

JOB DESCRIPTION



JOB TITLE	Senior Welfare Adviser
SERVICE	Advice Service - Finance, Benefit and Debt (FBD)
HUB	Advice, Community & Employability Hub
LOCATION	Community Links, 105 Barking Road, London E16 4HQ, with outreach and community-based delivery as required
SALARY BAND	Practitioner
CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK (DBS LEVEL):	Enhanced DBS

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

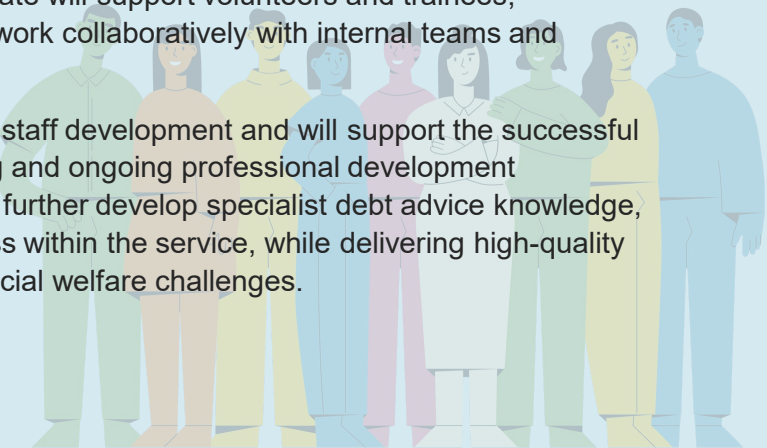
We are looking for an experienced and compassionate Senior Welfare Adviser to join the Advice Service at Community Links. The role forms part of Catch22's Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS), commissioned by HMPPS, and will provide specialist welfare benefits, debt and social welfare advice to men involved in the criminal justice system, while also contributing to the wider Community Links Advice Service.

The postholder will deliver high-quality advice, advocacy and casework to people experiencing poverty, financial hardship, debt, housing difficulties and other social welfare challenges, with a particular focus on supporting men engaged with probation services and those moving through rehabilitation and resettlement.

Working within a holistic advice model, the adviser will help clients understand their rights, maximise income, improve financial wellbeing and access the support they need to achieve positive outcomes.

The role's core specialisms are welfare benefits and debt advice. The postholder will manage a varied caseload, supporting clients with benefit entitlement, claims, appeals, debt issues and available debt solutions, while also advising on housing issues, income maximisation and wider social welfare matters. The successful candidate will support volunteers and trainees, contribute to quality assurance activities and work collaboratively with internal teams and external partners.

Community Links is committed to investing in staff development and will support the successful candidate through funded debt advice training and ongoing professional development opportunities. This role offers opportunities to further develop specialist debt advice knowledge, achieve recognised accreditation and progress within the service, while delivering high-quality support to people facing complex debt and social welfare challenges.



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WHAT YOU WILL DO

Key duties

- Provide high-quality social welfare advice, advocacy and casework across welfare benefits, debt, housing and wider social welfare issues.
- Support service users involved in the criminal justice system to address practical barriers to rehabilitation and resettlement, including financial hardship, housing instability and access to services.
- Manage a varied and complex caseload, ensuring clients receive accurate, timely and effective advice and support.
- Support clients to maximise income and access their rights through benefit entitlement checks, welfare benefits advice, claims, mandatory reconsiderations, appeals, grant applications and access to financial support schemes.
- Provide debt advice, including budgeting, financial capability, income maximisation, debt solutions and support with creditor communication.
- Support clients experiencing housing difficulties, homelessness risks, financial hardship and other complex social welfare issues.
- Assess clients holistically and develop action plans that address multiple and interconnected needs.
- Provide specialist social welfare advice, advocacy and casework across welfare benefits, debt, housing and related social welfare matters. Manage complex cases, represent clients where appropriate, and refer clients for legal advice or specialist services when issues fall outside the scope of the service or require specialist intervention.
- Deliver advice through face-to-face appointments, outreach sessions, telephone, email and digital channels.
- Deliver workshops, information sessions and community engagement activities that improve financial resilience and awareness of rights and entitlements.
- Maintain accurate, confidential and up-to-date records of client interactions, casework and outcomes using approved case management systems.

