



Volunteering with us:

Board Member 3x
July 2023



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Citizens Advice in Scotland: An Essential Community Service

Scotland's Citizens Advice Network is the largest independent advice service in the country providing free, impartial and confidential advice. We use people's real-life experiences to influence policy and drive positive change. Our vision is for a fairer Scotland where everyone has the advice and information they need to realise their rights, and where the barriers to accessing those rights are effectively challenged.

Last year the network helped nearly 174,500 people in communities across Scotland to solve their problems, and a further 2.5 million sought information from our online advice pages. We unlocked £132 million in financial gains for people. One in six people who sought advice saw a financial gain, the average value of which was over £4,200.

The Citizens Advice network is made up of 59 local Citizens Advice Bureaux, each its own independent charity, and Citizens Advice Scotland as the national charity and membership body, which includes the GB delivery of Extra Help Unit service, a group of specialist case workers supporting vulnerable energy and post consumers. Together we provide advice across over 200 locations and deliver 12 national advice projects for UK and Scottish Government including the Money Talks advice service and the Help to Claim Universal Support advice service.

Our Network's mission:

- We help people navigate systems and access their rights
- We build resilience in local communities
- We support the realisation of human rights
- We help change policies and practices to ensure they work for people



Citizens Advice Scotland's Role

Citizens Advice Scotland (also known as the Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux) is a membership organisation and our members are the 59 Citizens Advice Bureaux based in communities across Scotland. Our role is to make sure that Bureaux have the support they need to deliver on our collective mission. This includes training, quality assurance, co-ordination of national projects, as well as providing the platforms which enable high quality advice provision. We also produce the online advice pages that are accessed by millions of people each year, and we deliver a statutory support service resolving energy complaints and delivering positive outcomes for vulnerable energy consumers and micro-businesses across Great Britain. We are experts in debt advice and provide training and second-tier advice to Bureaux and all other free providers in Scotland. We also deliver a range of shared services to Bureaux like Human Resources, Information Technology and Finance. We carry out research, policy work and campaigning on key issues informed by statistical analysis of the advice sought by clients from across the network, which influences the practices of government, regulators and private companies. In everything we do, we aim to work in partnership with Bureaux, respecting their autonomy and ways of working.

Citizens Advice Scotland is funded mainly by grants from the UK and Scottish governments, along with project funding from a variety of other sources.

Our Strategic Direction

The Citizens Advice Network was born in the shadow of the Second World War and we have over 80 years' experience of helping people through crises. We have emerged from the pandemic lockdowns into the immense challenges of the cost of living crisis which has brought a further increase in demand for advice as inflation soared, energy bills went up and incomes remain flat. We are currently delivering a three year strategy from 2022-2025 which focuses on rebuilding resilience after the impact of COVID so that the Network can respond to the demands of the cost of living crisis, embedding our progress in digital services achieved during that period, promoting the value of locally led service delivery, and building the Network to deliver more effective outcomes for the people of Scotland.

The current Board shaped this strategic direction following extensive consultation with Citizens Advice Bureaux and Citizens Advice Scotland staff and we are looking for new Trustees who share our vision and who will promote and support the delivery of this strategy. The positions on offer are not remunerated but the real reward is being part of our extraordinary team and knowing you will play a key role in shaping Scottish society for the better.

About the Role

Your chance to shape Citizens Advice Scotland

Together with the rest of the Board you will help ensure the highest levels of governance and strategy development for Citizens Advice Scotland. You will have a commitment to our Vision, Aims and Mission and will be prepared to contribute your time, skills and experience to support success of the organisation and the wider Network. You will be a team player with a passion to make a difference to the lives of people in Scotland.

Central to our current strategy are a set of values which set out who we are, how we work and what we believe in – person-centred, empowering, supportive, inclusive and collaborative. You will be expected to demonstrate these values in your leadership.

We are committed to representing the diversity within the communities that we serve, and having conducted an Inclusion and Diversity assessment of our Board we would particularly welcome applications from the following groups:

- People from ethnic minority backgrounds
- People from the LGBTQ+ community
- People with a disability

The Citizens Advice Scotland Board is made up of an independent chair and twelve Board members. Six of those represent Citizens Advice Bureaux (internal Board members) and six of the others are otherwise independent of the Citizens Advice Network in Scotland (external Board members). We are currently recruiting for 3 external Board members.

