



JOB DESCRIPTION Benefits Advisor

Post Title:	Benefits Advisor	Pay Scale:	£23,431.54 per annum (pro rata) AUNN Band E
Department:	Information, Signposting & Advice (ISA)	Hours of Work:	37 hours per week (job share considered)
Responsible to:	Operational Manager (Advice)	Tenure:	2 year fixed term with possibility for extension
Based:	Hybrid (home, office & field based)	Date of issue:	July 2024

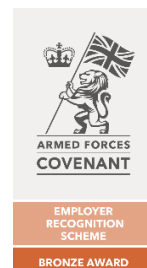
PURPOSE OF THE DEPARTMENT/SERVICE

The Information, Signposting & Advice (ISA) team aims to empower individuals and support their health and wellbeing through the provision of accurate and up-to-date information, signposting and advice as well as through income maximisation.

The service provides a first point of contact to members of the public by triaging enquiries, providing information and signposting or referring onwards to both external organisations and other Age UK Nottingham & Nottinghamshire (Age UK Notts) services.

It also provides general and specialist advice services meeting the Age UK Brand Partnership requirements and tailored to meeting the needs of our local population. The area of specialist advice provided relates primarily to welfare benefits, but it also offers generalist support on housing options, social care and local services

With a small team of paid staff, the service works extensively with volunteers to provide services including office appointments, telephone sessions and home visits.



PURPOSE OF THE POST

The post holder will work as part of the ISA team, providing specialist advice and support to maximise income and resolve all benefits queries for Pension Age clients and complete Benefit Forms for 55+ clients across the city and county.

The focus of the post will be on undertaking welfare benefit entitlement checks and supporting completion of the relevant claim forms. The provision of generalist advice regarding social care, housing options and local services will also be required to deliver a holistic, comprehensive service that responds to the clients' full range of needs.

The post holder will also be required to provide support to a team of volunteers who will support various functions of the role in delivering the required service to meet contractual targets.

KEY DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The post holder is expected to demonstrate an acceptable level of competence in their role for each of the key duties and responsibilities listed below. Competence means demonstrating the required skills, abilities, attitude and behaviours in your work role.

Communication and Customer Service (C&C)

1. Undertake welfare benefit entitlement checks and provide specialist support and advice to assist with claiming entitlements and resolving queries via telephone, home visit, office appointments and outreach arrangements as appropriate
2. Provide specialist welfare rights support to ISA volunteers in client interactions as well as staff from other departments to ensure quality-assured advice provision across the charity
3. Provide generalist advice on social care, housing options and local services to clients in the spirit of offering a holistic support service
4. Provide some basic energy-efficiency-related information and advice where applicable to help maximise income by reducing energy costs
5. Have a good understanding of the boundaries of the advice service and make onward referrals or signpost elsewhere where appropriate
6. Work closely with the partners involved in relevant funding programmes linked to the ISA department to foster and effectively maintain positive working relationships

Planning and Organisation (P&O)

1. Ensure all contractual deadlines and targets linked with the appropriate funding programmes are adhered to as a key priority
2. Effectively manage your own diary and workload including client-facing appointments, volunteer supervision and management, team meetings and administration and other tasks as appropriate
3. Ensure all your own advice cases as well as those of volunteers supporting the role are progressed in a timely manner
4. Be proactive within the role and provide cover for team members in their absence where reasonable and appropriate

Recording & Monitoring (R&M)

1. Prepare and complete all monitoring returns and reports required for the appropriate funding programmes – this will include the provision of data and other information relating to our delivery of the service
2. Use case recording systems to ensure all client interactions are recorded, dealt with and progressed in a satisfactory and professional manner
3. Ensure that all outcomes and codes are entered onto Charitylog in a timely manner – including following up on estimated gains to record actual outcomes
4. Be responsible for own administration, including producing all correspondence associated with the role, working in close cooperation with administration volunteers as required to support this

Quality (Q)

1. Ensure that all information and advice provision, case management and case recording undertaken by you is in line with the requirements of the Age UK I&A Quality Programme, models best practice and is clear and accurate
2. Undertake quality assurance checks on cases completed by staff and volunteer advisors and support with the delivery of quality-assured advice across the ISA department
3. Review quality assurance checks undertaken on your cases and complete any corrective action required within the timescales specified
4. Support management by taking a proactive approach to ensuring the charity maintains the standards set out within Age UK's Quality Programme for Information & Advice

Charity Focus (CF)

1. Assist with attending events and other outreach activities, on an occasional basis, to promote relevant ISA programmes
2. Follow all office systems and procedures, making recommendations for improvement and updating these where appropriate
3. Attend and contribute to all appropriate meetings with partners for the appropriate funding programmes in agreement with the Strategic Director (ISA)
4. To keep up to date with developments in health and social care and other appropriate information relevant to your service areas

Team Work (TW)

1. Fully engage in informal catch-ups and team meetings to maintain a continuous flow of communication and peer support throughout the team
2. Support the mentoring and development of ISA volunteers
3. Work flexibly with other members of the wider team to ensure that key activities are delivered in an open and supportive environment

Specialist Knowledge (SK)

1. Remain up to date with relevant welfare rights legislation and wider social welfare information at a specialist level, as well as developing a detailed knowledge about local services, social care and housing options
2. Keep abreast of training needs of self and volunteers to ensure high-quality advice and support
3. Understand the needs of disadvantaged groups and the difficulties they face in accessing information, advice and support
4. Respond in a timely, professional and non-judgmental way to allegations of abuse.

