

**citizens
advice**

New Forest

Citizens Advice New Forest

<https://newforestcab.org.uk/>



Chair

June 2020

Private and Confidential

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Values

We give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.

- *We're informed and honest.*
- *We're compassionate and collaborative.*
- *We're problem-solving and forward-thinking.*

Our Purpose – why we are here

Citizens Advice New Forest is an independent registered charity that helps people in the New Forest community to resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing information and advice, and by influencing policymakers on big issues when clients' voices need to be heard.

Our aim

To provide a service that is freely, impartially and confidentially delivered with integrity and reliability by volunteers and staff to enable clients to make their own choices.

Our strategic goal for 2023

Everyone in New Forest area will be able to access free advice to find a way forward, supported by a strong, representative and influential Citizens Advice New Forest; providing our services through multiple digital channels and enabling personal face-to-face involvement with clients at community supported premises, championing equality and diversity while challenging discrimination.



Citizens Advice Structure

The Citizens Advice Bureaux deliver advice services from over 2,550 community locations in England and Wales, run by 272 individual charities. Citizens Advice itself is also a registered charity, as well as being the membership organisation for local offices. Together they are the Citizens Advice service.

Services



The Staff and Volunteers of Citizens Advice New Forest (CANF) deliver general advice to help people deal with benefits & tax credits, debt, housing, employment problems, relationships & family, legal, consumer goods & services and more. Working with those in greatest need CANF provides opportunities for volunteering and helping people back into work through training and work experience.

In 2018/19, over 7000 clients were helped. Many of these came with multiple, complex problems. There is a variety of ways of contacting CANF: 44% visited in person, 29% used the New Forest Adviceline and 27% contacted by email, webchat or mail. CANF helped with over 16,000 issues. The key areas for issues were: benefits, housing, employment, relationships and debt.

Specialist services (supported by additional, ear-marked funding) were provided in 2018/19 in the following areas:

- Macmillan Cancer Support (in partnership with Citizens Advice Hampshire – provision of information and advice to people with cancer);
- Money Advice Service Debt Advice Project (MASDAP);
- Energy Best Deal (via National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux) – provision of advice on the best energy deals);
- Pension Wise – CANF provides the base in the New Forest for free, specialist advice on pensions for people over 55 referred through the national Pension Wise service;
- Healthwatch Hampshire – provision of information, advice & signposting on health and social care issues.

Citizens Advice New Forest employs 2 full-time and 9 part-time staff to support over 120 volunteers running a general advice service for walk-in client assessments and appointments at locations in Fordingbridge, Hythe, Lymington, New Milton, Ringwood and Totton; these face to face services have been suspended during the COVID-19 lockdown. The staff and volunteers also increasingly help clients by telephone, email, webchat and mail, particularly during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Volunteers contributed approximately 28,332 hours of work to the charity during the year. We estimate the value of this help at £612,821 for the 2018/19 year.



Citizens Advice New Forest (CANF) is a private company limited by guarantee and is a registered Charity. It is a member of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux. CANF works to National Advice Quality Standards and is assessed every three years. CANF is also a member of Citizens Advice Hampshire, a consortium of local bureaux working together.

The bureau started operations on 1st April 2010 following the merger of Lymington CAB, New Forest North CAB, New Milton CAB and Waterside CAB. CANF provides a modern advice service throughout the New Forest which makes a difference to the lives of individuals, their families and communities.

Trustees are recruited in line with the terms laid out in the Articles of Association and elected by members at the Annual General Meeting. A term of office is three years and Trustees may stand for three terms. Citizens Advice runs an induction programme for all new Trustees, and our intranet sites, CABlink and BMIS contain pages with information to support Trustees in their role.

CANF Board structure and Governance

The Trustee Board provides strategic leadership and objectives, policy direction, major decisions about the use of finances and is active in business planning and review. The Board is governed, managed and operated in line with Citizens Advice service principles and its Membership Scheme. The Trustees not only need to understand but also to apply governing documents and their obligations including the implications of being an employer.

