

# The impact of our advice



**citizens  
advice**

**Aylesbury  
Vale**

# Helping people find a way forward

---

**Every month, Citizens Advice Aylesbury Vale supports hundreds of people and families with problems affecting their lives.**

We provide information, advice and specialist support that helps people resolve their problems. This report demonstrates the impact of our advice, the people that we support and the services that we provide across the Aylesbury Vale.

Each year, CAAV provides advice to around 5,000 people supporting them with over 11,000 different issues. Our role as an independent, local Citizens Advice office is to help people find a way forward, to help enable them make lasting change for the future and to improve their lives through the provision of advice.

Areas of deprivation and poverty are hidden by the affluence of Buckinghamshire and many of our clients live day-to-day, sometimes barely meeting their basic needs. Some are isolated due to location, social or health difficulties and many are long-term health or disability sufferers who have limited mobility, and our services aim to accommodate and support those who are more vulnerable.

We are seeing an increase in people who are experiencing mental health issues and finding it difficult to cope with issues they may be having and we aim to strengthen our relationships with external agencies, to ensure people are helped when they need it most.

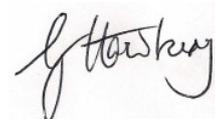
Our services would not be delivered without our dedicated volunteers and staff who do a fantastic job, working with sometimes complex issues and doing their best for people, normally above and beyond the call of duty. Thank you just doesn't seem enough!

We very much value our funders including AVDC and their support is critical to our services. We seek to develop our income streams to become a sustainable charity that will serve the communities of the Vale for many years to come.

Should you wish to become a regular donor, you can join our 'friends' scheme or make a donation via our website.



Richard Wiltshire, CEO



Guy Hawking, Chair of Trustees

# Our impact

---

In 2017 we helped **5,362** Unique Clients (each client is counted once throughout the year but may be seen more than once) in the Aylesbury Vale area. Clients are supported via telephone, face-to-face appointments and through home visits.



**48%**  
of our service is delivered through face-to-face appointments



**1 third**  
of our clients have a disability or long-term health condition



**20%**  
of our clients are from BAME communities

---

We dealt with **11,543** separate issues throughout the year across a wide range of advice and consumer areas.



**Fuel debt**  
211 issues relating to fuel debt, energy advice or switching supplier



**Charitable support**  
102 cases including emergency food parcels vouchers and clothing



**Financial debt**  
Every day we deal with one or more client's who are experiencing debt issues

---



**20%**  
of our clients face housing issues such as eviction or tenancy problems



**40%**  
of our clients need advice or support to enable them to access benefits



**1 fifth**  
of our clients are experiencing relationship issues and this is increasing

# The difference this makes

---

Through analysing local and national data, we are able to highlight the difference this makes. With your support, we make a difference to people's lives.



**3 in 4**  
people said we have made a positive difference in their lives



**90%**  
of clients were satisfied with our service overall



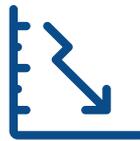
**4 in 5**  
clients said their lives improved following advice from us

---

We aim to improve people's wellbeing through free, confidential and impartial advice.



**3 in 4**  
people felt less stressed, depressed or anxious after advice



**Nearly half**  
of our clients with health issues needed less help from health services



**3 in 5**  
people found it easier to manage day to day life after advice

---

We offer a safe, non-judgemental space to provide advice to those suffering with mental health issues.



**3 in 5**  
people felt better able to manage their condition following advice



**Nearly 1 in 2**  
reported their relationships with other people improving after advice



**85%**  
believed the quality of their children's lives would improve after advice

# A client's story

---

One recent case study carried out is with a home visiting client, April who is of pensionable age and has significant long-term health conditions which means it is a struggle for her to leave the house.

April has received a disability benefit since 2002 and lives off her state pension with a top-up of pension credit. Due to welfare reform, April was required to re-apply for a new 'Personal Independence Payment'. The paperwork is 40 pages which can be difficult to complete and she asked us for help.

This payment enables April to pay for additional items to help her to cope with the daily difficulties of living with long-term health conditions. She was concerned that there would be a delay and her money would stop. The home visiting team supported April who then was interviewed and she awaited the final outcome.



'Where would I be without them (Home Visiting), I've been living on disability since 2002. I wouldn't have known how to do it all and the size of the form threw me, so I phoned the Home Visiting team.'



The client also fed back about the interview process and stated 'I think it went well but I was really worried that I wasn't going to get the award.'



A week after the interview for PIP, the client received a letter to notify the outcome and stated: 'I didn't open the letter at first as I was so nervous'.

