



Senior Policy Researcher - Consumer and Public Services Job pack

Thanks for your interest in working at Citizens Advice. 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'll find:

- Our values
- 3 things you should know about us
- Information about the team, organisation and role
- The role profile and person specification
- The benefits of working at Citizens Advice
- Our approach to equality and diversity

Want to chat about this role?

If you want to chat about the role further, you can contact Morgan Wild by emailing morgan.wild@citizensadvice.org.uk or calling 07753374258



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 us

1. We're local and we're national. We have 6 national offices and offer direct support to people in 279 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.



How our organisation works

The Citizens Advice service is made up of Citizens Advice - the national charity - and a network of 279 local Citizens Advice members.

This role sits in the national charity, which includes

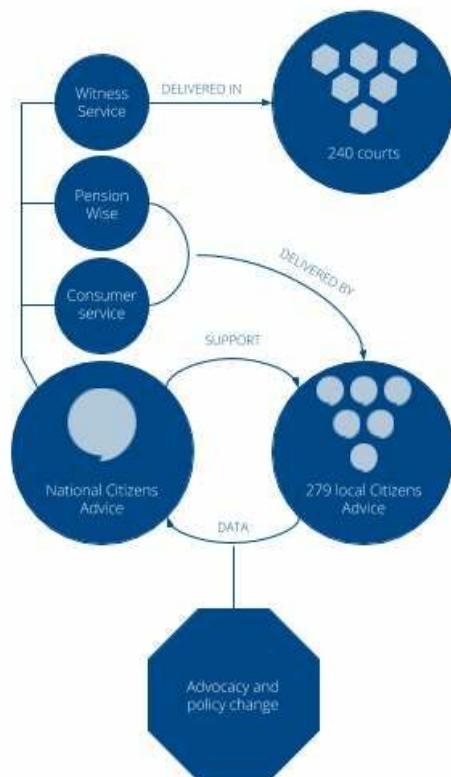
- 800 national staff working in one of our 6 offices or as homeworkers, or as part of the Witness Service from all criminal courts across England and Wales
- 2800 Witness Service volunteers

Our network members are all independent charities, delivering services from

- 585 local Citizens Advice outlets
- over 1,700 community centres, GPs' surgeries and prisons

They do this with:

- 7,000 local staff
- around 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.

 **The team**

The role you're applying for is in the **Advice and Advocacy** directorate and in the **Consumer and Public Services** team. Here are **4** ways you can find out more about us:

1. **Citizens Advice - for everyone, for 80 years:**
<https://wearecitizensadvice.org.uk/for-everyone-for-80-years-98601c688814>
2. **Beyond the job pack:** 4 staff describe what it's like to work at Citizens Advice. <https://wearecitizensadvice.org.uk/beyond-the-job-pack-305976d4b8d7>
3. You can read about how we score applications and some tips for writing them here: <https://wearecitizensadvice.org.uk/want-to-write-an-amazing-job-application-for-citizens-advice-c4dbf6ae3b36>
4. You can read more about how we're using our data to understand the social impacts of coronavirus here:
<https://wearecitizensadvice.org.uk/down-to-the-minute-how-our-data-reveals-the-nations-concerns-in-real-time-24fb8c9ceee>
5. You can find out more about our research reports, blogs and consultation responses here:
<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/policy/>



The role

We are recruiting a Senior Policy Researcher to join our Consumer and Public Services team. People who come to Citizens Advice for support are five times more likely to be in poverty. Our team tries to change policy by tackling practical problems that improve our clients' financial health. In recent years, we've done this by:

- Helping reduce the bills paid by loyal and vulnerable customers in essential markets by £260m
- Persuade regulators to introduce a cap on certain high cost credit products which have reduced costs by £60m
- Lobbied for the introduction of a ban on letting fees, which has saved renters £13m a month

Our team is now at the forefront of the organisation's advocacy response to the coronavirus pandemic. Our organisation is unique. We directly help 2.7 million people to solve their problems each year. Through these interactions we see first hand, and in real time, the problems faced by people across England and Wales. We spot emerging issues quickly, often even before government - a particularly crucial role we're playing at the moment. This makes us uniquely placed to develop effective solutions and influence government, regulators and industry.

You'll be joining the team at a challenging time for the people who come to us for support and will quickly be leading influential policy research projects that you'll design to make an impact on government and other policymakers' decisions.

You will have strong analytical and research skills and the drive to change policy, working with our world-class news and public affairs teams to ensure these changes happen.