Recruitment to the Board remains skills based, open and focused on maintaining a diverse, engaged and effective body. Trustees should have a mix of knowledge, skills and experience relevant to the needs of CANF and the community for whom it provides services. The Trustees need to be able to manage risk effectively.

Finance

The Trustees are required by law to prepare annual financial statements that give a true and fair view of the Charity and of the surplus or deficit of funds for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to select appropriate accounting policies and apply them consistently and make judgements and estimates. They also need to assess the Charity's position as a going concern.

Whilst systems and controls are in place, with timely reporting, the risk to CANF remains high particularly with likely future pressures on its main funder (New Forest District Council (NFDC)). NFDC has agreed funding for 2021/22. CANF continues to develop and implement new ways of delivering its services and rationalising its real property leases. The longer-term financial impact of COVID-19 has yet to be established. This could result in further significant changes to the face to face delivery model.

Financial Overview

	New Forest Citizens Advice Bureau			
Income	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	
Donations and Legacies	280,660	271,535	305,072	(Includes NFDC Grants)
Charitable Activities	53,505	63,363	68,233	(Projects)
Other Trading Income	1,666	1,065	-	
Other	1,516	1,023	1,395	
Total	337,347	336,986	374,700	
Expenses				
Staff Costs	195,246	207,376	207,999	
Premises	91,377	90,918	101,029	
Office Costs	54,650	44,240	59,120	
Governance	2,239	2,117	2,128	
Other	53	120	115	
Total	343,565	344,771	370,391	
Year End Reserves	136,347	128,562	132,871	
Note: Expenditure includes projects and general advice				

We are seeking a Chair

This is an exciting opportunity to lead a dynamic local branch of Citizens Advice. This rewarding role is vital to the effectiveness of the charity and requires strong leadership skills.

We are looking for an individual with the following skills:

- Leadership skills
- Experience of chairing meetings and committee work
- Facilitation skills
- Tact and diplomacy
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.

It is desirable for the Chair to have knowledge of the type of work undertaken by CANF and a commitment to keeping ahead of the changes that take place in the organisation.

The Role

The Chair will co-ordinate the activities of the Board. They will attend and chair meetings of the Board and the Annual General Meeting plus Board Committee meetings as necessary. In addition, they will:

- a. In conjunction with the Company Secretary, ensure that Board decisions are made within the remit of the governing document and the policies of Citizens Advice and the Membership Agreement.
- b. Plan the agenda for meetings with the Company Secretary and Chief Officer.
- c. Develop membership of the trustee board to ensure that it contains the diverse range of skills, experience and knowledge needed to operate effectively.
- d. Ensure that successors of key posts – eg Treasurer, Chair – are identified and inducted in good time.
- e. Ensure that trustees receive induction and adequate training to enable them to fulfil their roles.
- f. Monitor the calibre, level of commitment and attendance of all trustees.
- g. Ensure the Board reviews its own work and how effectively it operates, making sure to take any corrective action required.
- h. Ensure that the Board is able to seek the views of all sections of the community served by CANF.
- i. Check that decisions taken at meetings are being implemented.

- j. Ensure the Board reviews the work of CANF.
- k. Liaise with Chief Officer to keep an overview of the CANF's business.
- l. Provide or arrange for support and supervision for the Chief Officer, including annual appraisal.
- m. In conjunction with the Treasurer, ensure proper management and control of CANF's finances.
- n. Represent CANF in the community and at public events.
- o. Represent CANF in relationships with funders and negotiating for funds for staffing, premises or equipment.
- p. Ensure that CANF plans for the recruitment and turnover of paid staff and volunteers.

Impact of the role:

This role is vital to the organisation. It will bring many challenges but an equal amount of satisfaction. CANF is a very professional organisation run by people with drive and commitment. We are looking for someone to help us develop and implement strategy to meet the challenges which lie ahead and to add strength to our Board.

