- Understanding of the issues involved in interviewing clients
- Numerate to the level required in the tasks
- Ability to prioritise work and meet deadlines
- Ability and willingness to work as part of a team
- Ability to monitor and maintain own standards
- Demonstrate understanding of social trends and their implications for clients and service provision
- Awareness that our clients are at the heart of everything that we do
- A commitment to continuing professional development of self and others
- Ability to commit to and work within the values, aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice service in which equality and diversity is embedded throughout
- Ability to travel throughout the area
- Willingness to share hours of work with colleagues covering Monday – Friday 8am-6pm