

Citizens Advice Surrey Heath

Annual Review 2018-19



*A local service, working with
local people, for the benefit
of this community*





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Chairman's Report

As a Charity, Citizens Advice Surrey Heath provides free, impartial and independent advice and information for the benefit of the local community. This activity is mainly carried out at our premises on Knoll Road, Camberley. We moved to our new location in March 2019 after at least 17 years in 'temporary' accommodation in the portacabin behind the library. We continue to provide face-to-face consultations at the new Camberley based premises, supplemented by outreaches in Bagshot and Chobham.

In addition, telephone services (AdviceLine), in conjunction with Citizens Advice Woking, home visits, webchat and email have been utilized to enhance our reach into the Community and accessibility. This enables those who cannot visit their local Citizens Advice (LCA) during opening hours, whether due to employment, transport or disability, to access support.

In past years we have seen a decline in Total Income which has resulted in the LCA being limited in the services we can offer to the Community. However, this trend has been reversed this year with the successful securing of several new projects and use of excess reserves.

Citizens Advice Surrey Heath was successful in its application to national Citizens Advice to provide the 'face to face' service required for the 'Help to Claim' aspect involved with supporting the digital Universal Credit application process for the Surrey Heath community. A 'Money Advice Worker' was recruited to assist with this process and with the more complex cases of debt and welfare benefit advice increasingly required by clients.

We were also successful, in partnership with Voluntary Services North Surrey, in securing a grant from the Department of Health for Social Prescribing. Subsequently, we have employed a 'Wellbeing Advisor' to identify and support people to navigate and engage with community services, groups and social activities in order to improve their wellbeing and reduce their impact on health care provision. The challenge still remains to increase funding as, in the short term, we have increased our operation by utilising excess reserves but such a strategy is not sustainable in the longer term.

Personnel

We continue to be indebted to the 56 volunteer advisers, receptionists and administrators who make up the majority of the staff. They are supplemented by a small group of 9, part time paid specialists, supervisors and managers. The complement of paid staff equates to a full time equivalent of 4.4, who also often voluntarily provide additional unpaid hours above their contractual entitlement.

Finances

Although we continue to work within a one year funding environment, thanks to good stewardship, our funds were able to cope with a successful office move. Our balance sheet shows that we are holding sufficient unrestricted reserves for just over six months of operational activity.

We continue to be grateful to SHBC who support our core funding as well as the provision of the LCA premises. We are also indebted to the Board of Trustees of the Frimley Fuel Allotments Charity, who have supported us with an additional grant to help resource the Independent Living Adviser position (the LCA providing the balance of resources required to fund this position). This role supports those elderly, disabled and vulnerable people at home, delivering a range of advice services and support in order to enable them to remain living an independent life.

As part of Citizens Advice Surrey (CAS), we have provided services for the Local Assistance Scheme to the residents of Surrey Heath, funded by Surrey County Council, and will continue to offer this service in the next financial year under a new title 'Surrey Crisis Fund'.

We also continue to receive funding from Healthwatch Surrey to provide services for the benefit of all those in Surrey Heath.

Gifts and Donations

We always appreciate individuals, companies and organisations that support our LCA, either with cash donations or materials such as equipment or consumables. Of particular note are the donations made by 'Our Lady Queen of Heaven' Church.

In April 2018, we were again indebted to many local organisations and the golfers who supported our sixth charity golf day at the Berkshire Golf Club. Over £6,800 was raised for the charity. We owe particular thanks to Barclays Bank who provided us with volunteer helpers and a level of matched funding from their Community Programme.

In October 2018 we held our third quiz night at St. Paul's Church in Camberley and raised over £2,800 for the charity with the support of volunteers, friends and family.

Operations

Citizens Advice Surrey Heath continues to exceed the requirements necessary to meet the membership agreement with Citizens Advice and the Advice Quality Standards accreditation. This is assessed annually and the LCA is now at the highest level for all categories used in reviewing the 'Leadership Self Assessment'.

The Future

The Board will continue to review its resources and service delivery in the light of the pressures on funding and examine all possible avenues for further inflow of finance. Our seventh charity golf day has now been held and we were very successful in the amount we raised, once again helped by matched funding provided

by Barclays Bank and generous support from other sponsors and those who attended. We aim to hold another Quiz Evening later in the year.

We intend to consolidate our operation having recently relocated and secured a number of new services particularly Social Prescribing and 'Help to Claim' Universal Credit support. Both of these initiatives are complex and involve coordination with a number of different organisations. Therefore considerable, scarce management time has and will be spent ensuring the success of these new services.

