

The impact of our advice

2018-2019



**citizens
advice**

**Aylesbury
Vale**

Helping people find a way forward

We are Citizens Advice Aylesbury Vale.

Every year thousands of people come to us for advice and help with solving their problems.

We're here for everyone and help with problems like managing debt or household bills, understanding rights at work or housing issues. We also deliver specialist projects such as our countywide Money Matters programme (funded by the National Lottery Community Fund); training people on Financial Capability, developing their skills and abilities to manage their finances. This preventative work complements the work our services do in helping people when they are most in need.

We're an important part of this community, with offices in Aylesbury and Buckingham and outreach services where people need us. Last year we provided advice to around 3500 people and supporting them with 13,000 different issues. We're seeing increasing numbers of people coming to us with more than one problem. Our role as an independent, local service is help them find a way forward.

Through our daily interaction with clients, we have a credible understanding of local needs. We use our data and insight to tailor our services, as well as to help improve policies and practices locally. Putting our clients' needs at the heart of decision-making means we also work in partnership, making it easier for clients to access relevant services.

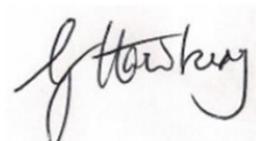
We're also part of the Citizens Advice service. This means we share knowledge and best practice so that people can expect a quality service. Together we work to fix the underlying causes of people's problems using evidence gathered from across our network.

Because of this we save society money. Using a treasury-approved model, we calculated that in 2018/19, for every **£1** invested in our service, we saved government and public services **£3.92**, with a financial benefit for our clients of **£19.28**. We are a charity and rely on financial support from donors and funders such as Aylesbury Vale District Council. Their support is key to the sustainability and growth of our services, enabling us meet the demand of the Vale communities.

This is the story of our impact.



Zoe McIntosh, CEO



Guy Hawking, Chair of Trustees

Our Impact

In 2018-2019 we helped **3753** 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.



39%
of our service is delivered through face-to-face appointments



29%
of our clients have a disability or long-term health condition



18%
of our clients are from BAME communities

We dealt with **13,266** separate issues throughout the year across a wide range of advice and consumer areas.



Fuel Debt
93 issues relating to fuel debt, energy advice or switching supplier



Disability Issues
1033 cases including help to fill in PIP forms and complete PIP appeals



Financial debt
Every day we deal with one or more clients who are experiencing debt issues



10%
of our clients face housing issues such as eviction or tenancy problems



35%
of our clients need advice or support to enable them to access benefits



10%
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.



88%
of people said we've given control back to them in their situation



100%
of our clients were satisfied with our service overall.



£420,618
is the amount of income gain we have helped secure for our clients.

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



91%
of people felt less stressed, depressed or anxious after advice



99%
of clients reported that they were satisfied with access to the service. Wait times for appointments are down from last year



92%
of clients felt listened to and supported

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



88%
of people felt better able to manage their condition following advice



51%
of people presenting with benefits issues left with an increased income



100%
of surveyed clients reported that their children's lives improved following advice

A client's story

One recent case study carried out is with Petra who was referred to Citizens Advice Aylesbury Vale for Welfare benefit advice by another agency.

Petra is a lone parent, with two young girls, and has both physical and mental health issues.



At the initial home visit she said she felt so overcome by her financial circumstances that she no longer read nor dealt with any official correspondence received. She also lived in fear of bailiffs knocking at her door.

The home visiting adviser helped her to go through this correspondence and to make a claim for Universal Credit. Food parcels were arranged “to see her through” to the first payment almost five weeks later. Petra was reticent to ask for advance payments as she would have to pay these back at a later point.

Once on the correct benefit, Petra said she felt better able to tackle her debt situation. The adviser supported her through each stage including the preparation of a financial statement and negotiation with creditors on her behalf.



‘There were several times before Citizens Advice started to help me that I was so overwhelmed I could not see a way out. The adviser showed me that although it would take time for my finances to improve it is achievable by claiming my benefit entitlements and following their step by step debt process.’

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 (2019), we see a number of clients in that area through our home visiting service. Some 85% of these clients are either disabled or have long term health conditions and would have difficulty accessing our service.