JOB DESCRIPTION

(Continued)

WHAT YOU WILL DO

Operational Responsibilities

- Manage a complex caseload of individuals facing multiple disadvantages, including financial hardship, housing difficulties, debt issues and barriers associated with rehabilitation and resettlement.
- Maintain accurate, confidential and auditable records using AdvicePro and other approved systems.
- Ensure all advice and casework is delivered in line with organisational policies, relevant legislation, MOJ contractual requirements, agreed KPIs, quality assurance standards, and applicable AQS and FCA requirements.
- Meet agreed service targets, performance indicators and reporting requirements.
- Produce accurate monitoring information, client outcome data and reports for management, commissioners and funders as required.
- Participate in case reviews, audits and quality assurance activities.
- Contribute to service development by identifying emerging trends, gaps in provision and opportunities for improvement.
- Support contract monitoring, service evaluation and funding requirements.
- Identify, record and escalate safeguarding concerns in accordance with organisational procedures.
- Ensure compliance with GDPR, confidentiality requirements and information governance standards.

People Responsibilities

- Support, mentor and provide guidance to volunteers, placement students and trainee advisers.
- Contribute to the induction, training and ongoing development of volunteers, trainees and new team members.
- Share knowledge, expertise and good practice to support consistent, high-quality advice delivery across the service and contribute to quality assurance activities where required.
- Work collaboratively with advisers, solicitors, programme staff, community teams and external partners to achieve positive outcomes for clients.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with referral agencies, commissioners, community organisations and other stakeholders.
- Contribute to a positive, inclusive and supportive team culture that promotes learning and continuous improvement.
- Act as a role model for professional practice, client care and organisational values.
- Provide guidance and support to colleagues on casework matters within areas of expertise.

JOB DESCRIPTION

(Continued)

WHAT YOU WILL DO

Individual Responsibilities

- Demonstrate and promote Catch22 values and behaviours in all aspects of work.
- Maintain professional competence and keep up to date with developments in welfare benefits, debt advice, housing and social welfare law.
- Participate actively in supervision, training and continuing professional development activities.
- Undertake debt advice training and accreditation opportunities supported by the organisation.
- Promote equality, diversity, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice in all areas of work.
- Maintain confidentiality and comply with GDPR, data protection and information governance requirements.
- Adhere to safeguarding, health and safety, lone working and organisational policies and procedures.
- Exercise sound professional judgement, integrity and accountability in all aspects of work.
- Take responsibility for personal learning, development and continuous improvement.
- Carry out any other duties reasonably required within the scope and grade of the role.

WE WILL NEED YOU TO HAVE THIS

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS	WHY WE NEED YOU TO HAVE THIS
Specialist knowledge and experience of welfare benefits and debt advice, including Universal Credit, debt options and relevant legislation.	Welfare benefits and debt advice are core areas of the role and form a significant part of the caseload. You will be expected to provide specialist advice and support positive outcomes for clients experiencing financial hardship.
Strong advice, advocacy and casework skills.	You will manage a varied caseload, helping clients resolve complex issues and access their rights and entitlements.
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.	You will need to communicate complex information clearly and build trusted relationships with clients and partners.
Strong IT, case recording and administrative skills.	Accurate record keeping is essential to support compliance, quality assurance, reporting requirements and effective service delivery.
Ability to manage a varied and complex caseload.	The role requires effective prioritisation and management of multiple client needs.
Commitment to continuous professional development.	Legislation, guidance and best practice change regularly, and advisers must maintain professional competence.
EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE	WHY WE NEED YOU TO HAVE THIS
Minimum two years' experience providing social welfare advice at casework level, including advocacy and representation.	You will be expected to manage cases independently, provide specialist support and achieve positive outcomes for clients.
Experience preparing welfare benefit appeals, mandatory reconsiderations or tribunal submissions.	The role requires the delivery of specialist welfare benefits advice and representation, supporting clients to challenge decisions and access their rights and entitlements.
Experience supporting vulnerable individuals with multiple and complex needs.	Clients may experience poverty, financial hardship, homelessness, social exclusion, rehabilitation or resettlement challenges. You will need to assess needs holistically and provide effective support.
Experience providing welfare benefits and debt advice.	The role delivers specialist welfare benefits and debt advice within the Finance, Benefit and Debt (FBD) Service and requires advisers to manage cases independently.