When assessing applications, we make decisions based on the quality and relevance of the examples and evidence you provide for how you meet the person specification. You can read more guidance on how to complete our application form [here](#). You may wish to use the S.T.A.R. method when outlining how you meet our requirements:

- Specific – give a specific example
- Task – briefly describe the task/objective/problem
- Action – tell us what you did
- Results – describe what results were achieved

Role profile

Band:	Senior Officer
Proficient salary:	As advertised

Location:	Flexible (London, Leeds, Birmingham, Cardiff and Liverpool) Travel H/M/L: M	
Reporting to:	Principal Policy Manager	
Directorate overview:	<p>Our objective is to make Citizens Advice more influential by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● forming trusted partnerships and using our insights to inform delivery and policy behind the scenes ● using our evidence to support new policy development with useful and authoritative reports ● marshall our resources to inform public debate and educate people on priority areas ● making Citizens Advice a recognised leader in robust, useful and insightful data analysis. 	
Role purpose:	To ensure that Citizens Advice develops authentic, empowering evidence based policy solutions that make society fairer; and influence to achieve change.	
Key accountabilities	Key elements/tasks	% of time
Contribute to the development of a policy research theme	<p>Develop policy research themes and assess new research proposals in terms of wider team/directorate objectives.</p> <p>Proactively propose new ideas for consideration/development.</p> <p>Construct and argue convincing cases in support of a new ideas.</p> <p>Provide constructive critical challenge to policy research work in other theme areas.</p>	10%

	<p>Ensure that flagship, strategic and tactical research projects take forward the Corporate Plan, Equality Strategy and Brand.</p>	
Manage and deliver policy research projects	<p>Directly manage stakeholder relationships and be able to resolve issues independently, and show good judgement about when to escalate concerns.</p> <p>Manage a range of projects, setting and meeting own deadlines without significant intervention.</p> <p>Ensure specific research projects are done in an inventive, responsible and generous way, and that all outputs provide empowering, authentic solutions.</p>	30%
Influence directly	<p>Where appropriate and effective, influence key decision makers directly.</p> <p>Without support participate in external working groups, make presentations at appropriate events.</p> <p>Show confidence on 'lines to take' across all projects in core area.</p> <p>Identify wider implications of projects and link up projects and people across the directorate.</p> <p>Be able to use at a high level 'lines to take' from across the teams' projects</p> <p>Proactively build and maintain stakeholder relationships at an appropriate level (Civil Service Grade 7 as an example).</p>	10%
Provide media and influencing content and insight	<p>Be credible in briefing senior internal people face to face on policy issues.</p> <p>Develop authentic, empowering and influential public positions on policy research issues.</p> <p>Provide news, campaigns, information and other teams with suitable, relevant, timely policy content; and work with these teams to sharpen and package content.</p>	10%

<p>Manage and develop staff and ensure the efficient working of the team</p>	<p>Be an active member of the team, identifying opportunities for your own development.</p> <p>Be flexible and able to facilitate urgent requests.</p> <p>Contribute to the good and efficient working of the team in delivering against the business plan.</p> <p>Coaching or buddying junior members of team.</p> <p>If line management responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and allocating work, monitoring achievement of deadlines, and supporting staff as appropriate - Managing performance and development, mainly through regular supervision sessions and the talent talk process - Recruitment and induction of new staff - Ensure that the work of the department reflects and supports the service's Equality and Diversity Strategy. <p>Compliance with Citizens Advice policies and procedures, including Health and Safety.</p>	<p>10%</p>
<p>Contribute to wider corporate objectives</p>	<p>Participate fully in some cross-directorate/organisation groups/workstreams.</p> <p>Be confident and competent to lead cross-directorate activities such as sessions at away days.</p> <p>Play a clear leadership role within the team in both displaying and encouraging others to follow the expected behaviours.</p> <p>Build strong links with other teams and across the Citizens Advice service as a whole, and where possible ensure the research programme builds on and enhances their objectives.</p>	<p>5%</p>

	Work closely with the network as required	
Support delivery of best practice systems and processes	Contribute to and implement best practice systems and processes across the team.	10%
Finance	Manage supplier relationships to ensure projects are delivered on budget.	10%
Other	Contribute flexibly to corporate priorities, including occasional travel and out of hours availability. Undertake any other duties as may be reasonably required within the scope of the role.	5%



Person specification

Essential Criteria

1. Ability to contribute to the development of an influential policy research programme, under a broad work theme.
2. Excellent research and analytical skills, and an ability to manage and deliver flagship strategic and tactical research projects to deadlines.
3. Excellent written and oral influencing skills, including the judicious use of data and acute media and political judgement.
4. Strong understanding of what really makes senior decision makers change policy and practice, using both formal and informal routes.

Requirements for role (*candidates will confirm at application stage and at interview*)

- IT proficiency including competent use of Google and Microsoft Office
- Ability to develop and maintain an inventive, responsible and generous team culture in which equality and diversity are well managed and staff and volunteers can do their best.
- Understanding of, and commitment to, the aims and principles of the Citizens Service in which equality and diversity are embedded throughout.
- Awareness that Citizens Advice clients are at the heart of everything we do.



Terms and conditions

1. PROFICIENT SALARY: As advertised

Appointment may be at an initial salary level (90 or 95% of the proficient salary) or at the proficient salary, depending upon skills and abilities as assessed during the recruitment process.

