**CITIZENS ADVICE SWINDON**

**Remote Volunteer Adviser**

**Purpose of the role**

* To help provide an effective and efficient advice service to local citizens accessing  Citizens Advice Swindon (CAS)
* To assist clients finding and accessing the information they need.
* To help influence government and other organisations by informing them of the effect of their actions on the lives of clients.

**Main duties and responsibilities include:**

* Carrying out initial check with clients to assess clients’ problem(s) using sensitive listening and questioning skills both face to face and over the phone.

·         Assisting clients to find and access the information they need and explain availability of the comprehensive national & local information system & factsheets & leaflets.

·         Identifying clients struggling to find the information and assist those clients to find & access the service/information they require.

* Assess and agree the appropriate level of service, taking into consideration the client’s ability to take the next step themselves, the complexity of the problem and Citizens Advice Swindon resources.

·         Identify the situations including any requirement for urgent advice or action where advice may be required, and carry out the appropriate action.

* Interviewing clients, both face-to-face and on the telephone, allowing the client to explain their enquiry and helping the client to set priorities.
* Finding, interpreting and communicating the relevant information and exploring options and implications in order that the client can come to a decision.
* Acting, where necessary, on behalf of the client, negotiating, drafting or writing letters and/or making appropriate referrals.

·         Signposting clients appropriately (both internally and externally) to suit the client’s needs following agreed protocols, including, informing clients what they can expect.

·         Referring clients appropriately (both internally and externally) to suit clients’ needs following agreed protocols, including making arrangements and informing clients of what to expect.

* Seek help from the supervisor to assist with difficult issues when required.
* Completing clear and accurate case records with inclusion of relevant references.
* Recognising the root causes of problems and participating in taking appropriate action.
* Keeping up to date on important issues by essential reading and attending the appropriate training.
* Develop a clear understanding of, and commitment to, Citizens Advice policies on Equality and Diversity; incorporating this into all aspects of the work.
* Attending Citizens Advice Swindon meetings.

**Research & Campaigns Work**

* Identify any local, regional or national Research and Campaign Issues.
* Assist with the national and local research & campaign work by providing information about clients’ circumstances through the appropriate channel.

**Personal skills and qualities that an adviser needs:**

* A commitment to the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice service.
* Ability to use IT in order to carry out basic keyboard and data entry work.
* Excellent communication skills in writing and on the telephone.
* Ability to communicate clearly, in English, both orally and in writing.
* Basic numeracy skills.
* Being confident, friendly and approachable.
* The understanding of why confidentiality is important.
* To remain calm and sensitive to the needs of others.
* To be open-minded and non-judgmental.
* Respect for views, values and cultures that are different to their own.
* Ability to use IT in order to carry out basic keyboard and data entry work.
* Ability to research, analyse, and extract relevant information and explain complex information to clients.
* Ability to recognise their own limits and boundaries in the role.
* Ability to manage time effectively.
* Ability to work as part of a team.
* Punctuality and regular attendance.
* Willingness to develop and learn new skills.