

Volunteer stories

Bridget,
Inverness, Badenoch & Strathspey CAB

citizens
advice
bureau

What were your motivations and reasons to volunteer at the bureau?

I was looking for a volunteer role which would contribute to the local community and provide an opportunity to use my skills and experience from previous jobs and general life.

What does your volunteer role involve?

I come into the local bureau weekly to work a session, mostly dealing with a range of enquiries which have been triaged for phone/email follow up and response.

What is the 'stand out' part of your role(s)? In other words, what are the most important, rewarding, or enjoyable part of your volunteering?

The chance to try and help people out who have ended up with issues they are trying to deal with, and need some help/advice.

I really appreciate that the cab adviser roles require working to a consistent and quality standard so people get the best advice we can offer

What are the benefits of volunteering at your bureau?

I feel part of a really supportive and professional team, and we are offering a positive service to the public. As a volunteer the role allows flexibility to fit in with other commitments.

What challenges have you overcome as part of your volunteer journey?

Due to coming out of covid the initial training was online via zoom, which was well delivered but inevitably is less straightforward than training together in person, with less opportunity to meet other staff, shadow, and see the workings of the bureau. Also as a wheelchair user I needed some adjustments eg IT and office set up, to fulfill the role, and I have had to personally adapt to a slower way of working with some difficulties eg quick note taking, which mean I can't work to a standard I would previously have held myself to. Colleagues and supervisors have been very supportive and encouraging which is really helpful, and the teamwork is great.





It definitely keeps me mentally active and I feel part of the community. . .

What skills or knowledge have you gained through volunteering at the bureau?

A lot more knowledge of many aspects of the cab service, eg benefits system, family/child issues and legal rights, a very systematic approach to the enquiry work we deal with, specific to cab.

What difference do you feel your role/contribution brings to your bureau and community?

Although I probably deal with less urgent and more general enquiries than some colleagues, it is still very rewarding to be able to offer people coming to us some useful advice, and a listening ear. I can take some of the load off other cab team members, and try and give people in the community good advice service so they have somewhere to turn to in difficult situations.

Please tell us anything else which you feel is an important part of your volunteer story.

I wasn't quite sure how the role would develop, but am very reassured and committed being part of an organisation that works to consistently high standards, and maintains a very up to date website in advisernet, which I find compares very favourably with systems I have experienced in other big organisations, eg police, prison service, hmrc...Also my cab bureau has been great in supporting me as a wheelchair user. It's a very friendly bureau, and this is reflected in the approach with the public using the service, which makes me feel I am part of something worthwhile.

Interested in volunteering at Inverness, Badenoch & Strathspey CAB? Contact us