The outcome for April was that she was awarded the enhanced rates but, this time for ten years instead of two, providing her with stability and security and enables her to focus on her health.



April says 'I'm extremely happy with the outcome and I feel more secure and that the more assured income, takes some of the worry away.' April also thinks that, in the past, stress has exacerbated some of the conditions and her stress will now be eased.

# Helping where it's needed most

We provide help across the whole of Aylesbury Vale. However, there are more people we could support, especially in the deprived areas of our community.

In this chart the Vale's wards are listed, as ranked by the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Southcourt being the most deprived and Bedgrove being the least deprived.

The table demonstrates the percentage of adult population in each ward that we have helped. This is at the local office, at our outreach locations and through the home visiting service in Buckingham which supports the elderly, disabled, rurally and socially isolated members of the community.

Whilst Buckingham North & South score well on the Multiple Index, we see a number of clients in that area through the home visiting service and the needs of the community. Some 85% of Home Visiting clients are either disabled or have long-term health conditions and would have significant difficulty accessing our service.

Local Authority Ward	IMD Rank	All cases %	Long term illness or disability	Welfare Benefits support	Debt support	Housing support	Relationships & Family	Employment
Southcourt	15	4.3	1.5	1.7	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.6
Gatehouse	27	3.9	1.4	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.5
Quarrendon (Riverside)	30.1	4.6	1.2	1.4	1.2	0.6	0.8	0.7
Central & Walton	35.2	3.0	1.0	1.0	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.5
Walton Court & Hawkslade	44.4	3.7	1.4	1.4	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.5
Elmhurst	44.6	4.3	1.6	1.4	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.7
Watermead	44.6	2.8	0.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.3
Grendon Underwood & Brill	51.3	3.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4
Luffield Abbey	55.2	3.6	1.8	1.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4
Tingewick	64.7	3.4	1.9	1.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.4
Oakley	68	2.3	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.3
Wingrave	70	3.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.5
Oakfield & Bierton	72.4	2.5	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.4
Great Brickhill & Newton Longville	72.9	2.1	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.2
Marsh Gibbon	77.8	3.0	1.1	1.0	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.4
Stewkley	78.3	2.3	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.2
Steeple Claydon	79	3.7	1.5	1.4	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.5
Coldharbour	80	2.9	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.6
Buckingham North	81.4	6.7	2.6	3.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	0.7
Mandeville & Elm Farm	82.5	2.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4
Waddesdon	84.4	2.3	0.8	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4
Winslow	85.3	3.9	1.7	1.8	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5
Great Horwood	85.5	2.5	1.2	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.2
Pitstone & Cheddington	87	2.1	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.3
Haddenham & Stone	89.8	2.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3
Wing	89.9	3.3	1.0	1.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	0.6
Quainton	91.3	1.7	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.3
Long Crendon	91.7	1.6	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2
Wendover & Halton	91.7	1.7	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2
Edlesborough	92	1.5	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.3
Aston Clinton & Stoke Mandeville	93.7	1.6	0.6	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3
Buckingham South	96.4	4.3	1.5	1.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Bedgrove	98.3	1.9	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.4

# Funding and feedback

---

Our service is reliant on external funding, donations and long-term supporters. As an independent local charity, we value our relationships with all our funders sincerely thank them for their ongoing commitment to our work.

As we strive forward with our strategic plan, we aim for long-term sustainability and alternative income streams to diversify. By supporting your local office, you are impacting people's lives, improving well-being, supporting those with mental health difficulties, disabilities, health conditions, the elderly, families and many more.

We work with:

- Trusts and foundations
- Local businesses to support their CSR objectives
- Philanthropists and individual donors
- Schools and local clubs

There are many benefits of choosing Citizens Advice as your charitable partner and we welcome discussing this with you.

---

Our recent client feedback highlights why advice services are needed:

Thank you for your help and your support. I don't know where I would be without this help!

The adviser was very friendly, supportive and professional and helped me understand my situation. I feel confident & happy!

I have been given a direction and how to proceed.

I received an excellent service today. I can now leave knowing that some of the pressure can be taken off.

I never felt rushed in my appointment to be out quickly for the next client. Polite and friendly manner by the adviser, they were calm.

I have felt assured and my situation resolved. I have received great understanding & eased stress. This is a valuable service!

Very friendly lady. I understand everything she said and she helped me a lot.

The service given is so important and is second to none. I really appreciate the time given by the advisors & thanks for helping me.

I felt supported by the advisor who helped me deal with my job loss. The volunteers are an asset to Citizens Advice Aylesbury Vale.

# A volunteer's story

---

Following a career in the health service, our volunteer approached retirement viewing it as an extended holiday and was looking forward to time for themselves.