This is a rare opportunity to make a real difference in your community. CANF is a unique organisation with exceptionally talented staff and volunteers. You will be joining a proactive Board of Trustees who are open to new ideas and who work well together.

Time Commitment, Location and Expenses

The Management Committee meets quarterly. These meetings usually last up to 3 hours. There are quarterly meetings of the Trustee Board and these can last up to 3 hours. The Chair also liaises with the Management Team and represents the CANF in the community and at all public events. We estimate a monthly commitment of approximately 20 hours.

CANF's hub office is in Lymington, but attendance is not required other than for specific meetings. Most meetings are currently held in Lymington, but this can be varied.

This is a voluntary position for which all reasonable expenses will be paid.

Appointment Process

All expressions of interest and any discussion regarding these positions will be with the Chief Officer in the first instance. All interested candidates must submit a CV and covering letter. An Application Form will need to be completed followed by an interview with a small panel of trustees.

Start date – no later than December 2020.

Contact Details

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Citizens Advice New Forest is an operating name of New Forest Citizens Advice Bureau, a registered charity No. 1132425 and a company limited by guarantee No. 06983394.

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The Citizens Advice service helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing information and advice, and by influencing policymakers.

Citizens Advice takes its use of your personal data very seriously - for more information see our [privacy policy for applicants](#).

Appendix 1 - The Role of a Trustee

Trustees of the New Forest Citizens Advice Bureau (NFCAB) will:

1. Provide all necessary information to NFCAB to confirm their identity.
2. Act solely in the interests of NFCAB, accepting, jointly with other trustees, ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of NFCAB so that it is solvent and well-run, and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which NFCAB was set up.
3. Keep up to date with what NFCAB is doing, giving enough time and energy to the business of NFCAB, and meeting regularly enough to make the decisions that are needed.
4. Exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence as a trustee, using personal knowledge and experience to seek to ensure that NFCAB is well-run and efficient, and using the general knowledge, skill and experience that may reasonably be expected of a person carrying out the functions carried out by a director in relation to NFCAB.
5. Actively contribute to setting policy and strategic direction, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance, seeking to further the strategic objectives of the bureau.
6. Undertake appropriate induction and regularly update and refresh their skills and knowledge; take responsibility for their ongoing training and continuous development, including keeping abreast of developments within the company, its sector, and the legal, regulatory and governance environment.
7. Commit to sufficient time to prepare for and attend Annual General Meetings (1 hour approx), Board meetings (2.5 hours approx, quarterly), Board Committee meetings (2.5 hours approx, quarterly, if a member of a Committee) and ad hoc meetings, amounting up to approximately 2.5 days per month; ensuring that they can devote the time necessary to discharge their responsibilities for the Board and any committees. Additional time commitments may be required when the company is undergoing a period of particularly increased activity – trustees should recognise the need to be available at all times, particularly to meet the needs of the company at times of significant challenge or crisis.
8. Hold the information of NFCAB and the deliberations of the Trustee Board, and its Committees, in confidence and not disclose, communicate or otherwise make public that information or those deliberations to anyone (except in confidence to immediate family members, professional advisers or as may otherwise be required to be disclosed by law), except for any release of information approved by the Management Committee.

9. Act lawfully, including complying with any statutory, fiduciary or common-law duties, and seek to ensure that NFCAB acts lawfully, complying with the Companies Acts and the Charities Act, the Memorandum and Articles of Association of NFCAB and its Citizens Advice Membership Agreement. Disclose conflict of interests as they arise and any matters giving rise to disqualification.
10. Monitor compliance with NFCAB governing documents and how well the advice service meets the needs of the local community.
11. Accept NFCAB sending documents and information to them by electronic means or in an electronic form to an address that they specify for that purpose.
12. Provide reasonable assistance to NFCAB in connection with any legal proceedings or claims brought against NFCAB by a third party or made by NFCAB against a third party, both during tenure as a Trustee and for a reasonable time afterwards.