WE WILL NEED YOU TO HAVE THIS

EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE	WHY WE NEED YOU TO HAVE THIS
Experience managing complex debt advice cases.	You will be required to support clients with a range of debt issues, including debt solutions, creditor negotiations and enforcement matters.
Experience working within AQS standards and FCA requirements.	The service operates within recognised quality and regulatory frameworks, and advisers must work in line with these requirements.
Knowledge of safeguarding, GDPR, confidentiality and information governance requirements.	Protecting clients, managing information appropriately and maintaining confidentiality are fundamental aspects of the role.
Experience maintaining accurate records and working to performance and quality standards.	Accurate record keeping is essential to support compliance, accountability, reporting and effective service delivery.

WE WOULD LOVE IT IF YOU COULD HAVE THIS:

SKILLS	WHY WE WOULD LOVE YOU TO HAVE THIS
Experience delivering community outreach, workshops or awareness sessions	This would support community engagement and help clients improve their awareness of available advice and support.
Training and facilitation skills	This would support the development of volunteers, trainees and colleagues across the service.
Experience using AdvicePro.	This would reduce onboarding time and support efficient case management.
Partnership and stakeholder engagement skills	This would help strengthen referral pathways and collaborative working with partner organisations.
EXPERIENCE	WHY WE WOULD LOVE YOU TO HAVE THIS
Experience supporting Debt Relief Order (DRO) applications or other debt remedy processes.	This would strengthen the service's debt advice capability and support future service development.
Experience supervising volunteers, students or advisers	This would support quality assurance and team development.

If you think you could do the role, but don't have everything on this list, we would still love to see an application from you - particularly if you have lived experience. We ask everyone to provide a supporting statement detailing their experience, and will shortlist the most qualified people for the role from this.

WHERE THE ROLE FITS WITHIN CATCH22



Our structure

The Senior Welfare Adviser is based within the Community Links Advice Service, which forms part of Catch22. Operationally, the postholder will work as a member of the Community Links Advice Team whilst delivering the Finance, Benefit and Debt (FBD) element of Catch22's Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) programme within the Justice Hub.

