



# Help to Claim Adviser 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
- How the Citizens Advice service works
- Information about the organisation
- The Job Description and Person Specification

Successful applicants will be invited to interview on a 'first-come-first-served' basis until the posts have been filled. Any applications received after this will not be considered.

## 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 offering 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 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. 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:

- making the phonenumber free
- reducing the time people are waiting for their first payment
- securing funding to support people making a claim for Universal Credit

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 October 2018, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced a new end-to-end help to claim service delivered by Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland providing nationally consistent and high-quality local support for UC claimants. This new service, Universal Support – Help to Claim, has been delivered by local Citizens Advice offices like Citizens Advice Nottingham & District since early 2019.

## How the service works

There are 2 main parts to the service:

**Part 1** offers people support to submit their initial claim. This part of the service is designed to reduce the wait time.

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

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

## **Preserving our impartiality**

Impartiality is a cornerstone of Citizens Advice. We continue to speak up on UC as we do on all the issues that matter most to our clients. We aim 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 Help to Claim service gives us greater insight into how UC is working and increase the opportunities to raise our evidence with the government and to press for necessary change.

## How the Citizens Advice service works

The Citizens Advice service is made up of Citizens Advice - the national charity - and a network of around 265 LCA members.

The national charity includes:

- 1,000 national staff working in one of 4 offices (or as homeworkers), or as part of the Witness Service from over 240 courts across England and Wales
- 2,500 Witness Service volunteers

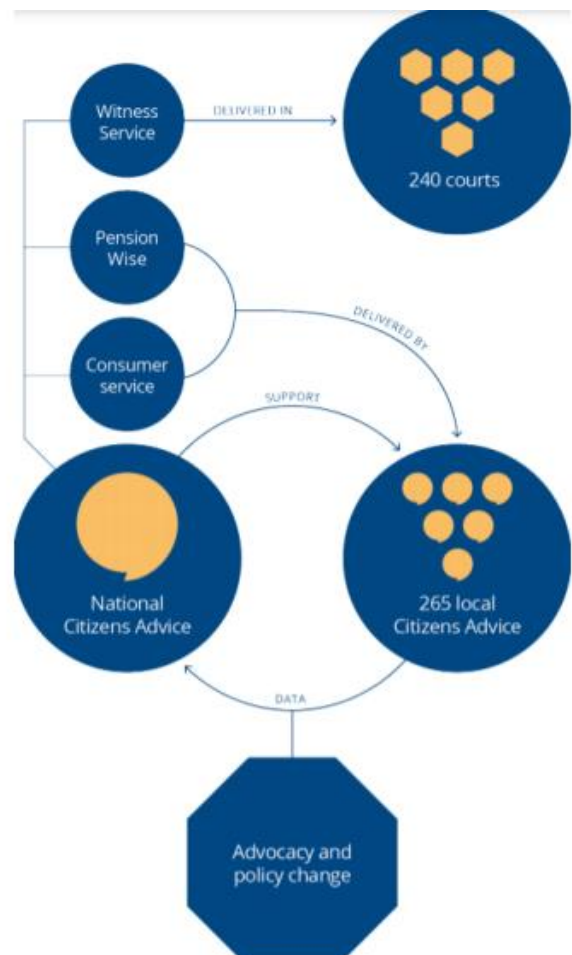
The local network members are all independent charities, delivering services from:

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

They do this with:

- 7,700 local staff
- over 21,300 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.



# Information about 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.

Every year thousands of people come to us for free, independent, confidential, and impartial advice and information. We're here for everyone and help with problems like managing debt or household bills, understanding rights at work, housing issues, claiming Universal Credit, employment law and much more.

The Citizens Advice service aims to:

- provide the advice people need for the problems they face.
- improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

The challenges of COVID, and then the subsequent cost-of-living crisis, has not stopped the brilliant work our staff and volunteers do to support clients across our communities. We've adapted our working practices and used technology to ensure we were available for our clients. In the year 2023/24 we helped 8,667 people and our debt team helped people manage a total of £3,761,469 debt and £644,963 was written-off with our help. Across the service we helped people claim £5,901,100 in benefits that they were entitled to, and £732,553 in income other than benefits.

Citizens Advice Nottingham & District is a brilliant and dedicated team of 53 paid staff and 47 volunteers who go out of their way to support everyone who comes to us.

We operate a number of projects including Help to Claim, MS Society and Advice on Prescription across a number of locations.

Through our daily interaction with clients, we have a credible understanding of local needs. We use our data and insight to tailor our services, as well as help improve policies and practices locally.

We put our clients' needs at the heart of our decision-making.

You can find out more details about our charity at [www.citizensadvicenottingham.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicenottingham.org.uk)



## Our Culture

At Citizens Advice Nottingham & District our people are at the heart of everything we do – without them, we wouldn't be able to deliver the first-class service we provide every day. We offer much more than a place to come to work; we offer the chance to be part of a team that is welcoming and inclusive, a role that makes a difference to people's lives, particularly during the current cost of living crisis, and somewhere that recognises that work is only one part of your life – getting the right work life balance for **you** is important to **us**.

In our recent People Survey 2022, our staff and volunteers told us that:



**87%** of people agreed or strongly agreed that their views are listened to and valued



**100%** of people agreed or strongly agreed that over the last 12 months people have treated each other with fairness and respect



**97%** of people agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend our organisation as a place to work or volunteer

## What we give our staff

We value the people who work here – and we show that in what we offer. As well as things like annual leave and our workplace pension, working at Citizens Advice means getting access to many benefits.

- A commitment to your development. We have a coordinated staff training and development strategy. This means that training will be provided both for your current job and for your development.
- Support when things in your life change. We'll be there for you with options for flexible working, career breaks, and support for parents and carers.
- All staff, volunteers and trustees are signed up to TogetherAll for support with mental health and wellbeing.
- Casual dress code – wear what makes you feel comfortable
- 6.2 weeks paid annual leave (pro-rata) and 3 days off at Christmas.
- Hybrid model of working.
- Generous employer pension contribution.

## Equality and Diversity

Citizens Advice as a service and network is fully committed to stand up and speak up for those who face inequality and disadvantage. We want this to be reflected in the diversity of the people who work for us.

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





## Help to Claim Adviser

We are looking for advisers to join our 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 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 between 30 - 37 hours per week.

### Job description

<b>Job title:</b>	Help to Claim Adviser
<b>Contract term:</b>	Fixed term until 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2025
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Help to Claim Supervisor
<b>Salary:</b>	£23,690 FTE
<b>Hours:</b>	30 - 37 Hours
<b>Employers' Pension contribution:</b>	5%
<b>Location:</b>	Based in Nottingham city centre, hybrid working
<b>Purpose of the job:</b>	To support clients with claiming Universal Credit. This includes assessing whether Universal Credit is the correct benefit for clients, supporting clients through the claim process, explaining how Universal Credit works, and ensuring they receive their first correct payment

Note: this role requires the completion of a Basic DBS check. This will be conducted by Citizens Advice Nottingham & District with no cost to the applicant. Depending on the content of this Basic DBS check there may be a potential of impact upon the recruitment process, however, if this arises, it will be discussed with you.

# Job description

## Main duties and responsibilities

### Service delivery

- 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

### **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 advice work (**desired**)
- Experience of delivering advice through phone, webchat, and video (**desired**)
- 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
- Willingness to share hours of work with colleagues covering Monday – Friday 8am-6pm
- Willingness to travel to Nottingham office to deliver the service 1 day a week