**Volunteer Role Description**

**Information & Advice Assistant Volunteer**

**Introduction**

Age UK Merton aims to recognise and respond to the changing needs of all older people in our community in order to enhance their quality of life.

**Role Purpose**

To see clients with problems across a wide range of enquiry areas, including benefits and debt, employment, housing, community care, family and personal matters and consumer problems. This is a very exciting and varied role as the volunteer will be helping to shape the development of the I&A team and service.

**Main Duties**

* Meet with clients in person or by telephone.
* Explore the nature of the problem raised by the person, and, where appropriate, their wider circumstances.
* Identify and research information relevant to the client’s situation, drawing on information resources available.
* Present and discuss information with the client in an accessible form, enabling them to identify a suitable solution.
* Where appropriate and at the client’s request, to act on their behalf and represent their interests with third parties by letter, telephone or in person.
* Inform people about services that may be available to them and how to access them, including Age UK services; and where appropriate to refer people to other agencies and sources of help.
* Give help with letter writing and completing forms.
* Maintain statistical and case records using manual and electronic systems.
* Liaise closely with the Information and Advice volunteer supervisor and other advisers, seeking advice, guidance and support where required.
* Where appropriate, to work with other relevant local agencies in developing information and advice services.
* Participate in training sessions and meetings as necessary.
* Develop a working knowledge of the information and office systems supporting the service, use them effectively and contribute to their improvement.
* Keep up-to-date with relevant laws, policies and procedures – locally and nationally.
* Carry out tasks according to Age UK policies and standards, in particular on confidentiality, anti-discriminatory policies and health and safety.
* Work as part of a team with other Age UK volunteers and staff.

**Person Specification:**

* Excellent listening and communication skills
* Empathetic
* Good standard of literacy and numeracy
* I.T. literate
* The ability to work confidently on own initiative and know when to seek help and support

**Service Hours**

Monday to Friday, during normal office hours.

Volunteers work on a day and time agreed between them and Age UK Merton. We would anticipate advisers committing to a regular day per week to help facilitate service planning. We hope that advisers would commit to at least 6 months service, but we have many who stay with us for much longer.