

Adviser for the Probation Service

Job pack

Thank you for your interest in working at Citizens Advice Harlow. This job pack should give you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to work at our amazing charity.

In this pack you will find:

- Our values
- 3 things you should know about us
- Overview of Citizens Advice Harlow and the national Citizens Advice network
- The opportunity, role profile, and personal specification
- Staff benefits

The application form and guidance notes are attached to this job pack.

Want to chat about this role?

If you want to chat about the role further, you can contact ayub.khan@harlowcitizensadvice.org.uk or by calling 01279 770181

Applications closing date: Until the position is successfully filled

Our values

#Team Harlow

- We are open and transparent
- We continue to learn and grow
- We have trust in each other
- We aim for quality whatever our role

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 around 300 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 Citizens Advice Harlow works

Citizens Advice Harlow has been ever present in Harlow since 1956. We are an independent charity governed by a board of trustees. We are supported by a range of funders, staff, and trained volunteers, without whom we would not be able to offer the quality service that we do today.

We operate a telephone, email, webchat, and virtual face-to-face service from our offices based in the heart of the town centre at West Gate House. We also deliver services at various outreach locations across Harlow.

Our portfolio of services includes specialisms such as welfare benefits, housing, employment, energy, debt advice and the Macmillan welfare support service for Harlow.

We have excellent relationships with statutory and non-statutory partners working on joint initiatives. We are accredited by the Financial Conduct Authority and meet the Advice Quality Standard.

Our vision is for people to have the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward, whoever they are and whatever problems they face

We use our experience of advice work and the data we collect to influence policies and practices that affect the lives of people in Harlow.

- Our services are free, independent, confidential, and impartial.
- We embrace diversity and seek to challenge discrimination in all aspects of what we do.
- We promote equality and challenge discrimination. We encourage and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds.

We will retain and use the information you provide only for this recruitment process. It is necessary that we hold this information to operate a fair and equitable procedure. We will keep this securely and destroy it after six months unless you have been appointed to a role in which case it will form part of your employment record.

Overview of Citizens Advice

The Citizens Advice service is made up of Citizens Advice - the national charity - and a network of around 300 local Citizens Advice members.

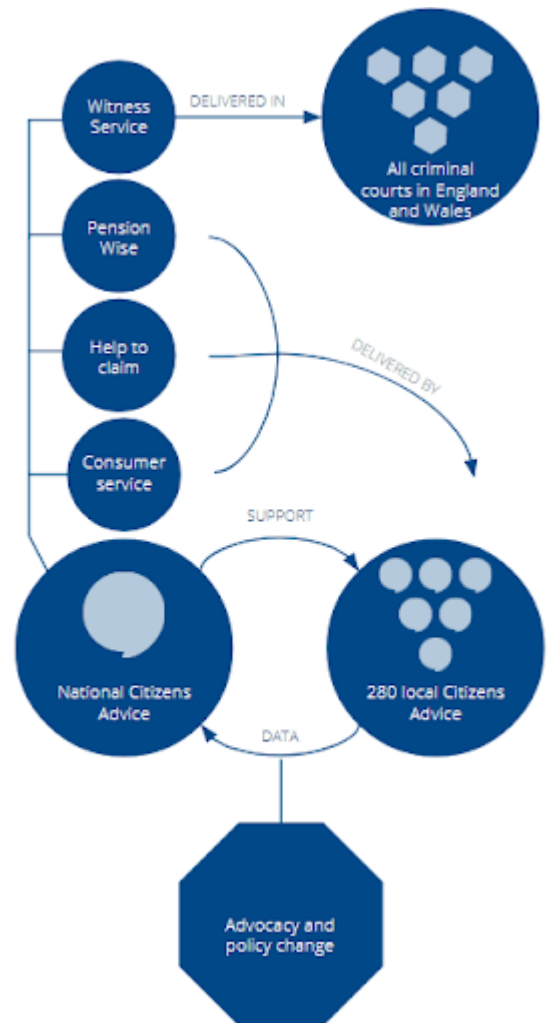
This role sits our network of independent charities, delivering services from

- over 600 local Citizens Advice outlets
- over 1,800 community centres, GPs' surgeries and prisons

They do this with:

- 6,500 local staff
- over 23,000 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 opportunity

Adviser for the Probation Service

Citizens Advice Harlow, working together with our regional consortium, Citizens Advice Essex, has been awarded grant funding from the Ministry of Justice to provide support and advice to people on probation concerning their benefits entitlements, and to provide any debt advice they need to support them as they move forward. The service covers the Probation Service offices in Harlow and the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner area. We have already made great progress in implementing the service, and you will have the support of a regional team to ensure its continued success.

We are seeking a skilled individual who has a background in providing independent advice, however, if candidates have experience in closely related fields and are able to undertake the necessary training to undertake this technically demanding role, we will consider you.

We are entirely flexible with where you work, this could be at our high-quality office space in Harlow or remotely. We would expect you to be visible and regularly meet Probation Service staff in the areas where we are delivering.

In this role, you will be responsible for ensuring that advice is delivered to consistently high standards.

You will have excellent communication and advocacy skills, as well as the ability to manage a caseload. You will complement this with strong IT skills and the ability to analyse and interpret information.

