

# Volunteer stories

citizens  
advice  
bureau

## Generalist adviser

Refers appropriate social policy cases to CAS  
Dundee CAB

### **What were your motivations and reasons to volunteer at the bureau?**

I had retired; I thought I knew something about benefits. My knowledge was decades out of date, but I have learned a lot about this and other areas.

### **What does your volunteer role involve?**

Calling back clients by phone to give holistic generalist advice, and refer on to more specialist advice, if appropriate.

Social policy; referring to the Social Policy Team in Edinburgh cases where the client has suffered injustice, and it is not their fault.

### **What is the 'stand out' part of your role(s)? In other words, what are the most important, rewarding, or enjoyable part of your volunteering?**

Helping clients to navigate their particular mine-field is satisfying. Making clients aware of their rights, empowering clients to deal with their problems where possible.

Helping clients to negotiate with 3rd parties for instance DWP and Energy companies etc. Social policy work gives me the opportunity to look at a case in detail. There is an intellectual challenge in identifying what the issues are and expressing that succinctly.

It is rewarding when a policy document issued by the CAS Impact Team uses material sent in by us.

### **What are the benefits of volunteering at your bureau?**

A great team to work with.

### **What challenges have you overcome as part of your volunteer journey?**

Knees knocked on my first telephone advising session.

### **What skills or knowledge have you gained through volunteering at the bureau?**

Knowledge – loads, and still learning – aren't we supposed to?

Skills – tailoring my approach to suit the client's needs.





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**What difference do you feel your role/contribution brings to your bureau and community?**

I am just one of many volunteers and staff colleagues offering advice to the community we serve.

**Please tell us anything else which you feel is an important part of your volunteer story.**

You don't need to learn it all – there is no exam; after all, we can't be sure that what was true last week remains true this week. Don't be afraid to let the client know you are looking it up or seeking further advice.

In the early days, I shadowed more experienced volunteer advisers, who taught me a lot.

