



Chief Executive

Recruitment brief • January 2026

Nick Shanks • Director, Harris Hill Ltd
07766538575 • nick.shanks@harrishill.co.uk • www.harrishill.co.uk

HarrisHill
Executive Search

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive for Citizens Advice Westminster.

We're an independent charity providing free, confidential and impartial information and advice to the local Westminster community. We're also a member of the national Citizens Advice Service.

At the start of a new 5-year funding contract, with the potential for extended funding until 2034, this is a very exciting time for us as we implement new services and seek to broaden our reach to support the most vulnerable.

We help people with a range of problems including housing, debt, benefits, employment and consumer rights. Sometimes they can be quite vulnerable and have more than one issue.

We have a strong understanding of local needs, which we use to tailor our services and help to improve policies and practices affecting our local community. We also take great pride in our collaboration with Westminster City Council, working alongside a network of voluntary and community organisations.

The Chief Executive has the support of a committed and proactive Trustee Board, a strong leadership team, highly experienced staff and dedicated volunteers. We work very hard to make sure all colleagues feel trusted and respected and that our culture is inclusive and welcoming.

Following the announcement that our current CEO is retiring, Citizens Advice Westminster now seeks an accomplished person to build on our current achievements, provide strategic direction to grow our services, making sure our staff and volunteers achieve their full potential, and deliver quality advice to our clients. The right person will continue to develop excellent relationships with our partners as well as explore new funding opportunities.

This is an exciting, challenging and fulfilling opportunity to join and lead our team, working to make a difference in an inner London area with a diverse client-base. If that person could be you, I hope you will apply.

Mark Gray

Chair of the Board of Trustees

About us

We help people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing advice and information about their rights and responsibilities. We also work to influence local government and other decision-makers to improve policies and practices which affect local communities. Citizens Advice Westminster collaborates with the broader Citizens Advice service to advocate for positive changes in laws and services at both local and national levels, utilising evidence from our clients' problems.

We offer advice and information on a wide range of subjects including **benefits, consumer, housing, legal, tax, family law, energy suppliers and immigration & nationality.**

Citizens Advice Westminster is a member of the national Citizens Advice service. It is also an independent registered charity governed by a Board of Trustees.

The Charity was founded in 1939 as an emergency service during the second World War. It has since become a frontline essential advice and information service for all those living in Westminster and surrounding areas.

Mission and values

Citizens Advice Westminster provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice and information to local residents, some of whom are the most vulnerable in society. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

We work with local community organisations to make a difference to the lives of people in Westminster through advice, research and campaigning. Citizens Advice Westminster delivers a high quality, agile advice service which reflects the issues and needs of our communities, and which puts clients first.

We work to:

- provide the advice people need for the problems they face and ensure individuals do not suffer from a lack of knowledge about their rights and responsibilities;
- improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives by influencing the responsible development of social policies and services.

Our current strategic objectives are to:

- provide an agile and responsive advice service which is high quality and accessible;
- develop influence through research and campaigning to make a difference to people's lives in Westminster;
- develop strong relationships with stakeholders and partners in Westminster and across London in order to broaden the reach of our service and attract new funding;
- sustain a highly skilled, creative and engaged workforce committed to the values of Citizens Advice;
- manage our resources and governance effectively and efficiently in order to deliver these objectives.

Advice in numbers

Our dedicated staff and volunteers have been crucial in empowering individuals and communities to thrive. Over the past 18 months, they've provided information, advice, and casework to **6,423 clients**, while also answering **16,597 calls** through our helpline.

Our clients

Our clients predominantly represent the Global Majority, with **63% from Black and Minority Ethnic communities**, emphasising our reach into diverse populations. Additionally, **62% of our clients manage long-term health issues or disabilities and 61% are women**. This underscores our commitment to serving underserved and vulnerable groups facing significant challenges.

Referral pathways

The Westminster Refernet Partnership now consists of **40 community organisations**. So far 2,029 clients received help through referrals, demonstrating the power of collaborative, coordinated effort among different service providers.