Local Authority Ward	IMD Rank	All Clients %	Long term illness or disability	Welfare benefits support	Debt support	Housing support	Relationships & Family	Employment
Southcourt	15.0	2.8	0.8	3.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
Gatehouse	27.0	5.5	1.4	6.6	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8
Quarrendon (Riverside)	30.1	5.7	1.2	4.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.8
Central & Walton	35.2	2.8	0.8	3.7	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.5
Walton Court & Hawkslade	44.4	3.3	0.8	4.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.5
Elmhurst	44.6	3.4	1.1	4.5	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5
Watermead	44.6	1.8	0.5	1.5	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4
Grendon Underwood & Brill	51.3	0.9	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
Luffield Abbey	55.2	2.3	0.9	2.8	0.3	0.3	.01	0.2
Tingewick	64.7	2.3	0.7	3.8	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2
Oakley	68.0	2.2	0.6	2.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.2
Wingrave	70.0	2.2	0.5	3.0	0.2	.03	0.4	0.2
Oakfield & Bierton	72.4	2.5	0.7	2.2	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4
Great Brickhill & Newton Longville	72.9	1.9	0.6	3.0	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.3
Marsh Gibbon	77.8	1.8	0.4	2.2	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.3
Stewkley	78.3	2.4	0.5	4.2	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.2
Steeple Claydon	79.0	3.2	1.1	4.8	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Coldharbour	80.0	2.4	0.6	3.2	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.4
Buckingham North	81.4	4.4	1.4	6.1	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6
Mandeville & Elm Farm	82.5	2.3	0.6	2.6	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3
Waddesdon	84.4	1.7	0.5	1.7	0.3	0.3	0.9	0.1
Winslow	85.3	3.5	1.4	6.7	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4
Great Horwood	85.5	1.9	0.6	3.9	4.0	0.1	0.1	.06
Pitstone & Cheddington	87.0	1.5	0.4	2.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Haddenham & Stone	89.8	2.1	0.4	1.4	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.3
Wingrave	89.9	2.2	0.5	3.0	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.3
Quainton	91.3	1.9	0.7	2.1	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.1
Long Crendon	91.7	1.1	0.3	1.4	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Wendover & Halton	91.7	1.7	0.4	2.4	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2
Edlesborough	92.0	1.2	0.2	1.6	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2
Aston Clinton & Stoke Mandeville	93.7	1.8	0.4	2.0	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.2
Buckingham South	96.4	3.6	1.1	5.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.5
Bedgrove	98.3	1.2	0.4	1.4	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2

Funding and feedback

Our service is reliant on external funding, donations and long term supporters. As an independent local charity, we value our relationship with all our funders and 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, 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
- School 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

Citizens Advice guided me through a difficult time and have been so understanding, helpful and patient

I found that in the most difficult time in my life Citizens Advice was a constant support

I was made to feel important, listened to, understood and human once again

In these times of isolation, fragmentation and absence of community, my appointment today has filled me with hope again

I am amazed at the help I am still receiving, things have been brought to my attention that that I wouldn't have even thought about!

I highly rate the Citizens Advice service and would love to win the lottery one day and make a big donation

A volunteer's story

Helena is an example of one of our trained volunteers.

People like Helena give their time, skills and experience to benefit the people who come to us for help.

I came to Citizens Advice having just graduated from university and feeling very unsure of what direction I wanted to take with my life. I had a large amount of spare time and was excited by the prospect of picking up new skills.



At the start I was somewhat apprehensive that my lack of life experience would put me on the back foot compared to other volunteers who perhaps had been employed for several years, bought houses and paid bills however after just one week on the training course I felt reassured and excited to get going with the voluntary work.

One of the areas where we are only partially able to demonstrate savings to public services is volunteering.

Volunteering also benefits our volunteers - they improve their skills, resilience, health and wellbeing while strengthening community engagement.

Our training and the experience of supporting others helps volunteers improve their own employability.

Having completed the training I was feeling confident, equipped and ready to start the assessing role. It's very true that at school no one teaches you how to get a mortgage, or what to do if you get into debt. I now know that if you really want to know the answers to things like this then the training program at Citizens Advice will certainly make things clearer! I feel prepared and confident, not only in helping people, but also hopefully for whatever may come my way in life.



I've also loved being surrounded by people with so much more and such different experience to me. Everyone is so friendly and interesting and I love being able to listen to everything they have to say and expand my mind and views even more.

But most importantly I am grateful for the opportunity to do something so rewarding and being able to genuinely help people. I have now been volunteering two days a week for just over a year. I feel so welcome and valued and am certain that I would like to pursue a career in the third sector.

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:

£3.92 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)

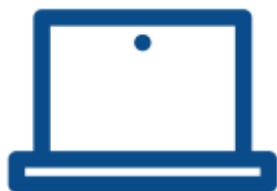
£22.77 in wider economic and social benefits (public value)

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

£19.28 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 and 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:
Appointment at two office locations for those who may need additional support



Outreach locations:
Winslow
Buckingham University



Home visiting:
Supporting the elderly and disabled and those rurally and socially isolated in Buckingham and surrounding areas



Training:
Financial capability training to vulnerable groups, 16+ learners and businesses

About us

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

Thank you to our:

8.5 full time equivalent staff

50 volunteers

10 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 and budgeting.

Funded by the Big Lottery, we have achieved:

77 financial capability training programmes

757 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



£339,197 in Expenditure to run our services for a year; two offices and outreach locations



78% 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.



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