



## Graduate trainee: Housing/debt adviser

### Job pack

Thank you for your interest in working at Citizens Advice Sefton. 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 will find:

- Information about Citizens Advice Sefton
- The role profile and personal specification
- Terms and conditions
- What we offer to our staff

#### Want to chat about this role?

If you want to chat about the role further, you can contact Jane Groves by emailing [jane.groves@seftoncab.org.uk](mailto:jane.groves@seftoncab.org.uk)



As users of the disability confident scheme, we guarantee to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum essential criteria for the vacancy. We welcome applicants from diverse communities for example BAME and LGBT+

## How Sefton Citizens Advice works

Citizens Advice Sefton is situated in Merseyside, neighbouring Liverpool, Knowsley and West Lancashire. Originally established in Bootle in 1939, the service developed into a borough wide charity in 2008. In 2022-23 Citizens Advice Sefton helped 5,446 people with over 21,300 problems. Over 70% of these problems related to debt and benefits.

Citizens Advice Sefton employs 24 people across the district and enjoys the support of over 60 volunteers across the borough.

We have permanent offices in Bootle and Southport. We run appointment services from these offices for the local community. We have debt specialists and are a partner in the Greater Merseyside Money Advice Partnership.

We are a delivery partner within Living Well Sefton and employ a Living Well Adviser and have a welfare benefits advice team who work collaboratively to help people tackle barriers to personal health and wellbeing in Sefton. We also attend mental health wards in the south of the borough to help people with severe and enduring mental health issues tackle benefit, money and other issues.

We recruit local volunteers who train as assessors, advisers, admin, reception and support roles or who undertake research and campaigns work based on client evidence. Our Board of Trustees are also volunteers.

We work in partnership with Liverpool Citizens Advice to provide a tribunal representation service.



## Graduate trainee: Housing/Debt Adviser



### The role

Due to funding from our national organisation – Citizens Advice, we are excited to offer a brand new opportunity for a recent graduate to join our team as a Graduate Trainee; focusing on supporting our clients within our Housing and Debt services. We are seeking a graduate who is a confident communicator with previous experience of providing advice and/or guidance to clients and that has a keen interest developing their knowledge and career in housing law, welfare rights, and debt management.

This post includes a tailored and accredited training package which will provide you with bespoke Citizens Advice housing and debt advice training supported by our experienced and qualified Training and Development Manager and mentored by our Benefits Team Supervisor with a view to further study to achieve a Level 3 Housing Practice from the Chartered Institute for Housing (total expected qualification time is 260 hours).

As a main point of contact for clients to assess their housing and debt advice needs, you'll need to be confident with interviewing and working with clients, and in particular vulnerable people.

This means your communication skills will be excellent, and you'll have the ability to engage confidently with clients - either face to face or on the phone, developing a professional relationship that enables them to fully engage with the advice process. You will also have the exciting opportunity develop and to write content for a short group workshop 'Know Your Housing Rights' which will be delivered by our advisers to Sefton residents.

The role also provides an opportunity to assist with social policy research and campaigns work analysing anonymous client data to identify trends and address issues at a local, regional and/or national level with the support of our Research and Campaigns lead and Co-ordinator.

The post holder may be required to work from other office locations in Sefton and will deliver advice sessions in outreach locations such as job centres, mental health settings and community venues as required. The adviser will provide a housing and housing debt

advice service to members of the public. The adviser will work closely with the welfare rights and money advice teams in Citizens Advice Sefton and with Living Well Sefton partners, mentors and neighbourhood partners.



## **Job Description**

### **Advice giving**

1. Provide advice and casework services to clients on a range of housing and debt issues such as rent arrears, eviction notices, housing benefits, mortgage issues.
2. Conduct thorough assessments of clients' financial circumstances, personal needs, and eligibility for housing and financial support.
3. Develop personalised action plans to address clients' housing and debt issues, offering practical strategies for debt management and housing solutions.
4. Negotiate with creditors, landlords, housing associations, and local authorities on behalf of clients.
5. Prepare and maintain detailed case notes, correspondence, and reports in line with data protection laws and organisational policies.
6. Conduct workshops and informational sessions to educate the community about debt management, renters' rights, and resources for housing assistance.
7. Work closely with other local agencies, referring clients to additional resources and services as needed.
8. Stay updated on changes in legislation and policy related to housing, debt, and welfare benefits.

### **Research and campaigns**

9. Assist with social policy research and campaigns work by providing information about clients' circumstances
10. Alert clients to research and campaigns options.

### **Professional development**

11. Commitment to training and continuous professional development

12. Keep up to date with legislation, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate training.
13. Read relevant publications and attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager.

### **Administration**

14. Use IT for statistical recording of information, for record keeping, document production, research and campaigns and funding requirements.
15. Ensure IT information assurance training is completed on an annual basis.
16. Ensure that all work conforms to our systems and procedures.
17. Provide statistical information on the number of clients and nature of cases.

### **Other duties and responsibilities**

18. Complete the required training to comply with quality assurance processes.
19. Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.
20. Demonstrate commitment to the aims and policies of the CAB service.
21. Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues.



## Person specification

<b>Experience</b>	
1	Experience of providing information, advice, coaching or services/support to clients
2	A thorough understanding of the issues involved in interviewing and working with clients, and in particular vulnerable people.
3	Proven ability to work well in a busy, pressured environment, work as part of a team but also able to work without direct support and supervision at times.
4	Experience of explaining complex information to clients
<b>Skills</b>	
5	Proven experience in an advice role, with a focus on working with clients
6	Excellent communication, negotiation, and advocacy skills.
7	Ability to empathize with and support vulnerable clients facing complex issues.
8	Strong organizational skills with an ability to manage a caseload effectively and efficiently.
9	Proficiency in using Microsoft Office Suite.
10	A commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
<b>Knowledge and Qualifications</b>	
11	Undergraduate Degree
12	Basic knowledge of housing, welfare rights, and debt issues
13	An understanding of equality and diversity issues and policies.
14	Understanding of the issues affecting society and their implications for clients and service provision
<b>Other</b>	
15	A commitment to training and continuous professional development provided by Citizens Advice
16	A genuine interest in developing a career in Housing and Debt advice and law

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



## Terms and conditions

Salary 35 hours | £23,217

Contract type: 12 months fixed term subject to continuation funding

Annual Leave: 28 days excl Bank Holidays

Location: Based in Sefton and advice outreach settings.

Office hours: Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm

Pension: 7% Employer contribution

## What we offer to our staff

- A contribution of 7% of your salary into a Stakeholder Pension Scheme (Aviva)
- We encourage development through participation in learning and training activities through the Advice Skills Academy (a partnership of Liverpool City Region Citizens Advice with The Women's Organisation) [Advice Skills Academy 2.0 – Citizens Advice Sefton \(seftoncab.org.uk\)](https://seftoncab.org.uk)
- A wellbeing service for staff and volunteers
- A Cycle to Work Scheme

Application is via an online application form and CV. Please ensure you complete BOTH.

Application can be found at <https://seftoncab.org.uk/jobs/>

Please send your CV with your name and Graduate trainee: Housing/debt adviser in the title of the document to [recruitment@seftoncab.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@seftoncab.org.uk)

Please note: **Closing date for applications: 11.59pm 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

Interviews: **16th November 2023**