They brought with them a wealth of personal and professional skills that were soon going unused and sought a new challenge. Our volunteer found themselves wanting structure and mental stimulation. They considered offering their time to a charity but was uninspired by some of the roles on offer locally. After a visit to the local Citizens Advice office, they were interested by the thought of helping others through the provision of advice.

After a swift application process, thorough training was provided to allow the volunteer to become a qualified advisor. Even though they were aware of some issues people faced, the most significant learning came from learning the impact of everyday issues, such as benefits and debt, had on people's health and well-being.



'Before I trained as an advisor, I thought I knew a great deal about how people lived their lives. More often, clients come to see us at 'crisis' point and they have a wide variety of issues.'



'Sometimes, the advice is not what the clients hope to hear, but we discuss all possible options and clients are encouraged to decide what is best for them. It is difficult when people are emotional, angry or upset and you need a lot of patience to support them through.'



'Seeing my 1st client I was so nervous, even with my experience, and I've now been advising more than 5 years. It is very satisfying and rewarding to help them solve their problems and regain control on their lives.'

This volunteer has provided hundred's of clients with advice and information over the years and remains committed to the local community to help those who need it. Their neglected skills have flourished, as well as learning more about money management and the complexity of the benefits system.



'Acting as a supervisor now to the other advisors, I'm able to offer lots of experience to both trainees and the more experienced. My confidence has developed and I enjoy being part of a team that unconditionally, provides advice to support the community.'

# Our local value and services

---

Citizens Advice has worked with the HM Treasury to provide a tool that enables all offices to calculate their local value. For every £1 invested in Citizens Advice Aylesbury Vale, our local value is:

## **£3.04 in savings to government and public services (fiscal benefits)**

By helping stop problems occurring or escalating, we reduce the need for public services (health, housing, out-of-work benefits)

## **£17.53 in wider economic and social benefits (public value)**

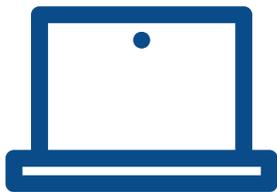
Solving problems improves lives - and this means better wellbeing, participation and productivity of the people we help

## **£13.44 in value to people we help (financial outcomes after advice)**

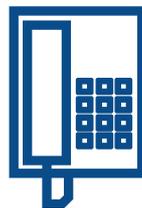
We can increase people's income through debts written-off, taking up benefits they are entitled to & solving consumer problems

---

Services that we provide:



**Website information**  
access to a comprehensive and high quality self-help website



**Telephone access**  
to quick and convenient help that can assist those who can help themselves



**Face to face**  
appointments at two office locations for those who may need additional support



**Outreach locations**  
Steeple Claydon  
Winslow  
Buckingham University



**Community events**  
Gawcott Solar Farm  
Buckingham Library  
Rural community groups



**Training**  
financial capability training to vulnerable groups, 16+ learners & businesses

# About us

---

Our dedicated team of volunteers, staff and trustees make everything we do possible.

Thank you to our:

**9.5 full time equivalent staff**

**70 volunteers**

**9 trustees**



Should you be interested in volunteering with us, please look on our website for the 'Expression of Interest' form to register your details.

---

## Money Matters programme

Our financial capability programme supports secondary schools, colleges, community groups and charities with a training programme that offers understanding into personal money management & budgeting.

Funded by the Big Lottery, we have achieved:

**26 financial capability training programmes**

**402 individuals supported with training**



---

We are a registered charity and company limited by guarantee.



**30 funders  
& donors**

provide financial support to us, thank you for your ongoing commitment



**£346,293 in  
expenditure**

to run our services for a year; two offices and outreach locations



**76% of our  
expenditure**

is on staff & volunteer costs associated with providing the service

# **Free, confidential advice. Whoever you are.**

We help people find a way forward with their problems and campaign on big issues when their voices need to be heard.

We value diversity, champion equality and challenge discrimination and harassment. We're here for everyone.

## **Citizens Advice Aylesbury Vale**

[www.aylesburyvaleadvice.org.uk](http://www.aylesburyvaleadvice.org.uk)

Adviceline: 03444 111 444

2 Pebble Lane, Aylesbury Buckinghamshire, HP20 2JH  
Wheeldon House, Buckingham, MK18 1JX

Telephone: 01296 329854

General email: [info@aylesburyvaleadvice.org.uk](mailto:info@aylesburyvaleadvice.org.uk)

Fundraising: [lindsay.riley@aylesburyvaleadvice.org.uk](mailto:lindsay.riley@aylesburyvaleadvice.org.uk)

Charity registration number: 1126825

Company registration number: 6693405