



# CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Information Pack

February 2025

## ABOUT CITIZENS ADVICE EAST DEVON



The first Citizens Advice office in East Devon opened in Ottery St Mary in April 1940. East Devon Citizens Advice Bureau was originally registered as a charity on 13 March 1978 and became incorporated in 2006. In 2008 East Devon CAB merged with Exmouth CAB maintaining the EDCAB Charity and Company registration numbers but changing its name to Citizens Advice Service East Devon and in 2010 the name reverted to East Devon Citizens Advice Bureau. We are a local independent charity and members of the national Citizens Advice network.

In 2023 we helped over 5,000 people to find a way forward through the hardest times: they came to us with over 10,000 different issues, and we had over 2,000 face to face meetings and helped our clients secure nearly £2million in extra income and debt reduction.

The Citizens Advice service offers free confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person. We give people the knowledge and the confidence they need to find their way forward – whoever they are, and whatever their problem. We help with everything from money issues to problems at work, housing to consumer rights.

Our two biggest funders are East Devon District Council and Devon County Council, but nearly one third of our income is from grant applications and donations. Every £1 we receive from local authorities generates around £18 of savings to public bodies.

Nearly 600 clients needed a food bank referral and 825 had debt issues that we helped them with. We completed 928 PIP forms and helped over 900 people with housing issues. Each year we save local authorities considerable sums by helping people stay in employment, in relationships and in housing. We see a large number of clients with physical and mental health issues and try to help them find the support they need.

We currently have 13 staff, most of whom are part time, and over 50 volunteers. Roles range from General Advisers who can help on any topic, to our Meet and Greet team, Charity Trustees, Admin Support and Researchers. Our training is respected as the most comprehensive advice training available, and while it is a lot of time and effort to complete the training and become an adviser it is

very rewarding, and those who complete it tend to stay with us for many years. Our offices are in Exmouth and Honiton, but we hold regular drop-in sessions in towns across East Devon.

## Financial Overview

In 2023/24 CAED set a deficit budget of just over £50,000. However, the year finished with a surplus of just under £48,000. As a general rule, CAED is very cost aware and endeavours to carry out its functions in an efficient, cost-effective manner.

The Charity's income was lower by £87,152 than in 2022/23. This is more than explained by income of £160,141 in that year for the Ukraine Project. Responsibility for this and for the staff whom we had employed for the project transferred back to East Devon District Council at the start of 2023/24. This is also the main reason for a reduction in expenditure of £55,539. The reduction in income would have been greater but late in the year income was recognised from a generous donation of £30,000 intended to fund an enhanced debt advice service and £14,112 for aid to families in poverty. Both amounts are held as designated reserves

The majority of funding comes from local government, and we are mindful of the potential restructuring and the impact this may have on Citizens Advice charities across the county.

### East Devon Citizens Advice: Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2024

	£	£
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash at bank and in hand	204,978	166,033
	—————	—————
	204,978	166,033
<b>Creditors: Amount falling due within one year</b>		
	(1,541)	(10,321)
	—————	—————
<b>Net assets</b>	203,437	155,712
	—————	—————
Represented by		
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	203,437	155,712

## Meetings

The Board of Trustees meet every two months as does the Finance Sub-Committee which the Chair attends from time to time. The Board normally meets at 5.30 pm in Exmouth but these meetings are usually hybrid to enable remote access. The Finance Sub-Committee meets in the afternoon.

We encourage all Trustees to attend our AGM in person.

The CEO has a brief weekly catch up with the Chair at a time that suits both.

Board meeting dates for 2025 – 20<sup>th</sup> March, 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 24<sup>th</sup> July, 25<sup>th</sup> September, 20<sup>th</sup> November

## Trustees

- Alexander Alder-Westlake
- Andrew Duffy
- John Holme
- Christopher Ward
- Sheila Whelan
- Robert Boyd

Company Secretary: Dean Stewart (CEO)

Clerk to the Board: Venetia Park

Reg Charity No. 1115963

Company Registration No. 05820956

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority - FRN 617590

Other Documents: Annual Report 2023/2024

Accounts 2023/2024

## What we expect from our Chair

The chair should take control of meetings, ensuring that everyone who wishes to has a reasonable chance to speak and take part. They should be able to listen to and understand a wide range of views, present information clearly and concisely and get clarification of relevant points, thus enabling the board to make effective decisions. The board must demonstrate its leadership of the organisation. It is the chair's role to enable the board to do that.

In addition, we need you to

- complete an induction for your role with face to face meetings and some short mandatory training courses
- maintain an awareness of how the local Citizens Advice is operating
- plan the board meetings including the dates and the agenda, with the Clerk to the Board and the Chief Executive
- read papers for board meetings and attend regular meetings

- facilitate the trustee board meetings by leading the meeting, ensuring that agenda items are discussed, enabling all members to contribute their views and take part and seeking clarification where necessary
- ensure that decisions and actions taken at board meetings are carried out
- ensure that the board decisions are made within the remit of the Citizens Advice membership agreement, governing documents, and policies
- monitor attendance and commitment of all trustees
- provide or arrange for training or support for trustees if needed
- with other trustees and the Chief Executive, develop a trustee board with a diverse range of skills, experience, and knowledge with an aim to promote trusteeship to underrepresented groups that represent the local community
- ensure that all trustees receive an induction, and the training needed for them to fulfil their role
- be proactive in recruiting successors to key positions such as Vice-Chair, Treasurer etc.
- arrange or provide support and supervision for the Chief Executive including an annual appraisal
- together with the Treasurer, ensure proper management and control of local finances
- together with the Chief Executive, represent the charity in relationships with funders or potential funders, local events and in the community
- work together with all trustees and ensure that the board is able to:
  - set policy and strategy direction, set targets, and evaluate the performance of the charity
  - monitor the financial position of the charity ensuring that it operates within its means and objectives, ensuring that there are clear lines of accountability for day-to-day financial management
  - monitor whether the charity complies with its governing document and meets the required standards and take actions to ensure that this is so
  - seek the views of all sections of the community and monitor how well the service meets the needs of the local community
  - ensure that there are robust service plans for the recruitment and turnover of staff and volunteers
  - review its own work and how effectively it operates including action for improvement
  - work on specific projects to further the strategic objectives of the charity

## Personal skills and qualities we are looking for

- Extensive and proven leadership skills
- Be non-judgmental and respect views, values and cultures that are different to your own
- 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.

## Induction

All Trustees receive a full induction once they have been formally appointed and ongoing training and development is encouraged.

Please contact our recruitment partner,  
Jackie Dawkins at Shine Charity Recruitment,  
if you would like to discuss this opportunity in  
more detail.

- [jackie@shinecharityrecruitment.co.uk](mailto:jackie@shinecharityrecruitment.co.uk)
- 07974/808193

