

# Housing Supervisor (or Solicitor) (Housing, Legal Aid Services)

## Job Pack

Thank you for your interest in working at the Citizens Advice service that supports people across Manchester and nationwide.

Citizens Advice Manchester is a charity which provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We are a modern, innovative and progressive advice service that aims to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

This job pack should give you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to work for the Citizens Advice service.

In this pack you'll find:

- Our values
- 4 things you should know about us
- How the Citizens Advice network works
- Information about the organisation, team and the role
- The role profile and person specification
- The application process and training for the role
- The benefits of working for the organisation
- Our approach to equality and diversity

### Want to chat about the role?

If you want to have a chat about the role further, you can contact:

**Dan Pye** - [dan.pye@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk](mailto:dan.pye@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk)

## To apply submit your CV via our website:

**[www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/work-with-us](http://www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/work-with-us)**

CAM is committed to being an inclusive organisation, we value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination. We want our teams to be representative of the diverse communities we serve, however you identify, or whatever background you bring with you, we welcome and encourage your application.

<b>Closing Date:</b>	10am on Wednesday 1 May 2024
<b>Interview Date:</b>	Tuesday 7 May 2024

## Our values

**We're adaptable.** We recognise that our clients' needs are changing and that we need to change with them. We like to try new things and learn when things don't work. We are confident enough to constructively question ideas and adapt to changes.

**We're respectful.** We foster relationships and respect our colleagues and clients. We willingly share our knowledge and experiences to maximise the social impact of our work. We are honest in our views and value that everyone has something to offer.

**We're responsible.** We recognise that everyone is entitled to basic needs and rights and work towards supporting these seeking help to achieve them. We remember we are a charity and work within our charitable objectives by being responsible in the way we use our resources and pursue new opportunities.

## 4 things you should know about us

**We're local.** We have information hubs and digital access points across the city region. We also have a well developed service offered by telephone, email, webchat and facebook messenger.

**We're also national.** We support the wider Citizens Advice network of 250 independent charities by providing telephone and digital advice to hundreds of thousands of people across England & Wales each year, through our Consumer Service and Money Advice Service Contact Centres.

As a result, we help hundreds of thousands of clients each year across England and Wales.

**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.

**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 the Citizens Advice Network works

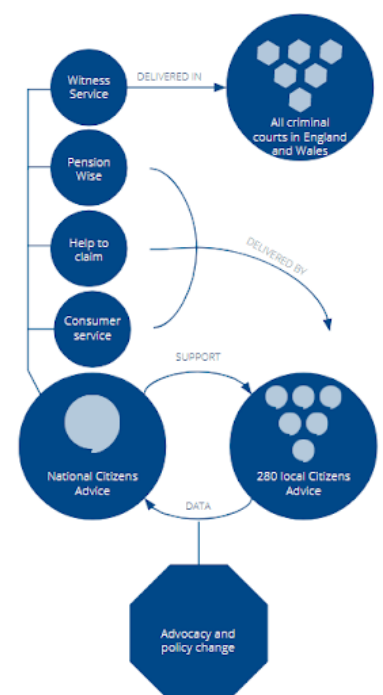
Citizens Advice Manchester is a member of the national Citizens Advice service which is made up of a network of around 250 local Citizens Advice members.

Citizens Advice nationally is a charity which employs 1,000 people working in research and campaign, communications, strategy, funding or as part of the Witness Service from over 240 courts across England and Wales 3,000 Witness Service volunteers.

Local Citizens Advice are all independent charities, delivering services from over 600 local Citizens Advice outlets and over 1,800 community centres, GPs' surgeries and prisons.

The network does this with 6,500 local staff and 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 organisation and team

Citizens Advice Manchester is one of the largest and most diversely funded Local Citizens Advice within the network - we employ around 200 staff (approx 60 of whom provide specialist casework services in the areas of Housing, Debt and Welfare Benefits).

Here are 4 ways you can find out more about us:

- Watch videos about the work we do: [Citizens Advice - YouTube](#) and [Find a way forward](#)
- Watch a video about our volunteers [Volunteers at CAM](#)
- Take a look at our [website](#)
- Take a look at the [national Citizens Advice](#) website and the [Campaigning site](#)

You're applying for a role on our **Housing and Legal Aid Team**, who deal with life changing issues such as unlawful eviction, disrepair, eviction and homelessness on a day to day basis.

Over the last 12 months the team has helped hundreds of clients retain their homes, who otherwise would have been made homeless without expert advice and advocacy.

## The role

The job you're applying for is **Housing Supervisor (or Solicitor)**.

The successful applicant will handle their own Legal Aid caseload of matters from instruction through to completion, acting on behalf of tenants, including but not limited to:

- Possession claims for rent arrears both private and social sectors
- Possession claims under accelerated procedure
- Anti-social behaviour injunctions
- Unlawful eviction injunctions
- Disrepair claims
- Homelessness appeals to the County Court and beyond
- Judicial reviews

In addition the post holder will act as the category supervisor. If you are a Solicitor applying for the role, ideally we'd like you to be a qualified advocate and experienced Legal Aid professional with a minimum of 3 years PQE in order to assume responsibility for SRA and Training Contract compliance, but we will consider applicants who have less PQE and are willing to take on this responsibility in the near future.