Leadership(L)

1. Complete all aspects of line management and coordinate induction and further training for the volunteers linked to the ISA department
2. Provide peer support and advice to the staff and volunteer advisors concerning their service users and other aspects of their role on a day-to-day basis
3. Ensure your line manager is kept informed of any significant developments or issues within the team

Charity Responsibilities - Standard Clauses

Your Needs

- You will keep under review your own developmental needs, keep yourself informed of current issues and be alert to the Age UK Notts training programmes and policies and attend all supervision meetings advised by your line manager. It is your responsibility along with your line manager to identify training and development needs and to inform your line manager of these (C&C, P&O).

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- You will uphold the Age UK Notts Equality and Diversity policies and practices thereby promoting fair and quality services to all. If Age UK Notts deem you have breached any of these policies this may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. All policies can be viewed on the Oracle - please ensure you refer to the Equality and Diversity Policy and the Bullying and Harassment Policy (Q, CF).

Health and Safety

- You will take reasonable care for your health and safety and have regard to other persons who may be affected by the performance of your duties, in accordance with the provisions of Health and Safety legislation and actively encourage, promote and reinforce all Health and Safety procedures in accordance with the guidelines laid down in the Age UK Notts Health and Safety Manual (Q).
- You will exercise proper care in handling, operating and safeguarding any equipment or appliance provided, used or issued by Age UK Notts or provided by a third party for individual or collective use in the performance of your duties (Q, C&C).

Safeguarding

- You will raise any concerns regarding safeguarding and report all allegations of abuse in line with the Age UK Notts Safeguarding policy (Q, CF, C&C).

Customer Care

- You will promote and deliver services in a way which is sensitive and responsive to those receiving such services and be aware of and implement the Age UK Notts customer care policies and service level agreement requirements (if applicable) (C&C, Q, CF).

Professional Integrity

- You will maintain at all times the professional integrity of the Charity and represent its main interests in any dealings with other bodies, groups and individuals (CF, Q).

Quality Assurance

- You will uphold and proactively contribute to the Age UK Charity Quality Standard (Q, CF).

Other

- Participate in, and promote fundraising & income generation (CF, C&C).
- Promote all Age UK Notts services and trading products (CF).
- You will attend staff meetings, the annual staff conference and other meetings as requested in order to keep up to date with information within the Charity (CF, C&C, Q).
- You will provide for your line manager regular timesheets, and any other reports or information as required (C&C).
- You will carry out any other specified tasks that may be reasonably required by the relevant Manager, with the proviso that any changes of a permanent nature will be included in the job description (TW).

This job description is intended as a summary of the main elements of the job described. They may be varied from time to time in consultation with the job holder without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.

I confirm that I have discussed the content of this Job Description with my line manager and that I understand its content.

Name of Employee:	
Signature of Employee:	Date:
Name of Supervisor:	
Signature of Supervisor:	Date:



Person Specification Benefits Advisor

Please indicate on enclosed application form evidence to show why you fulfil each individual point below:

Essential Requirements

1. In-depth knowledge of welfare benefits for clients aged 55+ (including universal credit), previous experience working in the advice or benefits sector and using welfare benefit check tools (SK, Q)
2. High level of numerical literacy accompanied by methodical, systematic thinking enabling the postholder to undertake complex welfare benefit entitlement checks with a high level of accuracy (SK, Q)
3. Meticulous attention to detail and the ability to document key information in comprehensive yet concise case notes (Q, R&M)
4. Experience of using exceptional organisational skills to plan own workload and meet deadlines while ensuring high quality (Q, P&O, R&M)
5. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with a friendly, sensitive and professional approach to build trusting relationships (C&C, Q, CF)
6. Experience of supporting team members towards a common goal, empowering and encouraging them to deliver to required standards and targets (C&C, L, TW)
7. An understanding of the needs of people at risk of reducing or losing their independence because of age, disability, health conditions or bereavement (C&C, Q, CF)
8. Ability to remain calm and effective under pressure, retain a positive attitude and adapt flexibly to the changing demands of the service (C&C)
9. Excellent IT skills including proven use of databases and Internet, and Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook (C&C, Q, P&O, R&M)
10. Knowledge and understanding of Equality and Diversity issues and a commitment to implement the Age UK Notts Equality and Diversity policy. (C&C, Q, TW, CF)

Desirable Requirements

1. Experience of external quality audit to meet the Advice Quality Standard (SK, Q)
2. Experience of working within the voluntary sector (SK)
3. Experience of managing people or supporting volunteers (L)
4. Driving licence and access to a car for the purpose of home visits



Summary of Main Conditions of Service Benefits Advisor

Salary:	£23,431.54 per annum (pro rata), AUNN Band E
Start Date:	As soon as possible
Hours of Work:	37 hours per week (job share considered) Age UK Notts consider a full-time working week to be 37 hours, Monday to Thursday 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. and 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Friday with 30 minutes for lunch (which is unpaid). Age UK Notts operates a scheme of flexible working hours.
Holidays:	24 working days (pro rated for part time hours). Employees are granted 8 Public Holidays. One additional days leave is added to the annual leave entitlement for each year of service up to a maximum of 8 additional days.
Mileage Allowance:	Currently 45p per mile.
Pension:	The Charity will contribute 4% of basic salary into our NEST pension scheme after 3 months service, with an employee minimum contribution of 4% (in line with auto-enrolment rules). However, employees may contribute more than the minimum required employee contribution.
Place of Work:	The post will involve a combination of home working, outreach appointments, visiting clients at home and working in the city centre office.

N.B. Due to financial constraints, applicants who are not short-listed will not be notified. If you have not received an invitation to attend an interview within three weeks of the closing date you may assume that your application has not been successful.