We will continue to review the way we operate and embrace potential improvements to our methods of operation for the benefit our clients and the community. Further, we will continue to collaborate with other LCAs throughout the county, either through the auspices of Citizens Advice Surrey or in partnership with other LCAs. We will also maintain our active participation in relevant initiatives by Citizens Advice.

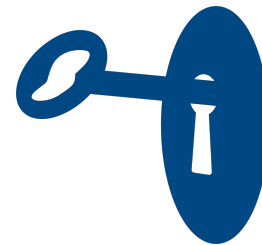
Thank You

I want to extend my sincere thank you to all members of the staff, the trustees and the many volunteers who willingly give their time, and their talents, to support the Surrey Heath community.

Nigel A Downey
Chairman



Chief Executive Officer's Report



Our challenge in 2018/19 was to introduce two new projects, expanding the services we provide to our clients, whilst maintaining a high standard in our core service and organising a move to new premises.

After almost twenty years in our 'temporary' accommodation in the portakabin behind Camberley library we were offered the opportunity to move into newly refurbished premises in Surrey Heath House by Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC). Designing the space was a challenge as the floor area was considerably smaller but, with the replacement of our old furniture with smaller desks and careful planning we managed to retain our five interview rooms and accommodate everyone.

The move happened over two days at the end of March, with only one extra day closed to the public. However, there was a huge amount of preparation involved including clearing out our old premises and getting our IT and telecommunications a much-needed upgrade as well as transferring them across to the new premises. We opened our doors on 1st April and clients quickly found us in our new location, helped by publicity through SHBC, posters and our partner organisations.

The space is brighter, lighter and more welcoming and we have had very positive feedback both from volunteers and clients. We are already seeing an increase in footfall, probably helped by our more prominent position on Knoll Road.

We really appreciate SHBC's support in providing our new premises and their assistance in enabling this move to happen. It was not without its problems but the result is a much more welcoming and professional environment for clients and volunteers alike. We must also thank Community Foundation for Surrey for their grant which enabled us to upgrade our out-dated ICT system, putting us on a more sustainable footing.

An additional bonus has been the closer working relations we have developed with Council departments, Camberley Jobcentre, Adult Social Care and Surrey Heath CCG, who all occupy the same building. With our own separate entrance, we still retain our independence and impartiality but it is easier for clients to navigate between services and get support with us all in the same building.

This closer working has also benefited the new projects we are involved with. In October we recruited a Wellbeing Adviser to work with SHBC and Voluntary Support North Surrey to broaden the borough's offer of Social Prescribing. Having a Wellbeing Adviser located in Citizens Advice has meant we can provide a more holistic support to clients and others referred through this project. It connects people with non-medical support in their community to improve their overall wellbeing and reduce social isolation.

This is particularly beneficial for our Independent Living Adviser's clients who are housebound and require home visits for advice and support. The project is part-funded by the Department of Health and part-funded by Surrey Heath CCG so it has helped better integrate us into clients' health and social care in the Borough.

Another key project, which has greatly developed our relationship with Camberley Jobcentre, is our 'Help to Claim Service'. Funded by DWP through national Citizens Advice, we are providing face to face support to clients to make their initial Universal Credit digital application, up to receipt of their first payment. This includes helping them set up an email account and ensuring they have the right means of identification as well as helping them understand the budgeting implications of the way this benefit is delivered.

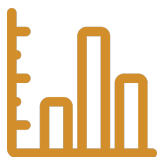
We have seen a 12% increase in individual clients in 2018/19 but a 25% increase in the number of issues they are coming to us for help with. This may be partly due to the introduction of Universal Credit and the uncertainty over Brexit but it reflects the complexity of problems that our Advisers have to deal with. In response to this we have recruited a Money Advice Caseworker who can provide the continuity and additional support to clients with more complex benefit and debt issues.

Our Independent Living Adviser has seen a 19% increase in home visits this year and a 123% increase in appointments at outreach advice surgeries. This is partly due to the increased number of sessions we are doing at local Surestart centres and partly due to a greater awareness of our regular Bagshot advice session on a Wednesday morning at the Windle Valley Centre and monthly session on the first Monday of the month at Chobham village hall. With several Children's Centres set to close in the coming year we are reviewing other options for outreach.

