



## Recruitment information pack

September 2020



### Our aims

- To provide the advice people need for the problems they face
- To improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives



### Our principles

*The Citizens Advice service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. It values diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.*

# Introduction from the Chair of the Trustee Board

I am delighted that you want to find out about becoming a trustee. This pack will tell you about Citizens Advice South Lincolnshire, what trustees do, about the current trustees and how to take the next step.

We serve our community from offices in Grantham, Spalding and Stamford, and seven outreach centres. When you visit us, you will see the commitment and professionalism of our staff and volunteers.

I am privileged to be joined on the Board by a committed, experienced and skilled team of other trustees who share our vision. The Board operates with a clear understanding of the different roles of the executive staff and the trustees. The Board provides leadership and support for the Chief Officer and senior managers, while properly exercising its governance responsibilities.



We are now looking for new trustees to join the Board, to enhance its diversity and breadth of experience. Since our Treasurer and I shall soon retire from the Board, we are particularly interested in recruiting trustees to take on the roles of Chair and Treasurer. We are also seeking new trustees with experience and skills in fundraising and business development, risk management, information systems, equality and diversity, local government and/or the charity sector.

If you have a passion to serve your community, we would very much like to hear from you. I would be happy to speak with you. You can contact me via email at:  
[chair@citizensadvicesouthlincs.org.uk](mailto:chair@citizensadvicesouthlincs.org.uk)

John Morden  
Chair of the Trustee Board  
Citizens Advice South Lincolnshire

# About CASL

Citizens Advice South Lincolnshire (CASL) is an independent registered charity. We serve over 225,000 people in South Holland and South Kesteven. South Lincolnshire is very rural, covering 1,700 square kilometres. Our offices are at Grantham, Spalding and Stamford. We have outreach sites at Bourne, Deeping St James, Grantham Foodbank, Holbeach, Long Sutton, Market Deeping and Sutton Bridge.

We support clients with debt, benefits, housing, relationship, employment and immigration problems. We offer information and advice. We influence policy makers with evidence from our research experience. We train our volunteers and staff to help with a wide range of issues. If we cannot help, we refer clients to specialists.

We help people through face-to-face advice, on the phone and by email and online chat services. We campaign locally and nationally. We have around 24 staff, almost all part-time, and over 130 volunteers.

We dealt with 36,700 client issues in 2018/19 and another 3,750 at the first point of contact. The value of our volunteers' work is more than £790,000 a year.

During the coronavirus pandemic, we have continued to serve our communities. Our methods have changed, with flexible working by staff and volunteers, but we are operating at levels of activity close to those before March 2020.

CASL is a member of the national Citizens Advice organisation, which celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2019. We are one of 250 individual charities operating under the Citizens Advice umbrella. The main areas where we help are debt, benefits, employment, relationships and housing.

The tough economic climate limits funding for local services, but CASL's finances are relatively strong. Major changes to benefits, the health service and education impact the lives of those most in need.

Three local councils provide our core funding: Lincolnshire County Council, South Holland District Council and South Kesteven District Council. Their support enables us to operate most of our services.

CASL was founded in 2016, following the merger of the Citizens Advice charities for South Holland and South Kesteven. They had operated locally for many years.

Our website offers more information about our work and our services:  
[www.citizensadviceouthlincs.org.uk](http://www.citizensadviceouthlincs.org.uk)

### *Our offices and outreach sites*



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# Trustee role description

## What do trustees do?

- complete a structured induction for the role
- maintain awareness of how CASL is operating
- read papers for meetings and attend four Board meetings, four or five sub-committee meetings a year and some other events
- work on specific projects with other trustees and CASL staff
- take an active part in Board discussions and work with other trustees to fulfil the Board's collective responsibilities, including:
  - deciding policy and strategy direction, setting targets and evaluating CASL's performance
  - monitoring CASL's financial position, ensuring that it operates within its means and objectives, that there is clear accountability for day-to-day management and that proper financial controls are in place
  - monitoring how the service meets the needs of the local community
  - ensuring that the service plans its recruitment of staff and volunteers
  - reviewing CASL's work and how effectively it operates, including actions for improvement.

If you have specific knowledge, skills or experience, you may also be able to guide other trustees or senior managers in those specialist areas.

