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| **Position** | Social Policy Officer |
| **Location** | Glasgow |
| **Responsible to** | CEO Parkhead CAB |
| **Line manager responsibility** | Communications and Campaigns Officer |
| **Budget responsibility** | Yes |

# About the job

**Salary for Social Policy officer is £29,000** (same conditions)

**Annual leave : 27 days, plus 13 days Public Holidays Total : 40**

**Hours : 35** (Flexible working hours policy in place and Hybrid working)

**Responsible to:** Assistant Manager/ CEO

**Type of Contract:** Fixed term initially of 2 years with further funding being sought thereafter. The aim is to make these posts permanent

**Requirements:** Appropriate Disclosures, proof of right to work in the UK

Citizens Advice Bureaux have two aims, to:

* Provide advice and information to ensure people can claim their rights.
* Campaign on the basis of evidence to advocate for policy and legislative change to improve people’s lives.

Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS), our 59-member Citizen Advice Bureaux (CAB) and the Extra Help Unit (EHU), form Scotland’s largest independent advice network. Scotland’s Citizens Advice Network is an essential community service that empowers people through local bureaux and national services by providing free, confidential and independent advice. We use people’s real-life experiences to influence policy and drive positive change. We are on the side of people in Scotland who need help and we change lives for the better. During 2022-23, the Citizens Advice network provided advice and assistance to over 187,000 people. The network put over £142 million back into people’s pockets during this time, with every £1 invested in core advice funding returning £14 in gains for people.

The role of the Social Policy Officer is to build the capacity of the 8 Glasgow CABx to campaign and advocate to address the root causes of problems faced by CAB clients. The case recording system used by CABx to record information about clients and their issues, generates both statistical and qualitative information providing the evidence to support advocacy and campaigns. Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS) is the network association to which all CABx belong.

The Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS) Impact Team undertake lobbying and advocacy at national level, using the evidence from the Scottish bureaux. All bureaux as a condition of membership are expected to contribute to social policy work by providing feedback on key issues, supporting national campaigns and undertaking advocacy and campaigning on local issues. In bureaux social policy co-ordinators are responsible for collecting and collating evidence to send to CAS or for local action and for helping with local campaigning and advocacy.

The Glasgow Bureaux have currently launched a pilot project to train and deploy volunteers as dedicated social policy co-ordinators. A successful recruitment exercise was launched to attract social policy and sociology students in Glasgow Caledonian and Strathclyde Universities, a new training course devised and a social policy co-ordinators guidance manual written to support the pilot project. One of the responsibilities of the Social Policy Officer, in collaboration with the Campaigns and Communications Officer, will be to test and develop these initiatives to produce a model for social policy work that can be rolled out to all bureaux in Scotland. While the Social Policy Officer will lead on production of evidence to identify and design advocacy and lobbying activities, the Campaigns and Communications Officer will take responsibility for designing and writing campaign materials, training in campaigning skills and organising lobbying and advocacy activities.

For the past 30 years the Glasgow Bureaux have operated a successful project in collaboration with the Glasgow University Law School to train and deploy law students as advisers in the bureaux in Glasgow and the surrounding districts. Students who complete 100 hours of advice work and complete an assignment are awarded a module which counts towards their degree. The social policy project aims to develop similar relationships with social policy, sociology and social work departments in Glasgow’s Universities.

In carrying out their roles, the Social Policy and Campaigns and Communications Officers will work in close collaboration with the CAS Impact Team, the communications members of the team and the Volunteer Network Officer. This social policy project is enabled by a grant from CAS Development Committee. The posts of Social Policy Officer and Campaigns and Communications Officer are funded in the first instance for two years with a possible extension to three years. The project and its officers will be line managed by the CEO of Parkhead CAB on behalf of the Glasgow CABx. Travel between the Glasgow Bureaux will be necessary. The Glasgow Bureaux are situated in Parkhead, Bridgeton, Easterhouse, Glasgow North West (Maryhill), Drumchapel, Pollok, Castlemilk and Glasgow Central CAB is housed in the Mitchell Library.

**Job description**

* Build capacity for both local and national social policy work within the Glasgow Bureaux.
* Assist the Glasgow Bureaux to fully meet the proposed new, and more demanding, membership conditions on social policy.
* Recruit and train, deploy, support and co-ordinate social policy co-ordinator volunteers in liaison with managers and training officers in the Glasgow CABx.
* Test the existing training course and guidance manual for social policy co-ordinators and develop it to provide materials for use throughout Scotland.
* Undertake analysis of statistical and qualitative data in the CASTLE case recording system to provide evidence for campaigns, communications and lobbying activities to be carried out by Glasgow CABx.
* Work closely with the Campaigns and Communications Officer to identify, design, lead and implement local awareness raising campaigns and lobbying activities.
* Support the engagement of Glasgow bureaux in national campaigns, lobbying and advocacy through improved social policy feedback, use of national campaign materials and collaboration with the Impact and Communications Team members.
* Participate in Impact Team initiatives to inform national advocacy and build capacity for social policy work.
* Pursue relationships with the Glasgow’s Universities to embed and seek accreditation for volunteer social policy work within the relevant university departments.
* Set up and facilitate a Steering Group to oversee the work of the Glasgow project and maintain close relationships with CAS staff in the Impact, Communications and Volunteer teams.
* Undertake line management responsibility for the Campaigns and Communications Officer.
* Manage the budget allocated to the project and produce written reports on the activities and progress of the project for the CAS Development Committee.
* Produce an end of project report for dissemination to all Bureaux which will provide a model for building capacity for social policy work that can be rolled out across Scotland.
* Undertake such other duties as may reasonably be requested

**Person specification**

**Knowledge, skills and experience**

**Essential**

* Relevant degree or equivalent professional experience or qualification.
* Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of the policy areas dealt with by CABx.
* Training skills and the ability to work with volunteers with differing educational backgrounds.
* Ability to analyse and synthesise statistical and qualitative data from CABx and other sources to produce reports and provide the evidence for campaigns and advocacy activities.
* Excellent written and oral communication skills including:-
  + An ability to analyse complex material and present the results in a clear and concise easy to understand and accessible manner
  + An ability to effectively represent the views of the organisation to internal and external audiences
* Good judgement and ability to manage own workload while remaining alert to the need to consult and work with colleagues in the Glasgow CABx and CAS
* Good team working skills – the ability to motivate and bring together volunteers to collaborate and focus on specific tasks
* Ability to work as part of a self-directed team, to take the initiative and work with minimal supervision

**Desirable**

* Knowledge of the voluntary and/or advice sectors
* Experience of managing teams/volunteers
* Experience in a similar or related position
* Experience of advocacy and lobbying