Accessibility

We have improved face-to-face accessibility through **new** pre-booked Advice Shop sessions and with **new** outreach locations across Westminster. We see clients at **24 different locations** across the borough, with **66%** of our clients finding it easy to reach us. People access our services in various ways:



13%
face-to-face



59%
by telephone



28%
by webchat and email



6,423

Clients helped



16,597

Phone calls with clients



2,029

Clients helped through
Refernet



34,088

Issues dealt with



97

Advice shop drop-ins
delivered

Our advice is effective

Problems rarely happen in isolation and can lead to severe consequences if left unresolved. By addressing these issues, we prevent situations from escalating further.

Over the last 18 months we have secured **£4.6m in financial gain**; this is a transformative change that can uplift households, alleviate stress, and provide a pathway to more stable living conditions.

The difference we make

The wider impact of advice – what we achieve as a result of solving problems and providing support – is just as important.

If left unsolved, problems don't just affect the individual – they affect our community. Solving them creates considerable value to society.

By continuing to adapt, collaborate, and focus on those most in need, we can look forward to even more impactful work in the future.

Our value to society

Maximising the income for those we help prevents more costly intervention.

This helps reduce financial difficulty, promotes inclusion and benefits the economy.

This is only one fraction of our true value.

We also:

- help clients negotiate local processes, such as welfare reform changes.
- help local authority rent and council tax arrears to be rescheduled, and reduce the associated administrative costs.

£4,605,863

Income gain for clients (benefit increases, charitable awards, reimbursements & other financial awards)

£148,197

In debts written off



7 in 10 people say their problem was solved following advice



8 in 10 people say we helped them find a way forward

82%

say they felt less stress, depressed or anxious as a result of the help they received from us

86%

could not have resolved their problem without CAW

75%

clients satisfied with our service

Our savings to the public purse include:

£13 saved
for every
£1 invested

£446k saved by the DWP, by keeping people in work.

£482k saved by NHS, by reducing use of mental health and GP services, and keeping people in work.

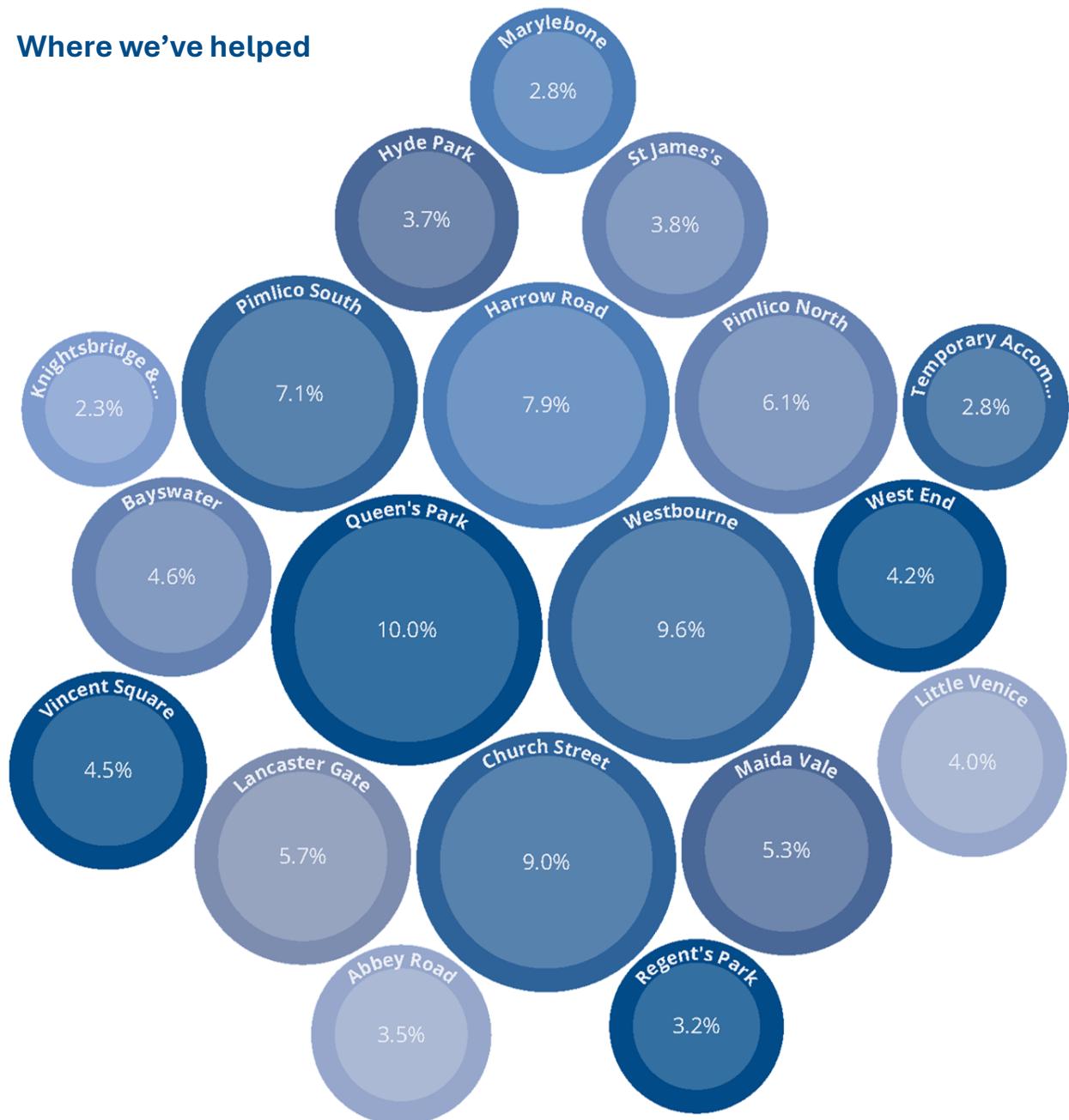
£291k saved by the local authority by preventing homelessness and housing evictions.

