

# **Volunteers**

## **at**

# **Coventry Citizens Advice**



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## Introduction from Vicki Fitzgerald (interim) Chief Executive



Thank you for your interest in volunteering with us at Coventry Citizens Advice.

We are a free, independent, advice-giving charity.

Since we started in the 1940's, volunteers have provided a major contribution to our work and in the current economic climate, we need volunteers to provide advice as part of our essential service to the people of Coventry.

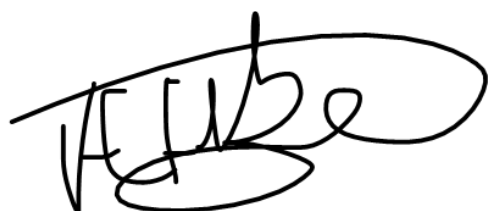
From fuel poverty to welfare benefits, housing issues to food vouchers, we give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward – whoever they are, and whatever their problem. For everyone, for over 80 years.

Our volunteers say that time spent with Coventry Citizens Advice is incredibly rewarding.

“I found the experience challenging and rewarding. It gave me an insight into the types of issues that people face on a daily basis, and what kinds of remedies are available to them. It feels rewarding to be able to provide advice where it is clearly needed.”  
(Diana, Volunteer Advisor)

Please take a few minutes to read through this pack to understand the roles on offer and what we look for in our volunteers.

Finally – thank you! We couldn't do our work without the support of people like you who are prepared to give their time to help others.



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## A quick note from Marian Nelson, our Volunteer and Training Coordinator



Congratulations! You have taken the first step to finding out more about volunteering with Coventry Citizens Advice.

This packs tells you more about us and the volunteer roles available;

- **Volunteer Advisor** – in our offices and in the local community
  - **Reception Volunteer** – city centre office – Wednesday morning, Thursday afternoon
  - **Cancer Support Project – Admin Volunteer *Grant Applications*** – could be done from home.
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- Application deadline 09:00 Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025

If you're interested in applying to volunteer with us the next step is to complete the application form on our website,

<https://www.coventrycitizensadvice.org.uk/volunteer/>.

If you need more information email [volunteering@coventrycab.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@coventrycab.org.uk).

### Where volunteers are needed;

#### At our offices

##### Foleshill

1-7 Station Street East  
Foleshill  
Coventry  
CV6 5FL

##### City Centre

Kirby House  
15 Little Park Street  
Coventry  
CV1 2JZ

**Community venues** - food banks, social supermarkets and family hubs throughout the city.

**Cancer Support Project – Admin Volunteer *Grant Applications***– could be done from home.

### The Volunteering Process

Volunteers are required to complete an **application form**. Please detail your transferable skills and experiences in line with the role you are applying for. If successful you will be **interviewed**, and successful candidates will need to complete **training**.

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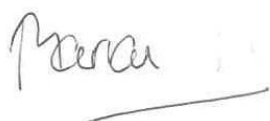
## Training

Training for the <b>adviser roles</b>	Face to face training takes place in our offices in Foleshill, for 4 days. This will run alongside self-directed online training and shadowing existing advisors.
Reception and admin volunteer	Face to face induction Wed 25 <sup>th</sup> June

## Key Dates

Application deadline	Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> May at 09:00
Interviews	Week commencing Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup> and Mon 9 <sup>th</sup> June
Training	Wed 25 <sup>th</sup> June 09:30 – 15:00 Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 09:30 – 15:00 Wed 9 <sup>th</sup> July 09:30 – 15:00 Wed 16 <sup>th</sup> July 09:30 – 15:00
Shadowing existing advisors	Begins week commencing Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup> July

