# Recruiting former clients as volunteers

We define former clients as local residents who have previously received information, advice or support from their local branch of Citizens Advice.

Former clients can, and do, make excellent volunteers in a range of roles. Having lived experience can give individuals valuable insight into what it's like to experience some of the issues that our clients might face, and what it's like to access the Citizens Advice service.

We ask all interested volunteers whether they have used the Citizens Advice service in the last 12 months because we feel it's important for there to be both space and time between using the service and becoming a volunteer.

It is important for us to carefully consider if the individual has moved from being a 'current client' to being a 'former client' and if it's appropriate for them to volunteer.

We consider a variety of factors including:

- How long ago the individual received help from us
- What kind of help was given
- What issue(s) we helped with
- How complex the issue(s)
- How frequently help was needed
- Whether the issue was resolved
- How likely the individual is to require help again

We feel it is important for a person to be ready to move into the volunteer role as we offer impartial and independent advice and do not rely on our own personal experiences. Therefore, we will often require a waiting period from the date of the last contact with us before considering an application. This is assessed on a case by case basis.

If you are a former client and are considering volunteering with us, please contact our training manager at training@caeastleigh.org for an informal discussion.