Board members are appointed for a term of 3 years and are eligible to seek nomination to serve a further 3-year term after which they must retire from the Board. Citizens Advice Scotland Board meetings take place 5 times a year from 10.30am to approximately 13.30. Board members will be given the opportunity to attend meetings in person at the CAS offices and/or the option to attend via zoom. You may also become a member of the various committees that report to the Board and this would involve attending a further 5 meetings per year in person or via zoom.

Job description

- > **Position:** Board member of the Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Scotland (Voluntary/ Non-remunerated).
- > **Overview:** Board members collectively have responsibility for governing and providing strategic leadership to the Association.

Key responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Management

- > Oversee the Association's affairs, ensuring it is well-run and is delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the community in Scotland and elsewhere as appropriate
- > Ensure that well informed decisions are made in line with good practice and the Association's governing documentation, with the Association's long and short-term strategic direction taken into account
- > Ensure that the major risks to which the Association is exposed are reviewed regularly and systems are established to manage and mitigate these risks
- > Constructively challenge and help develop proposals brought to the Board
- > Support the Chair and Chief Executive Officer in ensuring appropriate culture, values and behaviours in both the boardroom and Association
- > Satisfy themselves on the integrity of financial information and the robustness of the internal control and risk management systems to ensure propriety in the use of public funds
- > Monitor and evaluate the performance of the Association in accordance with its aims and objectives
- > Oversee performance in the implementation of the Association's Strategic Plan
- > Collectively ensure the Board performs a strategic and governance role that acknowledges and respects the role of the executive management.

Governance

- > Ensure the highest standard of governance and conduct in the business of the Association
- > Ensure that the Association acts within its powers, complies with its governing document, charity law, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and with any other.

Relationships with key stakeholders

- > Account for the Association's activities to relevant parties and key stakeholders.

In addition, Board members will:

- > Contribute actively to those collective duties of the Board as set out above

- > Work in partnership with other Board members, the Chief Executive Officer and the senior management team
- > Maintain familiarity with the Articles of Association to ensure the Association complies with its governing instruments
- > Ensure adequate preparation for and attendance at meetings of the Board and relevant sub-groups of the Board, as well as actively and constructively contributing to such meetings
- > Contribute actively to the Board's role in setting the strategic direction of the organisation and setting overall policy
- > Represent the Association at meetings and events as required
- > Act with integrity and in an inclusive manner at all times and in the Association's best interests
- > Uphold and represent the Association's vision, mission and values in a personal and professional capacity
- > Act in accordance with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) 'Guidance for Charity Trustees'.

Person Specification:

- > Commitment to and understanding of the vision, mission and values of the Association
- > A passion for the work of the Association and willingness to act as a champion for the Association
- > Ability to be open minded, to exercise judgement and work collectively
- > An inclusive personal style and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- > Excellent communication and negotiation skills
- > Strong and effective networking skills
- > Ability to deal effectively and with integrity with people at all levels
- > Ability to absorb, evaluate and interpret complex information
- > Well informed about the internal or external environment, and able to utilise this knowledge in the development of strategy
- > Demonstrate independence of judgement by constructively and respectfully challenging other assumptions or viewpoints, as well as explaining and defending their own viewpoint in an appropriate manner
- > Willingness to recognise and abide by the principle of collective responsibility for Board decisions
- > Availability and commitment to attend meetings, functions and deal with urgent business as required.

Terms of appointment and commitment required

Board members are appointed for a term of 3 years and are eligible to seek nomination to serve a further 3-year term, after which they must retire from the Board. You will be required to attend approximately 6 Board meetings annually.

In addition to Board meetings, you may be required to devote at least 1 day per month on an average. You may also be a sub-committee member and will therefore be required to attend specific meetings.

Eligibility

There is no minimum age for charity Board members stated in The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, but we would expect our Board members to be over the age of 16.

You are 'disqualified' from acting as a charity trustee if:

- > You have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or an offence under The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.
- > You are an undischarged bankrupt or have a Protected Trust Deed.
- > You have been removed under either Scottish or English Law or the courts from being a charity trustee.
- > You have been disqualified from being a company director.

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The Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux – Citizens Advice Scotland. Scottish charity (SC016637) and company limited by guarantee (89892)