

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Information, Advice & Welfare Benefits Officer

Reporting to: Service Manager

Salary: £26,125 (FTE)

Terms: FTC for 12 months year with a possibility for extension

Hours of work: 27 hours per week across 5 days (requests for fewer hours or job shares will be considered)

About AGE UK Bucks

Buckinghamshire has a growing older population who are the heart and soul of our communities – for example as employers, workers, volunteers, mentors, carers and child minders. They help make our worlds go round. But when the challenges of older age feel overwhelming, and someone's own world shrinks, Age UK Bucks is there to support them.

Working For Us

Based in Aylesbury and working across the county, our services support older residents to maintain their independence and well-being, especially when times are difficult. We do this through a range of services, including:

- Information and Advice service
- Welfare Benefits service
- Loneliness and Isolation service which focuses on supporting older people to build and maintain social connection through with local activities and groups, telephone and online peer support groups, and in home befriending for the most vulnerable
- Home Services team managing referrals to a team of self-employed and verified housekeepers, gardeners and handypeople
- Hospital Discharge Support Service which features transport home after a hospital stay and short-term community support
- Dementia Support Bucks Service, providing guidance and support to clients and their families and carers
- Supporting Buckinghamshire Council's Healthy Ageing strategy and the Age Friendly Bucks programme

Many older people don't know where to go for support, especially when their own world shrinks or their circumstances take a turn for the worse. Our Information & Advice and Welfare Benefits services offer clients access to free, confidential and independent information and advice on all matters affecting older people. This includes support to establish awareness of and eligibility to benefits to which they may be entitled. Many older people are unaware of the benefits they are entitled to, and last year the team was able to help secure £1.8m of annualised benefits for older Bucks residents.

The role

This role sits within a small established Information and Advice and Welfare Benefits team. You will be providing information and advice to support and empower older people on a wide variety of

issues associated with ageing. Most importantly, you'll be providing deeper support and guidance to help them maximise their income with benefits eligibility support. Enquiries come directly from older people in Bucks, their families and friends and professional referrers. You will progress and process these enquiries, liaising with colleagues, clients, partners and other organisations to ensure we provide timely, accessible and accurate information and advice so that the individual can make an informed choice regarding their circumstances.

Job purpose

Provide friendly, accurate and timely signposting, guidance and advice to older people in Bucks via telephone, online and email platforms so they can make informed choices and maximise their income through benefits support when eligible. Support partner organisations through targeted outreach and training to ensure long term community impact and reach. Manage, record and protect client data. Champion their needs and stories, as appropriate, internally and externally.

Main tasks and responsibilities

- Provide friendly, responsive and timely support to clients and their families and advocates
- Respond to client enquiries in a thorough and holistic way, drawing on all resources to help resolve client issues and maximise support
- Signpost and/or refer to other services, both within and outside of Age UK Bucks, processing internal and external referrals as appropriate
- Respond to welfare benefits queries, advise on eligibility and carry out benefit calculations
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- Manage client cases on our CRM in an efficient and timely manner, paying attention to accurate record keeping and coding of support for our reporting.
- Develop your role and skills by attending meetings, training sessions and supervision meetings as required
- Occasionally present information and advice at outreach events
- Support events and fundraising activities as appropriate
- Uphold quality assurance standards and demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement, including Age UK's QISS and QAS quality signposting and advice accreditation processes
- Be alert to potential safeguarding or vulnerability concerns
- Undertake other duties as required in order to deliver our Information and Advice effectively

Person specification

Essential requirements

- Experience of working with a welfare benefits or similar advice service
- Knowledge and understanding of issues facing older people

- Ability to demystify complex benefits forms and systems for clients and submit accurate claims to the Department for Work and Pensions
- Ability to work collaboratively with colleagues, volunteers and external partners
- Administrative experience, including use of CRMs
- Excellent standards of literacy and numeracy
- Strong telephone and in-person communication skills
- Sensitivity to older people's needs, resilience, and sensitivity to callers in distress
- Ability to prioritise tasks and follow data recording processes
- Ability to work as part of a team as well as independently
- Willingness to represent AUKB in the community at targeted outreach events

Desirable

- Safeguarding experience
- Knowledge of health and social care systems
- Strong research and information-finding skills
- Experience working with older people

Our values

Commitment to the aims of the organisation and the ability to demonstrate the following values:

Enabling: We assist older people to live independently and exercise choice

Influential: We listen to older people, represent their interests and ensure their voices are heard

Dynamic: We are innovative, driven by results and consistently deliver for older people

Caring: We are passionate about what we do and care about each individual

Expert: We are authoritative, trusted and quality orientated

This job description may change from time to time according to the needs of the organisation.

Terms and Conditions

-The position is office-based with some flexibility to work from home and a requirement to work in the community on occasion/as required

- Employees are entitled to 28 working days holiday per full-time role per calendar year.
This will be pro-rata for part-time roles.

-The Charity meets the current legislation by providing a pension scheme. All employees are auto-enrolled and if you wish to opt out you must complete appropriate paperwork.

Equal Opportunities:

Age UK Buckinghamshire wants to become more representative of the community we serve. We encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and encourage applications from our wonderful rainbow of talent in Bucks and people of all ages.