£1.9m in savings to the government and public benefits (fiscal benefits).

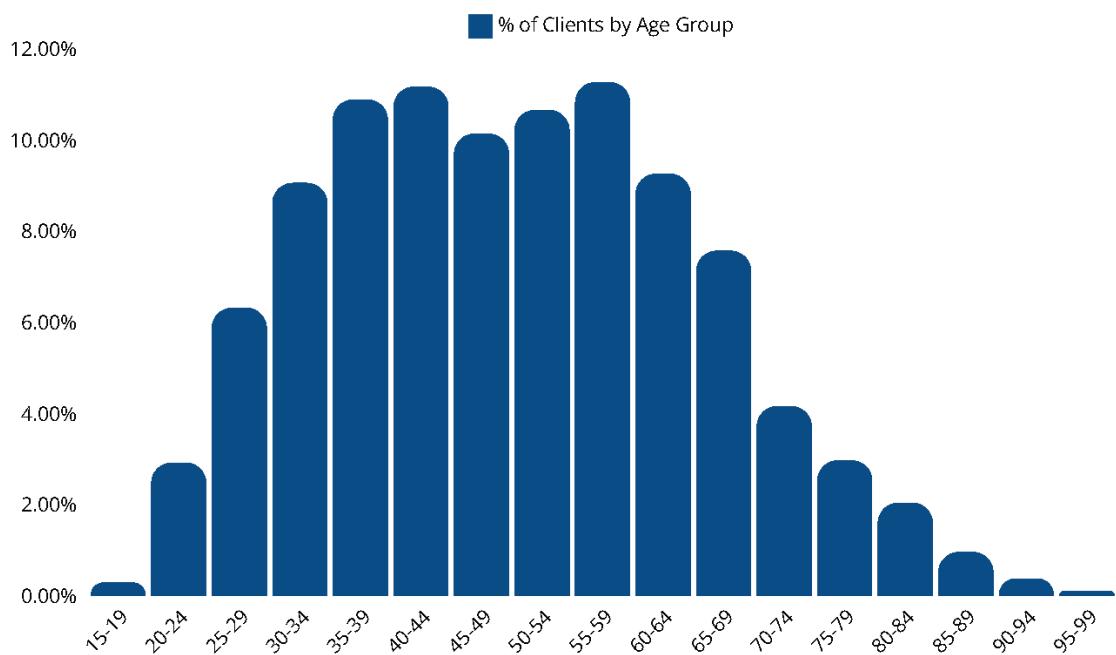
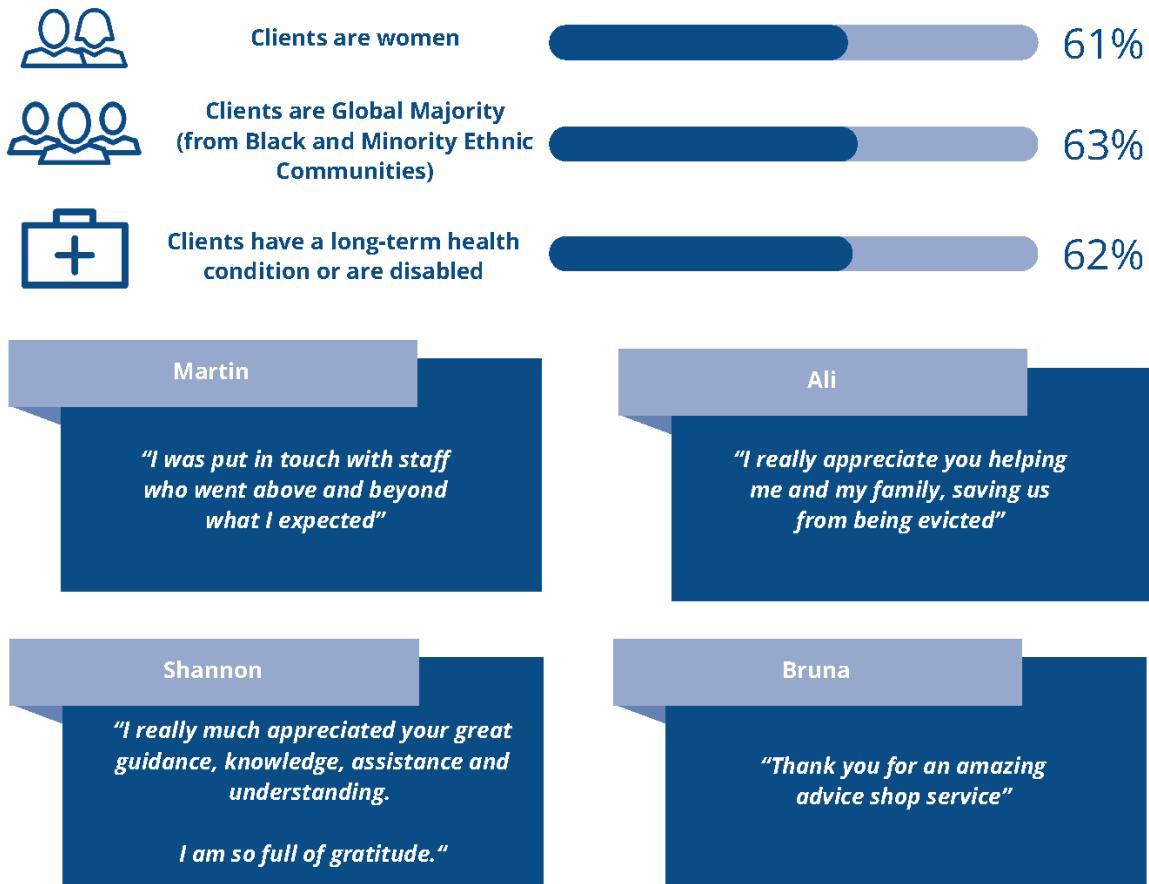
£21.3m in wider economic and social benefits (public value).

£9.8m in financial value to the people we help (specific outcomes to individuals).

Where we've helped



Who we've helped



Job description

Job title: Chief Executive Officer

Responsible to: Chair and Board of Trustees

Salary: £67,991 p.a.*

Accountability: Delivery of CAW Strategic Objectives and Business Plan

Purpose of the job

The Chief Executive Officer leads and manages the work of Citizens Advice Westminster in its mission to improve the lives of residents through delivery of a comprehensive information, advice, and casework service across the diverse City of Westminster.

Key responsibilities

Leadership and management

- Provide strategic leadership and direction for Citizens Advice Westminster, working collaboratively with the Board of Trustees to shape the organisation's strategy, direction, and policies and leading the Senior Management team.
- Manage the development and delivery of the organisation's services to improve the lives of people in Westminster.
- Develop and deliver functional business plans set against prudent and accurate budgets and support financial efficiency and value for money throughout the organisation.