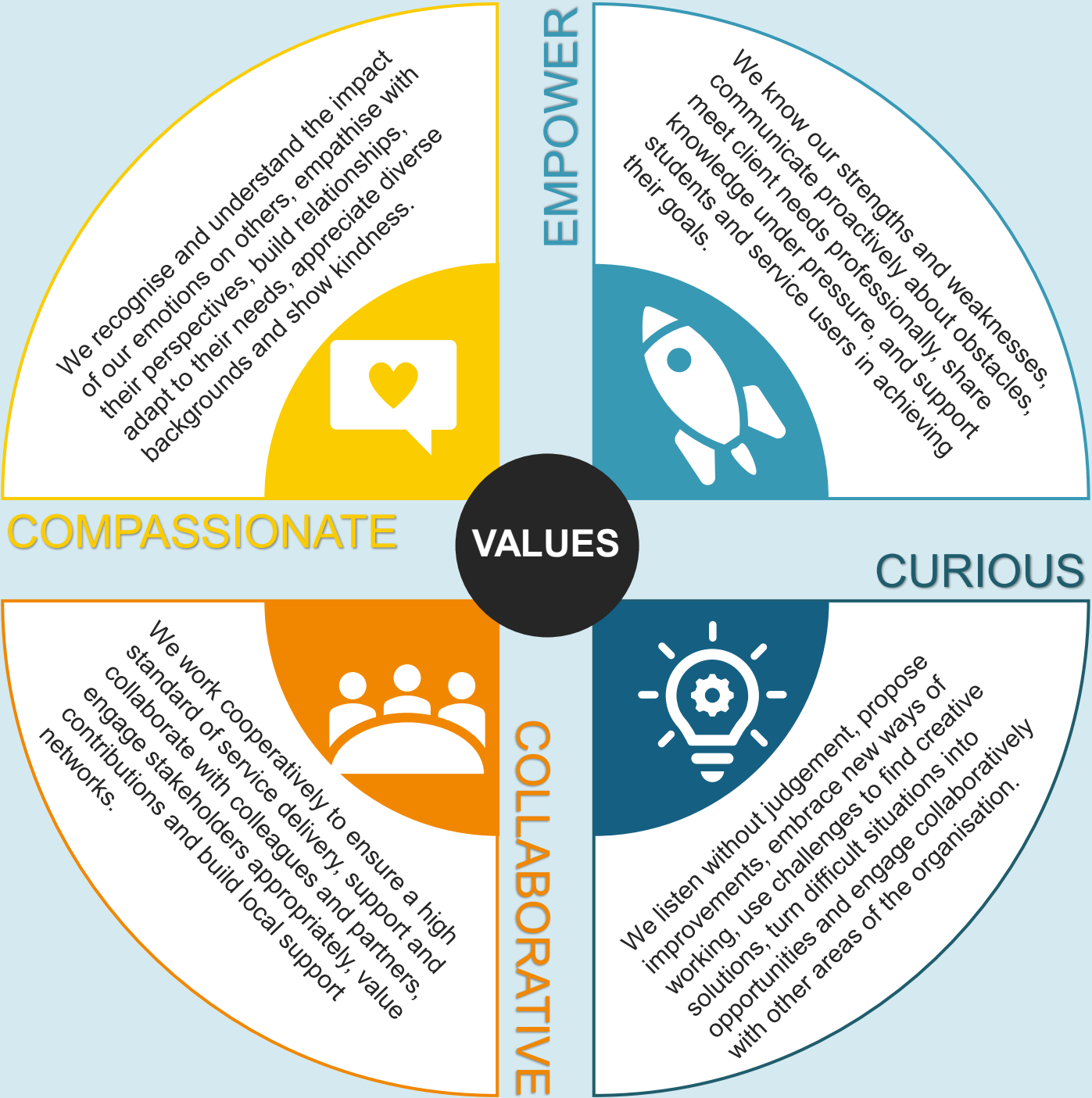
The FBD Service delivers specialist welfare benefits, debt and wider social welfare advice to men involved in the criminal justice system, helping them overcome barriers relating to welfare benefits, debt, housing, financial wellbeing and social inclusion. The role primarily supports this client group whilst also contributing to the wider Community Links Advice Service through integrated advice pathways and collaborative working across services.

The postholder will work alongside advisers, housing specialists, solicitors, triage staff, volunteers and community-based teams to deliver an integrated advice service. They will work closely with internal programmes, probation services, referral agencies and external partners to ensure clients receive coordinated support that meets their individual needs.

REPORTS TO	Programme Manager - Advice
LINE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY	Volunteers, placement students and trainee advisers (where applicable)
BUDGET RESPONSIBILITY	None

OUR BEHAVIOURS

Who we are at Catch22 is determined by ‘The How’ (our behaviours) and ‘The What’ (our capabilities and skills). Our Behaviour Framework (‘The How’) guides how we work, make decisions, and engage with others. It is important because it ensures our values are reflected in everything we do, helping us build trust, deliver consistently high-quality outcomes, and create a positive, inclusive workplace.



OUR VALUES

Our values are at the heart of everything we do. They were created by colleagues across Catch22 and guide how we work together to support others.



We're compassionate

We care about people, supporting them to move forward.



We empower others

We give people the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to thrive.



We're collaborative

We do things with people, not to them.



We're curious

We explore, innovate, and challenge to improve what we do.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The post holder will be required to comply with all policies and procedures issued by Catch22.

This job description cannot cover every issue or task that may arise within the post at various times and the post-holder will be expected to carry out other duties from time to time which are broadly consistent with those in this document.

This job description does not form part of the contract of employment.

Whilst Catch22 is a Ban the Box employer as part of conditions working for this particular contract successful candidates may be asked to gain HMPPS vetting (if ever required to satisfy business need), there are certain previous convictions that may prevent you from being successfully cleared. Catch22 has no influence on this decision nor autonomy to override the outcome.

