

Citizens Advice East End is seeking a new Chair

Citizens Advice East End provides independent advice services to people who live, work or study in Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham. We are governed and managed locally but with the benefit of being part of the influential national organisation, Citizens Advice. We support over 9,000 clients a year and help them with over 34,000 issues, including housing, employment, welfare benefits, utilities and debt. Last year, we helped people using our services to realise £22 million in additional income, debt write-offs or non-financial outcomes.

We are looking for a new chair of our trustee board as our current chair is reaching the maximum time for which they can serve under the rules governing Citizens Advice East End. We want to appoint a candidate who brings innovative ideas, enthusiasm for our values and capacity to make a significant contribution. Ideally, you will live and/or work in one of our three boroughs – Hackney, Newham or Tower Hamlets – and be reflective of our communities.

We encourage applications from anyone with an interest in helping Citizens Advice East End to support our service users and with experience of working in organisational governance structures. That experience might come from your work on a company's board of directors, a charity's trustee board, a school's governing body, or governance boards in national or local government. What's important is that you can help us to be an even more effective trustee board and to support our CEO in their leadership of the organisation.

The **deadline** for applications is **Friday, 27 February 2026** at 23.59, however we will review applications on a rolling basis.

To **apply**: please send your CV with a covering letter to james.peters@eastendcab.org.uk If you would like to discuss this opportunity, feel free to contact James by email.

Interviews will be held (via Microsoft Teams) during the first week of March. We would be grateful if you would tell us when you apply if there are any dates during that week when you would not be available.

This post is not remunerated but you will be helping Citizens Advice East End to deliver significant impact for the communities we serve.

About Citizens Advice East End

CAEE provides independent advice to people who live, work or study in Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham. These 3 London boroughs combine areas of affluence with areas of extreme deprivation, and their populations have a growing need for advice and assistance with issues such as welfare benefits, debt, housing and financial inclusion.

We help our clients with face-to-face, telephone and online advice services at our main offices in the three boroughs. We supplement this core service with outreach services at GP surgeries, children's centres, housing associations and other local institutions. We support over 9,000 people a year with practical and effective advice to help them in resolving problems that they face. We achieve positive outcomes for our clients and, through our efforts, recover over £22m income for them each year. Our clients include the poorest in society, frequently with acute physical or mental health issues. Our work often makes a real difference to their lives.

We are constantly challenging prejudice, discrimination and maladministration, in line with the ethos of our parent organisation, Citizens Advice.

We offer high quality advice to our clients, through a team of employed staff and volunteers based in our three London boroughs. We work in partnership with the local councils in those boroughs and under contract with numerous other funders, both locally and nationally. Increasingly, we work with a recently established London Citizens Advice Consortium, often working in partnership with the Greater London Authority.

Over and above our advice, we gather information on the demand for our services and the issues affecting our clients and we use that information for local campaigning on poverty and social exclusion issues. We also feed that information back to Citizens Advice, to help it with national campaigns on, for example, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis or the effects of welfare reforms.

Citizens Advice East End's governance

CAEE is a registered charity and is governed by a trustee board, currently of 10 trustees (maximum is 15).

The Trustee meetings are held quarterly in March, June, September and November/December.

They are usually on a Thursday evening from 6.30pm either online or at the offices in the City of London or Hackney and last about 3 hours. In addition, there is a separate strategic planning/ business planning session in January/ February and a handful of annual events with staff and volunteers that trustees are encouraged to attend.

CAEE: the Chair's role

The purpose of the role is:

- to lead the trustee board in ensuring the effective performance of its governance responsibilities
- to work in partnership with the Chief Executive to help achieve the objectives set for the organisation
- to ensure there is an effective relationship between the trustee board and the organisation's staff, volunteers, members and stakeholders.
- to represent the organisation externally and the trustee board internally

Main Duties

(Note: Some of the duties listed below may be delegated to other trustees. We estimate that the role will require a commitment of 1 day of the Chair's time per month)

The Chair **ensures that the trustee board fulfils its responsibilities**, particularly by:

- chairing board meetings, so that the board functions effectively and carries out its duties
- ensuring that the business of meetings is dealt with (balancing a need for good timekeeping with the need to allow space for full discussion), and that decisions, when required, are arrived at and recorded, and their implementation allocated and monitored
- ensuring, with the Chief Executive, that trustees receive appropriate advice, training and information relating to their role
- ensuring the organisation's governance, audit and investment practices are updated as needed
- serving as an additional promoter of the organisation to relevant stakeholders (including funders, local councils, regional authorities, the national Citizens Advice organisation and local and regional politicians)

- ensuring that satisfactory arrangements are made to identify and nominate the next Chair

The Chair **helps the Chief Executive to achieve the objectives set for the organisation**, particularly by:

- ensuring the board develops a long-term strategy for the organisation with objectives which can be monitored
- monitoring progress in implementing the work plan
- ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place to support, monitor and review the work of the Chief Executive
- leading on reviewing the strategic business planning and operational performance management sections of the leadership self-assessment (an internal audit of the board's effectiveness)

The Chair **helps to ensure an effective relationship between staff, volunteers, members and other stakeholders**, particularly by:

- helping to promote the organisation to a wider audience of potential funders and other stakeholders
- agreeing, with the Chief Executive, an annual schedule for board and sub-committee meetings

Through the Chief Executive, the Chair **facilitates appropriate communication between trustees and staff, volunteers and stakeholders**.

Along with the Chief Executive, the Chair **represents the organisation at local and national events**, which might include the following:

- the London Citizens Advice Chair's Forum meeting
- the Citizens Advice national conference

In addition, the Chair would be expected to undertake the **statutory duties of all trustees** and contribute to trustee discussions on other issues, including financial management and fundraising, human resources issues, overseeing service developments and ensuring that the charity has good governance.

Key Qualities

- Experience of chairing (or being an active part of) a governance board of a substantial organisation
- A desire to help the CAEE to support its service users

- An appetite to lead the organisation
- Excellent meeting and presentation skills
- Supportive and confident leadership style
- Tact, diplomacy and powers of persuasion
- Ideally, some understanding of the advice and/or non-profit sector
- The ability and willingness to commit to and work within the aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice service
- Previous experience as a charity trustee would be desirable