In 2018/19 we strengthened our equalities work through the introduction of the ASK programme and establishing ourselves as a Hate Crime reporting centre. The ASK programme is an initiative whereby our Advisers ask a specific question to clients that makes it easier for them to disclose any incidents of domestic abuse, either historical or current. We can then put them in touch with services who can provide specialised support if needed. We also address health inequalities through our partnership with Healthwatch Surrey, helping to give residents a voice to influence change in healthcare services.

We continue to provide emergency support to individuals through food bags, food bank referrals, help to access the Surrey Crisis Fund and assistance with grant applications to Frimley Fuel Allotments and other grant-making organisations.

Kate Sawdy
Chief Executive Officer



Our Impact - Key Statistics for 2018/19

Who we helped

 4,503 Individual clients (up 12%)	 5,800 Client contacts (up 17%)	 16,455 Advice issues people sought our help with (up 25%)
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How we did this

 56 Volunteers (+ 8 trustees)	 16,600 volunteer hours p.a.	 Worth an estimated £296,450 to the community
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The difference we make

 4 in 5 Clients said advice improved their lives, including reducing stress and improving finances	 £398,500 Worth of direct income gained for clients	 £22,800 Debts written off and reimbursements
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How advice is delivered

Face to Face	Adviceline (Tel)	Email	Webchat
			
56%	15%	20%	9%



Our value to society -

In 2018/19 for every **£1** invested in our service we generated at least:¹

<p>£9.01 in savings to government and public services (fiscal benefits)</p> <p>By helping stop problems occurring or escalating, we reduce the need for public services(health, housing, out-of-work benefits).</p> <p>Total: £1,537,720*</p>	<p>£41.25 in wider economic and social benefits (public value)</p> <p>Solving problems improves lives - and this means better participation, wellbeing and productivity for the people we help</p> <p>Total: £7,040,890*</p>	<p>£38.84 in value to the people we help (financial outcomes following advice)</p> <p>As part of advice, we can increase people's income, through debts written-off, taking up benefits and solving consumer problems</p> <p>Total: £6,629,480*</p>
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Our value to:

Surrey Heath Borough Council - in preventing homelessness and evictions:-
£121,050 (a return of £1.23 on every £1 invested in us in this area alone).*

NHS - by reducing the use of mental health and GP services, and keeping people in work:-
£185,387*

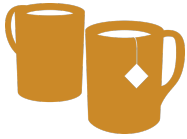
DWP - by keeping people in work:-
£976,052*

Housing providers - by preventing housing evictions
£244,190*

*These figures are taken from a Treasury-approved national methodology applied locally to demonstrate our financial impact. This uses a tool produced by New Economy alongside Citizens Advice management information and impact research and is based on minimum savings.²

¹ Modelling the value of the Citizens Advice Service

² Available from New Economy



Our value to this community

The figures above are only one fraction of our true value - we also:

- Help clients negotiate local processes, such as welfare reform changes.
- Help local authority rent and council tax arrears to be rescheduled and reduce the associated administrative costs.
- Ensure local people can get on with their lives by helping them maximise available income - preventing more critical and costly intervention by the state.

This helps reduce financial difficulty, promotes inclusion and benefits the economy.

Below is an example of the work we do with clients:

This is Arthur



- Arthur is an example of one of the people we helped in Surrey Heath
- Last year we saw over 4,500 clients about more than 16,000 issues
- Arthur's story shows how we help people solve their problems and why this is important

This is Faith



Faith, a volunteer adviser, helped Arthur with his problems. She found out Arthur was in his 80s and lived in a property that had been condemned. It had no gas or hot water and was in need of extensive repair. Arthur had significant debts and his health was not good.

Arthur was concerned that he was going to lose his home and was being pressurised by his debtors. He was anxious about bailiffs turning up on his doorstep and the strain was aggravating existing health conditions



Faith spent time with Arthur, revising his housing situation and clarifying his options.

- She contacted his creditors and made sure his debts were placed on hold whilst we provided budgeting support.
- She contacted his water company and registered him for the social tariff
- She contacted his energy supplier to apply for the warm home discount and to seek a refund on gas charges, which he had paid despite his gas supply being disconnected.



At a follow up appointment Faith completed a benefits check with Arthur which indicated that he was eligible for Council Tax Reduction and helped him submit a claim for this benefit. She also helped him negotiate appropriate monthly repayments for his debts and supported his application for sheltered accommodation.



Our advice helped stabilise Arthur's financial situation and helped him access more suitable accommodation.

His anxiety reduced and he was able to make the move to more suitable accommodation.

