

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Adviser (Scotland)
Department	Services
Reporting to	Advice and Support Manager
Line Manages	N/A
DBS / Disclosure Check Requirement	Level 1 (Basic)
Location	Homebased in Scotland (with travel to London as required)

Our vision

Every older person can afford to live well.

Our mission

We stand with older people in financial hardship, offering urgent help today, and shaping a fairer, more secure tomorrow.

JOB PURPOSE

To work as part of the Advice and Support team to support older people in financial hardship, their family members and friends to navigate welfare benefit, housing and social care needs. The postholder will lead on Scottish welfare benefits and housing and as needed, also provide a generalist level of advice relating to England and Wales. Support will be delivered through the Advice and Support duty phone line, booked appointments and emails. The postholder will manage a caseload of more in depth housing and welfare benefit cases for older people living in Scotland as well as carrying out information checks on our public facing literature.

We plan to expand and support the development of specialist advice and support for social care financial entitlement issues in Scotland in the future.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Advice and Support

- Provide specialist advice and support for our Scotland-based service-users with:
 - complex benefit calculations, including both working age and pension age benefits and supporting those in need to make applications, mandatory reconsiderations and appeals.
 - eligibility to disability benefits and assist callers to complete relevant forms over the phone.
 - housing issues affecting older people including for example, housing options, homelessness, eviction, repairs, adaptations, and leasehold issues.
 - complex situations relating to social care, health services and managing affairs in later life.
 - eligibility for financial support to pay for care services; including the financial assessment through Social Services and eligibility for non-chargeable services.
- Take a person-centred approach, combining rights-based advice with holistic support, working alongside the individual to identify their priorities and concerns, and connecting them with relevant internal or external services/groups.

- Effectively manage a caseload, monitoring key dates, communicating regularly with the older person and ensuring the case is progressed to achieve the best possible outcome in the shortest possible time.
- Maintain up to date case records and monitoring information in line with our AQS quality assurance processes and our internal reporting framework.

Safeguarding

- Keep up to date with all of our safeguarding policy and procedures and undertake all relevant training.
- Identify and act upon any safeguarding concerns in line with the Safeguarding Procedure.
- Record safeguarding concerns and actions taken on Salesforce immediately after the call, escalating any concerns to a Safeguarding Lead in line with our Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

Maintain expertise

- Keep up to date with changes that may affect older people, particularly in relation to welfare benefits and financial support, care, housing, utility providers schemes for vulnerable customers, scams and general budgeting/money saving tips.
- Horizon scanning and participating in external discussion forums to understand the changing environment and how this may impact the team's work.
- Undertake any research or training required to ensure we can provide accurate information and advice across Scotland, England and Wales.
- Pilot new and innovative means of providing advice as the service develops.

Public Information

- Work alongside colleagues in the Information Team to scope and review public facing information.
- Carry out thorough checks on information produced for the public on a wide range of topics related to later life, to ensure accuracy.
- Make suggestions for additions to content that would be useful to older people, based on previous experiences.

Collaboration, Policy and Influencing

- Collect and share evidence, insight and lived experience of issues affecting older people to inform Independent Age's policy, influencing, media and fundraising activity.
- Represent Independent Age across Scotland, building relationships with policymakers, stakeholders, partners and older people, and contributing to policy, campaigning and influencing activity through meetings, events, consultations and engagement opportunities.
- Provide briefings, training and presentations to internal and external audiences, sharing advice expertise and frontline insight.
- Act as an ambassador and spokesperson for Independent Age, supporting media, public-facing and stakeholder engagement activities where appropriate.
- Work collaboratively across the organisation, supporting colleagues, identifying service improvements and leading areas of development work.

General Responsibilities

- Embrace diversity and share in our commitment to equality of opportunity and to eliminating discrimination.
- Model and embed Independent Age's values and behaviours.
- Share in our commitment to promoting welfare and safeguarding adults at risk of harm and any children or young people connected with them that we may come into contact with through our work.
- Ensure that information is obtained, used and stored in accordance with our Data Protection and Confidentiality policy.
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the level of the role.

How We Work

At Independent Age, we live by our values and EDI principles.

Our **values** are:

- **Trusted** - a culture based on reliability and mutual respect.
- **Empowering** - an inclusive approach that helps people thrive.
- **Transformative** - a commitment to meaningful, intentional change towards shared goals.

To put our **EDI Principles** into practice, we will:

- proactively challenge ageism and all other forms of inequality and discrimination throughout all our work.
- celebrate and champion diversity within and outside our charity.
- create a culture where everyone knows that they belong.
- ensure our leaders act as role models and champions.
- promote equity of opportunity for our staff, volunteers and the people who use our services.
- ensure our EDI plan is integral to our annual planning processes to ensure that we deliver our goals.
- collect data on diversity and inclusion to enable us to inform our work and review our progress and impact.
- be accountable and transparent about our progress.
- use our influence to proactively champion EDI internally and with external partners.
- continuously improve, adopt best practice and learn from and share with others.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge and experience

- Knowledge of the law and practice relating to Housing in Scotland.
- Knowledge of the law and practice relating to welfare benefits in Scotland for people over state pension age and their Carers.
- Experience of providing advice to individuals in an advice service setting, in relation to the above.
- Understanding the role of an advice worker and advice work models with proven ability to put them into practice.
- An understanding of and ability to provide excellent customer service.
- Experience of using databases to record accurate and up to date information.
- An understanding of safeguarding and how to act upon concerns.

Skills and attributes

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills including the ability to translate complex issues into clear, focused, and understandable language for a range of audiences.
- Strong telephone and digital skills including the ability to quickly establish and build rapport in a remote setting, listen effectively, manage call time and record key details.
- Excellent attention to detail with the ability to accurately proofread and edit written material.
- Strong time management and organisation skills shown through the ability to work at pace, prioritise a number of concurrent tasks and meet strict deadlines.
- Ability to work autonomously for both personal development (knowledge and skills) and service development.
- A demonstrable commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and an affinity with, our cause.

Ideally you will also have:

- Demonstrable knowledge of the law and practice relating to health and social care charges in Scotland.
- Good generalist knowledge of a range of issues affecting older people across Scotland, England and Wales including Health & Social Care, Housing, End of Life, Bereavement, and Loneliness.
- Experience of case management and case recording in an advice context.
- Experience of working within an advice supervision framework, including quality checks, and acting on feedback.
- Familiarity with the Advice Quality Standard.