Pre-employment checks

This role is dependent on DBS and passing probation service security checks. Before commencing this role, the successful candidate will be required to gain clearance through HMPPS vetting to enhanced Level 1 and a Standard DBS through us.

Any offer of employment is based on you passing these checks and failure to do so may mean that you are unable to take up the position.

As an inclusive employer, we are open to employing people with lived experience of the criminal justice system.

Standard Plus Vetting

Please note this role is subject to Standard Plus Vetting, as some offences may not pass the enhanced Level 1 vetting. As an organisation, we work with adults at risk and we are committed to protecting, safeguarding, and promoting the safety of our clients.



Role Profile

Working closely with the CEO, Head of Advice and Supervisors

- To provide advice and casework to people on probation, covering benefits entitlements and debt advice, and in respect to beneficiaries gaining an understanding of and access to key financial services
- Assistance to clients with other related problems where they are an integral part of their case
- Acting for the client, where necessary, by calculating, negotiating, drafting, or writing letters and telephoning
- Negotiating with third parties as appropriate
- Ensuring income maximisation through the take-up of appropriate welfare benefits
- To assist clients in making applications for charitable funds where appropriate
- To provide practical support and advice about arranging banking or other financial services
- To coach or support individuals – by ensuring individuals can acquire new knowledge and skills necessary to claim benefits, and access banking and other financial products and services
- To identify key information about the problem including time limits, key dates, and requirements for urgent advice or action (using the Citizens Advice public website, scripts, and any other diagnostic tools as necessary)
- To assess and agree the appropriate level of service, taking into consideration the client's ability to take the next step themselves, the complexity of the problem, and the organisation's resources
- To refer clients appropriately (both internally and externally) to suit clients' needs following agreed protocols, including making arrangements and informing clients of what to expect

- To maintain case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring, and report preparation conforming to the Advice Quality Standard
- To assess client's problem(s) using sensitive listening and questioning skills
- To signpost clients appropriately to suit their needs, following agreed protocols
- To assist with research and campaigns work by providing information about clients' circumstances

Professional development

- Keep up to date with legislation, case law, policies, and procedures and undertake appropriate training
- Prepare for and attend supervision sessions, team and staff meetings, and external meetings as appropriate
- Carry out any task that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service
- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for your own safety and that of colleagues



Person specification

Essential

- Understanding of the main enquiry issues involved in assessing clients' problems
- Have excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to interview clients using sensitive listening and questioning skills to get to the root of issues and empower clients whilst maintaining structure and control of meetings
- Demonstrate an understanding of the issues affecting society and the implications of these on the client and the service
- Demonstrate an ordered approach to casework and an ability and willingness to follow and develop agreed procedures
- Ability to monitor and maintain own standards, manage time effectively for the purpose of meeting challenging but achievable targets and quality standard expectations
- Ability to systematically manage a varied workload, prioritise and meet deadlines under pressure

- Ability to use IT systems and packages in the provision of advice, in the preparation of reports, and to navigate bespoke online information systems
- Ability to work within guidelines, protocols, and procedures, a commitment to continuing professional development, including a willingness to learn and develop knowledge and skills in main enquiry areas
- Ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively and willingness to challenge constructively
- Flexibility and willingness to work as part of a team
- Understanding of and commitment to the aims and principles of the organisations service and its equality and diversity policies. An approach to work that is positive, flexible and solution-focused

Desirable

1. Experience of working within a Citizens Advice setting.



Terms and conditions

Location: Harlow with some hybrid working

Salary: £23,500 pa for a trainee role, rising to £28,500 pa for a qualified adviser

Salary pro rata: No

London allowance: No

Hours per week: 37.5 hours per week

Type of contract: Fixed to the end of January 2025

Closing date for applications: Until the position is filled

Interview date: To be arranged

The benefits we provide

One of our key strategic objectives is to prioritise learning and development, to both fulfil individual potential and to meet our strategic plan objectives. We also foster a supportive team approach reflected in our behaviours to each other including well-being and dignity at work.

Citizens Advice Harlow is dedicated to fostering a safe and supportive workplace environment. Our Trustee board diligently oversees workplace health and safety measures and regularly reviews policies to ensure their effectiveness and accessibility to all employees and volunteers.

We prioritise feedback and continuous improvement through our annual people survey, which helps us refine our support systems for staff and volunteers. We facilitate regular team meetings to enhance communication and foster a spirit of collaboration.

As part of our commitment to employee well-being, we offer generous staff benefits, including 23 days of paid annual leave plus statutory bank holidays. Moreover, we provide an additional 3 days over the Christmas period, allowing our staff to enjoy well-deserved time off during the holiday season.

We recognise the importance of financial planning for our employees' futures and contribute 3% to our workplace pension scheme, with a corresponding 5% employee contribution.

All staff and volunteers benefit from enrolment in our Employee Assistance Program, which grants access to valuable well-being and mental health support services.

We are dedicated to fostering professional growth among our team members and demonstrate this commitment through continued professional development opportunities. Additionally, we cover membership fees to professional bodies for our specialist caseworkers, enabling them to stay ahead of developments and changes to legislation so they can excel in their roles.

Applying for the role

If you are interested in applying for the role of Adviser for the Probation Service, please email your CV, cover letter answering the points outlined in the Job Specification, and our Diversity and Monitoring form to: sadie.crocker@harlowcitizensadvice.org.uk