## What we give our staff

We value all our people and can offer a supportive culture within a charity setting that is committed to social justice. We set out the commitment we make to our people in the [CAM People Commitment](#). The role has an attractive remuneration package with excellent terms including:

- Flexible 37.5 hour working week
- Hybrid working (following achieving competence)
- Pension Scheme and Life Assurance (death in service benefit) payable at 3 x annual salary
- Cycle to work scheme
- City centre location with free tea and coffee
- Corporate Cash Plan (Medicash)
- Employee Assistance Programme with 24/7 telephone support service
- Generous holiday entitlement starting at 25 days per year (in addition to bank holidays) and rising with long service to a maximum of 30

# Role profile

<b>Role:</b>	Housing Supervisor (or Solicitor)
<b>Location:</b>	Central Manchester (with travel around Greater Manchester required)
<b>Salary:</b>	£32,146 - £37,086 pro-rata
<b>Hours:</b>	22.5 to 37.5 per week
<b>Reporting To:</b>	Chief Operating Officer

## Role Purpose

The focus of the post is to:

- Provide high quality housing advice and legal services to vulnerable people across Greater Manchester, subject to SQM and Legal Aid Standards and
- Act as a housing category supervisor
- *(for Solicitors only) Act as Supervising Solicitor with responsibility for SRA and training contract requirements*

Key Accountabilities	Key elements and tasks
<b>Advice and Legal Work</b>	Deliver advice and advocacy direct to clients under Legal Aid Agency contracts.
	Conduct litigation, advocacy, recovering and maximising costs via legal aid funding certificates, inter-partes costs and settlement/agreement with third parties.
	Manage a large and varied caseload bearing in mind priorities, key dates while upholding highest standards of client care.
	Assist clients with other related problems where they are an integral part of their case and refer to other advisers or specialist agencies as appropriate.
	Undertake all casework within the procedures and guidelines of the LAA contract and to maintain work to the Specialist Quality Mark Standard.
	Negotiate with third parties in the best interests of clients.
<b>Supervision and compliance</b>	Continually satisfy the LAA supervisor standards of competence in the category of Housing & Debt.
	Provide appropriate levels of day-to-day technical support, guidance and supervision to peers and allocated staff.
<b>Performance and Personal Development</b>	Meet performance standards and objectives set by the Line Manager, taking ownership of key issues such as receiving referrals, billing, case and diary management etc.
	Work collaboratively with colleagues and peers through systems of informal and formal support such as IFRs, Peer Reviews, 1:1 support/coaching and group training.
	Keep up to date with legislation, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate CPD training.
<b>Research &amp; Campaigns Work</b>	Take an active role in the R&C process by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• forwarding all examples of R&amp;C work as appropriate</li> <li>• contribution to local and national campaigns</li> </ul>
<b>Volunteer Support</b>	Work collaboratively with volunteers by providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• day to day on-site support and guidance to volunteers</li> <li>• on-going coaching for volunteers in software use</li> <li>• training to CAM volunteers &amp; staff</li> </ul>
<b>Liaison &amp; Communication</b>	Promote the work of CAM as appropriate/as agreed with the line manager.
	Attend meetings with statutory and voluntary agencies as required to keep in

	touch with local issues and changes in procedures of other agencies.
	Ensure all complaints are forwarded to the Line Manager.
<b>Administration</b>	Follow the policies and procedures as stated in the Office Manual.
	Be self-administering (client letters, documents, reports) and comply with existing practices undertaking general administration tasks.
<b>Other responsibilities</b>	Uphold the aims and principles of Citizens Advice and its EDI policies.
	Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for your own safety and that of colleagues.
	Work in a positive and supportive manner and contribute to the creation of a good team environment.
<p>Please note that this job description does not constitute a 'term and condition of employment'. It is provided only as a guide to assist an individual in the performance of the job and is not intended to be an inflexible list of tasks.</p> <p>Citizens Advice Manchester is a fast-moving organisation and therefore an employee's duties may be varied from time to time. The post holder accepts that they may be required to work flexibly and undertake any other work or duties as may reasonably be required, within the scope of and commensurate to the nature of the post.</p>	