He was better able to manage both his finances and wellbeing and was less dependent on statutory support services

Why fixing problems matters

If left unsolved, problems don't just affect the individual – they affect this community. Solving them creates considerable value to society.

- **9 in 10** people we help say that their problem negatively affected their life.
- **2 in 3** say they had difficulty knowing who to contact or how systems work before advice

Our advice is effective

- **7 in 10** people feel less stressed, depressed or anxious
- **4 in 5** people said advice improved their life, including improving their health and finances

• *Outcomes and Impact research, 2017*



More examples of how we help our clients

THE PROBLEM:

Frances lived in social housing and cared for her disabled husband but had never previously claimed benefits. She came to us for advice on benefits having been made redundant from her part-time job.

WHAT WE DID:

We completed a benefits check which indicated that Frances could claim Universal Credit, Council Tax Reduction and Carer's Allowance.

Although Frances had internet access, she lacked confidence and requested help applying online for Universal Credit. We provided digital support to set up her Universal Credit account and submit her claim. Frances was also informed how to progress her claims for Carers Allowance and Council Tax Reduction. A follow-up appointment was arranged to give her some personal budgeting support during which we helped her apply for the warm home discount.

THE PROBLEM:

Karin was a single parent with two children. She worked part-time and had been claiming child tax and working tax credit. There had been no change in her circumstances and she had completed her annual renewal but she had received a letter from HMRC stating that she was not eligible for tax credits and requesting repayment of a £3800 overpayment.

WHAT WE DID:

We reviewed Karin's documents and established that she had misreported her income on a previous tax return. We assisted her to complete the appropriate tax credit appeal form which was initially refused. We then helped her to escalate the complaint within HMRC and highlight the issue to her MP. Within a month Karin had received confirmation that her file had been updated and the debt had been wiped.

THE PROBLEM

Pete was in his 70s and disabled. He had received a letter from an energy company saying that he had changed his dual energy supply to them. Pete had no recollection of authorising the switch.

WHAT WE DID:

We helped Pete to contact the energy company who maintained that he had authorised the transfer. We helped him to submit an erroneous transfer complaint and to chase this up and request compensation when the energy company did not follow their own complaints procedure. We also completed an Energy Best

Deal comparison to ensure Pete knew of the potential savings available from other suppliers. The result was that Pete received compensation and switched to another supplier of his choice.

THE PROBLEM

Josh was made redundant from his job in a local branch of a national restaurant when it closed in November. He came to Citizens Advice as he felt he had not been paid what he was owed in terms of outstanding holiday pay and pay in lieu of notice.

WHAT WE DID

We reviewed the documentation from Josh's former employer and the amounts received. Josh appeared to be owed an additional £350. As English was not his first language, we telephoned the Head Office to make them aware of the issue and they agreed to contact Josh to discuss the matter further. In case this did not resolve the issue satisfactorily we drafted a letter that Josh could send to his former employer highlighting the discrepancy and requesting payment of monies owed. Josh has since been paid the full outstanding amount.

THE PROBLEM

Mark was alcohol dependent with a number of significant health issues and his father had just died, leaving him feeling overwhelmed and unable to cope with the aftermath of his father's death. He was living in the family home, which was a housing association property, but he was not eligible for direct succession rights. He had a lot of unopened correspondence and forms to fill in regarding his housing but was too anxious to address them.