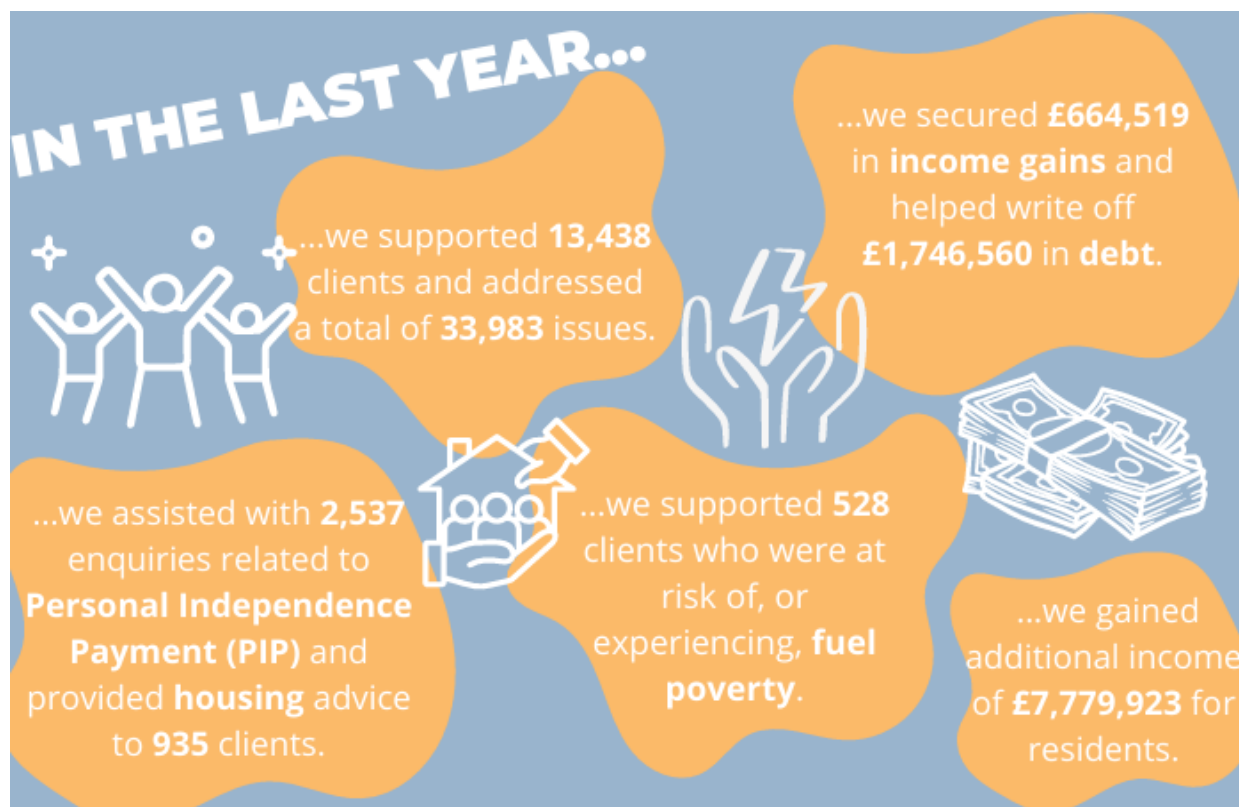
Thank you for your interest and we look forward to receiving your application.



## Coventry Citizens Advice at a glance

Our vision is to make society fairer. We do this one person at a time, helping people solve their individual problems and build resilience for the future.

Here's some highlights of 2024-2025...



Volunteers are particularly needed in our generalist advice service which is the “front door” into the organisation for many clients who come with a range of needs from benefit and employment enquiries to housing and consumer issues. The generalist advice is given in our offices, food banks, social supermarkets and family hubs located throughout the city.

In addition to giving generalist advice we have a number of projects which focus on particular communities in need. These include clients who are:

- Undergoing treatment for cancer – **this team needs an admin volunteer**
- Looking for support with debt issues
- Needing advice with energy issues
- Living with HIV or TB
- People who have recently experienced a major physical trauma

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## **Volunteer Adviser Role Description**

Volunteers needed as advisors in our offices and in the local community – family hubs, food banks and social supermarkets

### **What does an Adviser do?**

1. Explore a client's problem with them, research information to provide options, explanation and help with the choices and consequences the client faces.
2. Provide advice to clients over the phone, face to face and email. Face to face advice happens in our offices and in the community.
3. Ensure where possible advice leads to positive outcomes for the client, enabling them to feel more confident to deal with their individual problems.
4. Refer clients internally within Coventry Citizens Advice services or signpost to other specialist agencies, the local authority, or partners as appropriate.
5. Maintain detailed case records and financial and non-financial outcomes using our case recoding system, Casebook.

### **What qualities do we look for?**

- Passionate about helping people
- Good at building a rapport with others
- Sensitive to other people's needs
- An ability to treat all people with respect and in a non-judgemental manner.
- Logical and methodical with a natural inclination to detail
- Numerate
- Excellent communication skills both verbal and in writing.
- Working knowledge of Office 365, particularly Microsoft Word and Outlook and a willingness to learn new systems as required.
- The ability to research information using reputable sources.

### **Time commitment**

- One day per week, or flexibly to be split into two half days and time for home learning especially during the initial training period. We ask for a minimum of a year's commitment to volunteering due to the time it takes to train as a Volunteer Adviser.