## Person specification

<b>Essential</b>
A minimum of 3 years, full time equivalent experience of delivering advice and advocacy in housing to LAA standards.
Meets the civil supervisor status for Legal Aid Agency contracts in the category of housing & Debt.
Experience of liaising with courts/tribunals and other legal bodies to reach a positive client outcome.
Ability to effectively communicate as appropriate to the audience, including accurately drafting letters, reports and complex applications and presenting work in a clear layout, both orally and in writing.
Broad understanding of other Social Welfare Law subject areas.
An ability to work to high billing targets and experience of undertaking certificated work and use of CCMS or other billing systems.
Experience of supervising paid staff via informal and formal methods such as coaching, conducting supervision meetings and undertaking file reviews.
<b>Desirable</b>
<i>Held a practising certificate for a minimum of 2 years with an ability to lead SRA compliance and act as a Training Principal in the near future.</i>
<i>Minimum of 3 years PQE experience and an ability to lead on SRA and Training Contract compliance.</i>
<b>Other requirements for the role</b>
Ability to contribute to an adaptable, respectful and responsible organisational culture in line with our values and <u>Behaviour Framework</u> .
Ability and willingness to work flexibly as part of a team and a commitment to collective team responsibility.
Understanding of, and commitment to, the aims and principles of the Citizens Service in which equality and diversity is embedded throughout.
Awareness that Citizens Advice clients are at the heart of everything we do.

# The application process

## Stage 1 - Apply

You are required to submit a copy of your CV, this will be screened against the role description and person specification to assess whether your skills and experience is a good fit.

When submitting your CV you will be asked to respond to essential points from the person specification. It's important that you tailor your response to these points to clearly demonstrate how you meet the requirement. When responding you should choose examples of past experience to demonstrate how you fit the requirement, be precise about what you did, how you did it and the outcome or result of your actions. Remember that relevant examples from other aspects of your life, for example: voluntary or unpaid work, school or college work, family or home responsibilities can also be given.

**The closing date for applications is 10am on Wednesday 1 May 2024**

**SUBMIT YOUR CV VIA OUR WEBSITE:**

**[www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/work-with-us](http://www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/work-with-us)**

## Stage 2 - Interview

If your application is successful, you will be invited to participate in a formal interview process taking place at our offices in central Manchester (if attendance in person is not possible we may be able to accommodate a remote interview). The process will consist of you completing a short competency based assessment (lasting for 30 minutes) and participation in a formal interview (lasting for around 45-60 minutes). Your interview will be conducted by a panel of three people involved in running our services, with questions based on the person specification.

**Interviews are scheduled to take place on Tuesday 7 May 2024**

## Equality & Diversity at CAM

Citizens Advice Manchester recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges unfair discrimination. We recognise people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and we wish to encourage and harness these differences to make our services more relevant and approachable. Citizens Advice Manchester will not discriminate or tolerate discriminatory behaviour on the grounds of race, colour, sex, transgender, disability, nationality, national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, marital/partnership or family status, sexual orientation, age, social class, educational background, employment status, working pattern, trade union membership or any other irrelevant factor in any aspect of employment.

Our values include a commitment to equality and fairness, and to valuing each other. All our employees are expected to have read and understood our Equality and Diversity Policy and to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles. Breaches of the policy may lead to disciplinary action.

## Dignity at Work

Citizens Advice Manchester is committed to providing a culture in which all staff value each other and are able to work together to their full potential in an inclusive environment free from harassment, bullying and other unacceptable forms of behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour in the workplace will be actively dealt with, all complaints will be taken seriously, confidentiality will be respected and victimisation of those that raise complaints will not be tolerated.

Our values include commitments to work together and value each other - all our employees are expected to have read and understood our Dignity at Work Policy and to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles. All staff are responsible for helping to create and maintain a positive and inclusive working environment free from bullying and harassment. All managers have a particular responsibility for ensuring a supportive and inclusive working environment in which dignity at work is actively promoted.

## Probationary Policy

New appointments are subject to a probationary period which begins once you have completed training. At the end of the probationary period the outcome of the assessment may be confirmation of post; notice of dismissal; or at our discretion, an extension of the probationary period.

## Our People

We value the people who work here - and we show that in what we offer. As well as things like annual leave and our workplace pension, working at Citizens Advice means getting access to many benefits:

- **A commitment to your development.** We have a coordinated staff training and development pathway. This means that training will be provided both for your current job and for your development.
- **Employee assistance programme.** Once out of probation everyone working at Citizens Advice Manchester has access to professional and completely confidential counselling and advisory services.



## Equality and Fairness in Recruitment

We are fully committed to stand up and speak up for those who face inequality and disadvantage. We want this to be reflected in the diversity of the people who work for us. To help us achieve this, we aim to make our recruitment process as fair as it can be. We also offer support to disabled candidates to make sure no one loses out on a role because of their condition.

**We judge the application, not the person.** The select panel won't see your personal details. This makes sure each person's response is judged on its merits and not on their background.

Our commitment to equality runs through everything we do - read the [Future of advice: our strategic framework](#) to find out more.

## Criminal Convictions

Anyone who applies to work within Citizens Advice Manchester will be asked to disclose details of unspent convictions during the recruitment process. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working for Citizens Advice Manchester – much will depend on the type of job you have applied for and the background and circumstances of your offence. However, our national policy is that we will not take on anyone with a conviction for a sexual offence against a child or vulnerable adult, regardless of when the offence took place.

## Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS)

Some Citizens Advice Manchester positions may require the successful candidate to undergo a DBS check, this will be specified within the job pack.