

Chair of Trustees - Citizens Advice Kensington & Chelsea

About Citizens Advice Kensington & Chelsea

We provide free, confidential and impartial advice and campaign on big issues affecting people's lives. Our goal is to help everyone find a way forward, whatever problem they face.

Our borough is one of extreme contrast, with both some of the wealthiest and most deprived areas of the country. In North Kensington there are more than 6,000 children and young people living in poverty, and more than 5,000 people unemployed. North Kensington is also home to Grenfell Tower, a major focus of our work, and HMP Wormwood Scrubs where we have provided advice to inmates for over 30 years.

Last year we fielded over 10,000 enquiries and helped more than 4000 local people gain almost £2.5 million of support. We see a particularly high number of enquiries about claiming benefit claims, getting debt relief, resolving employment issues, and getting housing support. Our work has intensified over the last year as we have helped people through furlough, unemployment, and avoiding homelessness at a perilous time.

We have a team of 32 staff and 45 volunteers, and a budget of £1.3 million. We are a member of the national Citizens Advice (CitA) organisation, and contribute to regional and national campaigns to improve people's lives.

About the role

We are looking for an experienced Chair to lead our trustee board and ensure that we continue to remain a well-run organisation meeting our charitable objectives and doing the best possible work for our beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, and funders.

This role is an opportunity for you to lead a small but highly effective organisation that has a tangible impact on the everyday lives of the Borough's most vulnerable communities.

Key challenges over the coming year that you will play a key role in include:

- Recruiting 3-5 new board members to ensure that we have the right set of skills, experience, and knowledge to support the charity and are representative of the communities we represent and serve
- Broadening our sources of funding so that are not reliant on any single funder and are in a position to expand our services
- Meeting the challenges of hybrid working so that we can take advantage of cost savings and the 'new normal' of post-pandemic life whilst still maintaining a physical face-to-face service for our community

You will also act as a critical friend to the management, working closely with the CEO and holding them to account where necessary. Your impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences are also very important to us.

About you

We are looking for someone with proven leadership and facilitation skills, including experience of chairing Board meetings and committee work.

As chair you will represent our organisation in the community, at public events, and in relationships with funders and negotiating for funds for staffing, premises or equipment, so excellent communication and interpersonal skills, tact and diplomacy are key. A particularly important relationship is with the borough council who provide the majority of our funding, so experience in working with local government and familiarity with public sector commissioning and the community and voluntary sector would be a real asset.

Ideally you will already be familiar with some of our work or that of one of a similar organisation, as well as the geography and communities of our borough.

You will need to be able to commit to three to five hours per week, as well as two evenings a month for meetings.

The better we represent our community, the better we can serve it. Each new trustee is an opportunity for us to bring in a different perspective, so we welcome your application whatever your background. We are also seeking a number of trustees.