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## **Volunteer Receptionist Role Description**

### **What does a Volunteer Receptionist do?**

Reception volunteers are the public face of Citizens Advice. They are the main link between the public and the service. As a receptionist you would greet clients and make them feel comfortable, answer phone calls and provide information on the service. During quieter periods you may, once trained, provide email advice.

### **What qualities do we look for?**

1. An understanding of and commitment to the work of Coventry Citizens Advice.

### **People skills**

1. Passionate and interested in helping people
2. Sensitive to other people's needs
3. Good at building a rapport with others
4. Committed to treating all people with respect and in a non- judgemental manner

### **Technical Skills for the Role**

1. Excellent telephone manner
2. Ability to take accurate telephone messages
3. Good written and verbal communication skills
4. Working knowledge of Office 365, particularly Word, Excel and Outlook and willingness to develop and learn new software systems as required.

### **Time commitment**

Half a day per week.

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## **Cancer Support Project – Admin Volunteer**

### *Grant Applications* **Role Description**

People diagnosed with cancer may have increased living costs - for example heating bills increase due to longer time spent indoors because of their health, or they need medical equipment that cannot be provided on the NHS, or their travel costs increase as they are travelling to and from hospital appointments. Our cancer support project, the Macmillan team, supports such clients to maximise their income. One of the ways this is done is through the provision of grants. We need a volunteer to support clients to access these grants.

#### **What does a Cancer Support Project Admin Volunteer do?**

1. Ring the client to obtain relevant information
2. Enter a client's data into a grant search website
3. Support the client to make the application, including writing a support letter if needed
4. Answer any follow up questions or provide any documents that the grant supplier may have
5. Maintain records of the completed work

#### **What qualities do we look for?**

- Passionate about helping people
- Good at building a rapport with others
- Sensitive to other people's needs
- An ability to treat all people with respect and in a non-judgemental manner.
- Logical and methodical with a natural inclination to detail
- Numerate
- Excellent communication skills both verbal and in writing. Happy to talk to clients on the phone.
- Working knowledge of Office 365, particularly Microsoft Word and Outlook and a willingness to learn new systems as required.
- The ability to research information using reputable sources.

#### **Time commitment**

Half a day. This role can be done from home.



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## Volunteering with us. What's in it for you?

- Make a real difference to people's lives.
- Receive training necessary to complete your role.
- Work with a range of different people, independently and in a team.
- Have a positive impact in your community.
- Gain and build on valuable skills and experience such as communication, admin, IT skills and working in a team.
- Increase your employability.
- Meet like-minded people
- Reasonable expenses incurred whilst volunteering will be reimbursed in line with our Volunteer Expenses Policy.

*"I know that my time volunteering at Coventry Citizens Advice makes a positive difference to some of the most vulnerable people in the city. Not only that but I'm learning new skills and meeting lots of different people. I really enjoy what I do."*

(Yalda, Reception Volunteer)

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## **Disability**

Coventry Citizens Advice is committed to disabled people volunteering.

If you consider that you have a disability under the Equality Act 2020 and require any reasonable adjustments to be made in the recruitment process or volunteering subsequently if appointed, please make sure you tell us separately. We follow the social model of disability which believes that it is the barriers created by society which disable people. We will use reasonable adjustments wherever possible to remove those barriers.

## **Diversity Monitoring**

We recognise the benefits of having a diverse workforce and will take steps to ensure this. If you would like to see our Equality and Diversity policy then please let us know and we will provide you with a copy.

## **GDPR – How we will use your information**

We will use your application only to inform the selection process - this is our 'legitimate interest' under data protection law. Your application will be kept on record for 12 months after which we will destroy it. If you are successful, it will form the basis of your volunteer record with us. We will hold any data about you in completely secure conditions with restricted access.

We shall consider that by submitting the application form you are giving your consent to the processing of your data in the ways described above.

## **Travel Expenses**

We do not pay for volunteer interview expenses. However, we may reimburse candidates on a means tested benefits for reasonable travel expenses to attend an interview if prior authorisation has been obtained. Once you are a volunteer you can claim reasonable travel expenses in line with our volunteer expenses policy.

## **Conditions regarding offers of volunteering**

If you are successful and are offered a volunteer role, we will offer this to you on condition of the receipt of two satisfactory references. One of these should be someone who knows you in a work related, voluntary or academic capacity. Both referees should be able to comment on your suitability for the post applied for.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this information pack and we look forward to receiving your application.**