In addition, the Chair:

- plans Board meetings including dates and agenda, with the Chief Officer
- facilitates Board meetings by leading the meeting, ensuring that agenda items are discussed, enabling all members to contribute their views, taking part and seeking clarification where necessary
- ensures that Board decisions and agreed actions are carried out
- ensures that Board decisions are made within CASL's governing documents and policies and the Citizens Advice membership agreement
- monitors the attendance and commitment of all trustees
- provides or arranges for training or support for trustees if needed
- with other trustees and the Chief Officer, recruits a trustee board with a diverse range of skills, experience and knowledge, and promotes trusteeship to underrepresented groups that represent the local community
- ensures that trustees receive an induction and the training needed for them to fulfil their role
- proactively recruits successors to positions such as Chair and Treasurer
- arranges or provides support and supervision for the Chief Officer, including an annual appraisal

- together with the Treasurer, ensures proper management and control of CASL's finances
- together with the Chief Officer, represents CASL in relationships with funders or potential funders, Citizens Advice Lincolnshire, national Citizens Advice and in the community
- works together with all trustees to ensure that the Board fulfils its collective responsibilities as set out above.

In addition, the Treasurer:

- guides and advises the Board on the key assumptions and financial implications of CASL's budgets, operational and strategic plans
- ensures that CASL has an appropriate reserves policy and a realistic budget that meets the service's needs
- supports the Chief Officer and other staff to on the approval of budgets, accounts and financial statements
- presents CASL's accounts at the Annual General Meeting in an accessible way for members, volunteers and staff
- ensures that CASL's annual accounts are prepared in compliance with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities and submitted on time to the Charity Commission and Registrar of Companies, and make arrangements for them to be audited or independently examined
- keeps the Board informed about its financial duties and responsibilities
- monitors CASL's income and expenditure and in conjunction with the Chief Officer and other staff presents accessible reports at least quarterly to ensure Board members understand the accounts and their implications
- understands the accounting procedures and key internal controls to be able to assure the Board that the charity's financial integrity is sound.



What's in it for you?

You can:

- join a well-known, respected national charity
- make a positive impact for people in your local area by ensuring that CASL is sustainable and that it meets the needs of your community
- meet people, work in a team and build relationships with trustees, staff and other volunteers
- gain valuable governance and board experience
- build on your leadership and strategy skills
- increase your employability.

Trustees are unpaid volunteers, but we can reimburse expenses, in line with our expenses policy.



## What do you need to have?

You don't need specific qualifications, but you'll need to:

- understand and accept the responsibilities and liabilities that we all share as trustees
- be non-judgmental and respect views, values and cultures that may be different from your own
- have good listening, verbal and written communication skills
- be able to exercise good independent judgment
- have good numeracy skills to understand accounts, with the support of the Treasurer
- be willing to learn about and follow the Citizens Advice aims, principles and policies, including confidentiality and data protection
- be willing to undertake training in your role.

In addition, the Chair will:

- have previous Board, leadership or trustee experience, ideally as Vice Chair or Chair
- be confident in chairing and facilitating meetings, leading groups to reach consensus and using influencing skills to get results.

In addition, the Treasurer will:

- be financially qualified
- have some knowledge or experience of charity finances and fundraising.
- be able to explain complex financial information in an accessible way.



## How much time do you need to give?

The Trustee Board usually meets in the evening, four times a year. There is an annual half-day strategy meeting and a full-day all-hands meeting. Each trustee joins one of the three sub-committees, according to their interests. Each sub-committee meets four or five times a year.

Most trustees also take on a leadership role, guiding the charity in an area where they have experience or specialist expertise. You may also attend other meetings if you take part in projects, or meet with CASL volunteers and staff. There are occasional social events. We can be flexible about the time spent and how often you volunteer, so please talk to us.

Our Chair usually attends all sub-committee meetings, meets with the Chief Officer, other staff and volunteers on a regular basis and is involved in preparation of the annual business plan and leadership self-assessment, meetings with outside bodies and similar activities.

Our Treasurer may also be involved in preparation of the annual budget, approving monthly payroll and occasional meetings with outside bodies and similar activities.



## Valuing inclusion

Our volunteers come from a range of backgrounds. We particularly welcome applications from disabled people, people with physical or mental health conditions, LGBT+ and non-binary people, and people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.

We operate an open application process. If you are interested in becoming a trustee and would like to discuss flexibility in location, time, 'what you will do' and how we can support you, please contact us.



## Contact details and next steps

After reading this pack, especially the role description, if you:

- can bring the necessary skills, knowledge and passion
- are available to be part of a committed Board of Trustees
- will enjoy the opportunity of supporting the communities we serve

then we would love to hear from you.

For further information or an informal discussion,

you are welcome to contact our Chair, John Morden, at  
[chair@citizensadvicesouthlincs.org.uk](mailto:chair@citizensadvicesouthlincs.org.uk)

To apply, please complete:

- the Application Form
- the Skills and Experience Questionnaire
- the Diversity Form
- and add your CV.

then send them to:

John Morden, Chair

preferably via email to: [chair@citizensadvicesouthlincs.org.uk](mailto:chair@citizensadvicesouthlincs.org.uk)

or by post to:

John Morden, Chair

Citizens Advice South Lincolnshire

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