Partnership and growth

- Engage and develop relationships with stakeholders, including staff and Council members of Westminster City Council, the national charity, national, London-wide, and local funders and community organisations, other local Citizens Advice, building stakeholder confidence and leading to new funding opportunities.
- Provide a strong and influential voice for Citizens Advice Westminster as the 'public face' of the organisation, promoting the interests of the charity and its recipients.
- Lead income generation for the organisation including working with partners to develop fundable projects, responding to tender opportunities, and building and implementing an effective fundraising strategy.
- Provide expert insight and advice to the Trustee Board and stakeholders when required, including on matters relating to strategic development, new funding, and partnership opportunities.

* The salary is on a progressive pathway

Making a difference

- Lead the organisation's research and campaigns, using insights, qualitative evidence, and data to tackle the root causes of advice issues.
- Ensure that client experience is at the centre of decision making across the organisation.

A strong, supportive team

- Create an environment and culture which is collaborative, empowering, and supportive in order to deliver the organisation's strategic objectives and values.
- Embed equity, inclusivity and diversity and promote the wellbeing of staff and volunteers.
- Ensure that the organisation has effective, well trained, good quality staff and volunteers, with strong retention and progression opportunities supported by flexible and person-centred people development.



Person specification

Experience

- Highly developed leadership skills with proven experience of developing and leading organisational change.
- Demonstrable experience of leading change across an organisation with multiple, diverse stakeholders.
- Proven ability to run and improve high quality, value, and volume client-facing services at a senior level in a multi-stakeholder environment, preferably in an advice-related organisation.
- Proven ability to manage and develop teams, positively influencing culture and performance to achieve good outcomes and embed inclusion, equity, and diversity.
- Track record of income generation through successful grant and contract applications and capability to diversify income streams.
- Experience of working in the voluntary, not for profit or charity sector and with volunteers.

Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrable political acumen and diplomacy as well as proven influencing and negotiation skills, making clear judgements based on sound understanding and analysis.
- Able to influence external change and earn and maintain the trust of those people with whom the organisation deals, especially funding bodies and donors.
- Broad understanding of the operation of local and national government and the administration of public and legal services, including an understanding of commissioning.
- Understanding of and strong commitment to working with the voluntary and community sector including knowledge of the strategic and policy environment in which the advice sector operates.
- Demonstrable alignment with the values and purpose of Citizens Advice.

Desirable

- A general knowledge of the benefits system, social care / welfare, poverty /deprivation and understanding of the day-to-day work of advice services.

Qualifications, Education and training

- A recognised qualification in leadership and/or management or substantial and demonstrable experience.

Terms of appointment

Job Title: Chief Executive Officer

Salary: £67,991 p.a.
(The salary is on a progressive pathway)

Contract: Permanent, Full-time.

Pension: Employees are automatically enrolled. A 5% employee contribution is deducted from salary, and Westminster Citizens Advice contributes 3% gross before tax relief.

Annual Leave: 25 working days per annum. The office is closed between Christmas Day and New Year's Day, and up to 3 mandatory bridging days are added to annual leave during this period.

Additional leave entitlement is available after 2 years of service, up to a maximum of 5 days.

Sick Pay: Maximum entitlement of up to 3 months' full pay followed by 3 months' half pay.

Notice Period: 3 months (1 month during the 6 month probation period).

Location: The Stowe Centre, 258 Harrow Road, London W2 5ES

Pre-employment Checks: In accordance with Citizens Advice national policy, we will require the successful candidate to be screened by the DBS

How to apply

If you would like to apply, please send the following:

- An up-to-date CV
- A completed data capture form (which Harris Hill can share with you)
- A Supporting Statement (no more than 1 x A4 pages) outlining why you are interested in becoming Chief Executive Officer of Citizens Advice Westminster demonstrating relevant experience for the role.

Please submit your completed application to: nick.shanks@harrishill.co.uk by **9am Friday 20th February 2026**

Dates for your diary:

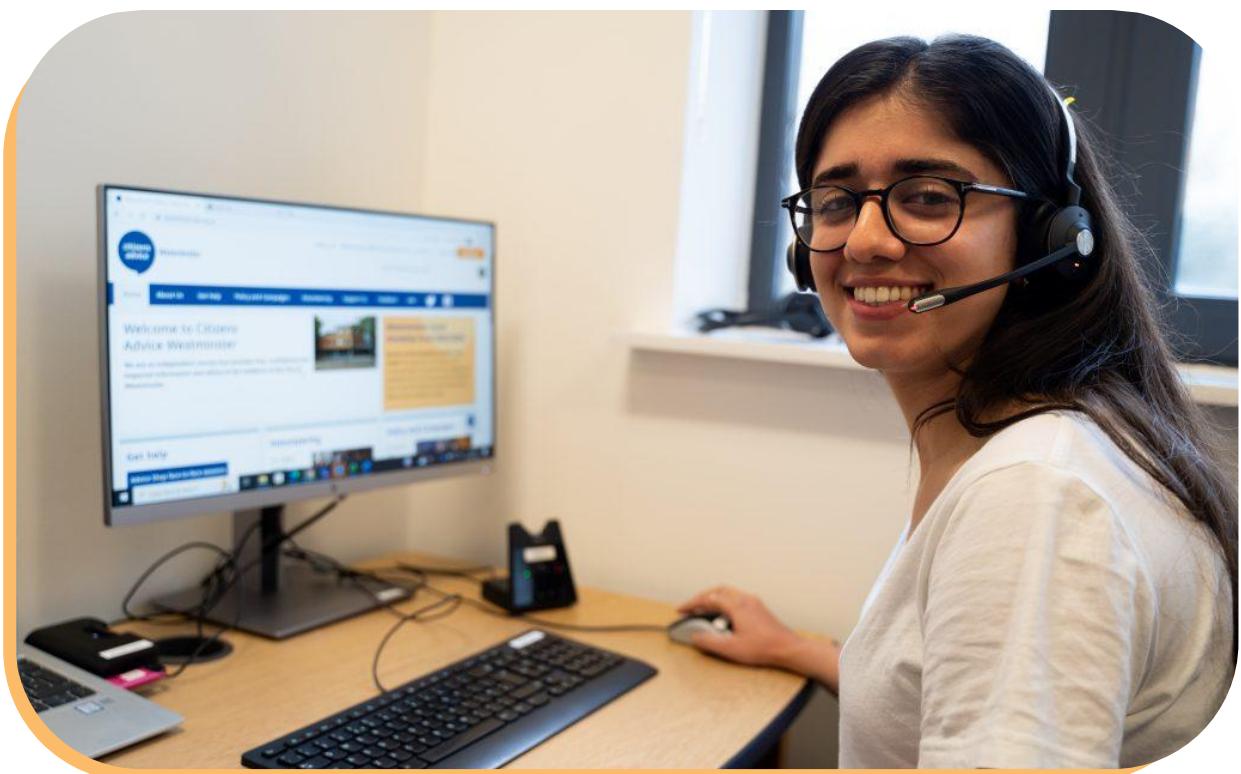
Closing date for applications: 9am Friday 20th February 2026

First interviews: Monday 9th March 2026

Second interviews: Monday 16th March 2026

Please could you also let us know if you will require any special provision should you be called forward for interview.

Please state in your application if you have any commitments during the interview period that may coincide with these dates.



Advertisement

Harris Hill is delighted to be working with Citizens Advice Westminster to recruit its new Chief Executive Officer.

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We work with local community organisations to make a difference to the lives of people in Westminster through advice, research and campaigning. Citizens Advice Westminster delivers a high quality, agile advice service which reflects the issues and needs of our communities, and which puts clients first.

As Chief Executive, you will:

- Lead and manage the work of Citizens Advice Westminster in its mission to improve the lives of residents through delivery of a comprehensive information, advice, and casework service across the City of Westminster.
- Collaborate with the Board of Trustees to shape the organisation's strategy, direction, and policies.
- Provide a strong and influential voice for Citizens Advice Westminster as the 'public face' of the organisation.

If you are inspired and excited by what Citizens Advice Westminster does, we'd love to hear from you.

Job title: Chief Executive Officer

Salary: £67,991 p.a. (The salary is on a progressive pathway)

Contract: Permanent / Full-time

Location: The Stowe Centre, 258 Harrow Road, London W2 5ES

How to apply:

Please review the Recruitment Pack for further information about Citizens Advice Westminster, the CEO position and for details on how to apply.

Closing date for applications: 9am Friday 20th February 2026

Both Citizens Advice Westminster and Harris Hill operate an equal opportunity policy and commit to treating all of our candidates and jobseekers fairly. We welcome and encourage applications from everyone regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.