

COULD YOU GET INVOLVED IN YOUR LOCAL CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU?



Like all Citizens Advice Bureaux, the local bureau gives advice to the public on all sorts of subjects, including benefits, debt, housing, consumer and employment rights, relationships, immigration, and legal matters. We are only able to do this thanks to a team of volunteers who are dedicated to getting the answers when enquirers really need them and also to working to get things changed when the law is wrong.

Services are provided to communities in West Oxfordshire from our bases in both Witney and Chipping Norton and also via the telephone, a home visiting service and sessions at RAF Brize Norton. Volunteers usually work for the bureau for a minimum of one day a week, so a team of people are needed to cover all the sessions that we are open to the public.

There is no "ideal" volunteer. Advisers are of both sexes, drawn from all age groups and all walks of life. What they have in common is some time to spare, a willingness to undertake training, an ability to listen and a commitment to serve their community.

No previous experience of advice work is needed as full training and support is provided. The training, which requires a commitment of about one and a half days a week for around six months, leads to a National Certificate in Advice Work and accreditation is also possible through the Open College Network.

Prospective volunteers often ask "Even after training, how on earth will I know all the answers to the many and varied questions brought to the bureau?" The answer is that volunteers are not expected to know all the answers but are trained to use the extensive information system, backed up by paid staff and referral agencies. Volunteers do not tell people what to do; they give them the relevant information and the options open to them – ensuring that individuals are aware of their rights and helping them to achieve these.

As well as giving advice, volunteers help clients with writing letters, making phone calls and filling in forms. There is no other voluntary work quite like it. Would YOU like to explore the possibility of joining our friendly team? Even if you don't want to train as an adviser, we welcome volunteers to help with a whole range of administrative and office tasks and also to join the management committee.

**DO GIVE US A CALL ON WITNEY 705691
WE SHOULD LOVE TO TALK TO YOU.**