If you are a designated essential car user, you will receive an Essential Car User Allowance payment in addition to your salary.

2. ANNUAL/TOTAL LEAVE

Annual leave is 26 days pro rata per annum from 1st January to 31st December, plus 4 fixed days (normally over Christmas and New Year). Additionally, there is Long Service Leave of 1-5 days after 3-7 years service.

3. PENSION SCHEME

Citizens Advice provides a Group Stakeholder scheme. Further details of this scheme will be provided to the successful applicant at offer and contract stage.

4. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Citizens Advice has a co-ordinated staff training and development strategy. This will mean that training for your current job, and future career developments relevant to Citizens Advice will be provided and you will be encouraged to take an active role.

5. INTEREST FREE LOANS

Interest-free loans are available to purchase season tickets for travel, and for career development purposes. If you are a designated essential car user, interest-free car loans are also available.

6. SALARY SACRIFICE SCHEMES

Citizens Advice offers salary sacrifice pension and operates a Cycle to Work scheme which provide a tax-efficient method for employees to contribute to their personal pension or purchase a bicycle for commuting to work.

7. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECKS (DBS)

Some Citizens Advice positions may require the successful candidate to undergo a DBS check.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Citizens Advice recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges unfair discrimination. We recognise people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and we wish to encourage and harness these differences to make our services more relevant and approachable. Citizens Advice will not discriminate or tolerate discriminatory behaviour on the grounds of race, colour, sex, transgender, disability, nationality, national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, marital/partnership or family status, sexual orientation, age, social class, educational background, employment status, working pattern, trade union membership or any other irrelevant factor in any aspect of employment.

Our values include a commitment to equality and fairness, and to valuing each other. All our employees are expected to have read and understood our Equality

and Diversity Policy and to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles. Breaches of the policy may lead to disciplinary action.

9. DIGNITY AT WORK

Citizens Advice is committed to providing a culture in which all staff value each other and are able to work together to their full potential in an inclusive environment free from harassment, bullying and other unacceptable forms of behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour in the workplace will be actively dealt with, all complaints will be taken seriously, confidentiality will be respected and victimisation of those that raise complaints will not be tolerated.

Our values include commitments to work together and value each other - all our employees are expected to have read and understood our Dignity at Work Policy and to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles. All staff are responsible for helping to create and maintain a positive and inclusive working environment free from bullying and harassment. All managers have a particular responsibility for ensuring a supportive and inclusive working environment in which dignity at work is actively promoted.

10. PROBATIONARY POLICY

New appointments are subject to a six months probationary period. Performance is reviewed after three months and again after six months. At the end of the probationary period the outcome of the assessment may be confirmation of post; notice of dismissal; or at Citizens Advice's discretion, an extension of the probationary period by a further three months.

11. POLITICAL IMPARTIALITY

An important part of the principle of impartiality is that Citizens Advice staff are seen to be upholding the principle of party political impartiality. To avoid possible misunderstanding or possible conflicts of interest guidelines have been established on staff taking part in party political activities. If you currently hold, or are intending to stand for local or national party political office, we will expect you to tell us about this if shortlisted for interview.

13. LOCATION

As advertised

14. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

As advertised

15. FLEXIBILITY

Our roles are open to discussion about flexible working, which may include arrangements such as part-time working, formalised flexitime, fixed (non-standard) working hours, working from home and job-sharing.

16. HOURS OF WORK

As advertised

Normal full time working hours are 9 - 5.15, Monday to Friday, although these hours may vary from week to week to meet the needs of the job. Staff may be able to agree a different working pattern with their manager.

Citizens Advice is an operating name of The National Association of the Citizens Advice Bureaux.



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.
- **Employee assistance programme.** Everyone working at Citizens Advice has immediate access to professional and completely confidential counselling and legal advisory services.
- **Interest free loans.** We offer loans for travel season tickets, and for

career development purposes. We offer interest free car loans if you're a designated car user.

- **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.
- **Great everyday deals.** Working at Citizens Advice gives you access to a number of deals and discounts via our Your rewards discount scheme.

You can find out more about what we offer our employees [on our website](#).



Equality and diversity at Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice 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 judge the application, not the person.** The select panel won't see your personal details. This makes sure each person's response is judged on its merits and not on their background.
- **We offer a guaranteed interview scheme.** If you have a disability and your application meets the minimum criteria for the post, we'll interview you for it. [Find out more here](#).

We're also very happy to consider flexible working, which may include arrangements such as part-time working, formalised flexitime, fixed (non-standard) working hours, working from home and job-sharing.

We particularly welcome applications from disabled and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) candidates as BAME and disabled people are currently under-represented throughout Citizens Advice. We are a member of the race equality campaign at Business in the Community, the Prince's responsible business network and are committed to improving employment opportunities for ethnic minorities across the UK. We also welcome applications from, LGB and Trans and non binary candidates.

Our commitment to equality runs through everything we do - read our [Future of Advice Strategic framework](#) to find out more.