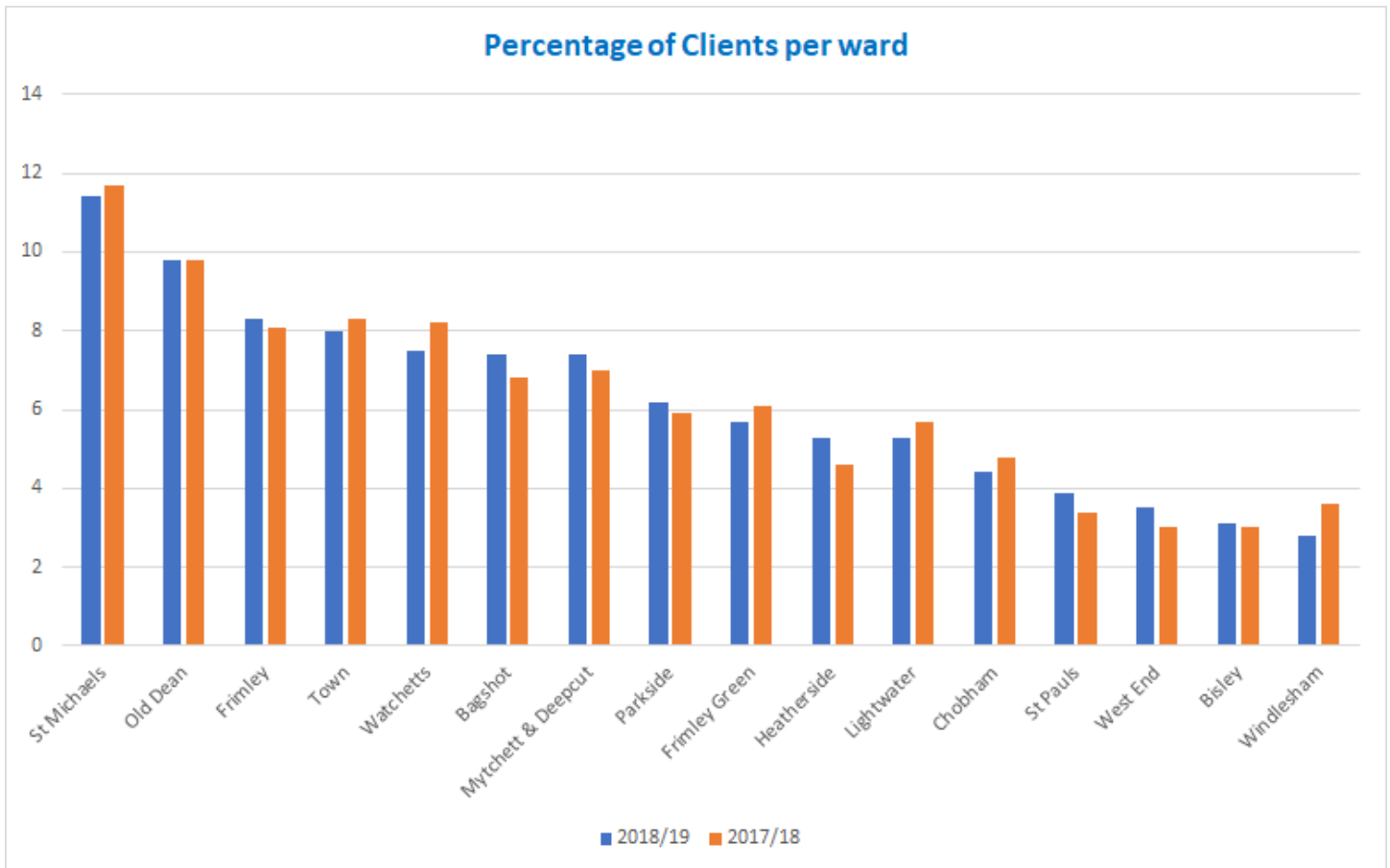
WHAT WE DID:

Our Money Adviser and Wellbeing Adviser worked together to encourage Mark to open his post and organise the contents as a first step. Our Money Adviser went through the housing forms and called the housing association to clarify when he had an appointment with them. Our Wellbeing Adviser encouraged Mark to book an appointment with his GP to get some support with his anxiety and alcohol dependency, following up to ensure he attended. With their support he was then able to discuss the issues relating to his housing and bills. We negotiated with all agencies on his behalf. As a result, probate application was avoided and Mark was able to stay in his family home while his housing officer helped him to downsize. We assisted him in applying for Universal Credit to help with his housing expenses going forward and referred him to Catalyst for help with his alcohol addiction.



Providing advice where it is most needed

Map of clients with recorded postcodes per ward



Our clients come from across all of Surrey Heath with the majority coming from the most deprived wards in the Borough (as measured by the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation) - St Michael's and Old Dean. We saw the least clients from Windlesham ward in 2018/19.

We record and code all the issues that clients present to us which provides valuable data, both locally and nationally, to influence change and to share with other organisations to campaign for change.

In 2018/19 we offered advice surgeries in the various Surestart Children's Centres across the borough. These are situated in the areas of most need. We wanted to give parents the opportunity to get advice in a familiar and easily accessible setting. The take-up has been sporadic but we have seen additional benefits in working with these centres as we have built up a rapport with staff and have been able to signpost clients for additional help where appropriate.

We also offer regular weekly advice surgeries in Bagshot and monthly surgeries in Chobham for ease of access for those who find it difficult to get into Camberley.

Our 'Help to Claim' service that helps people make an online claim to Universal Credit has led to much closer working relations with Camberley Jobcentre. We now have better referrals processes and regular meetings to ensure clients are able to quickly and successfully access this benefit as well as understanding the budgeting implications.

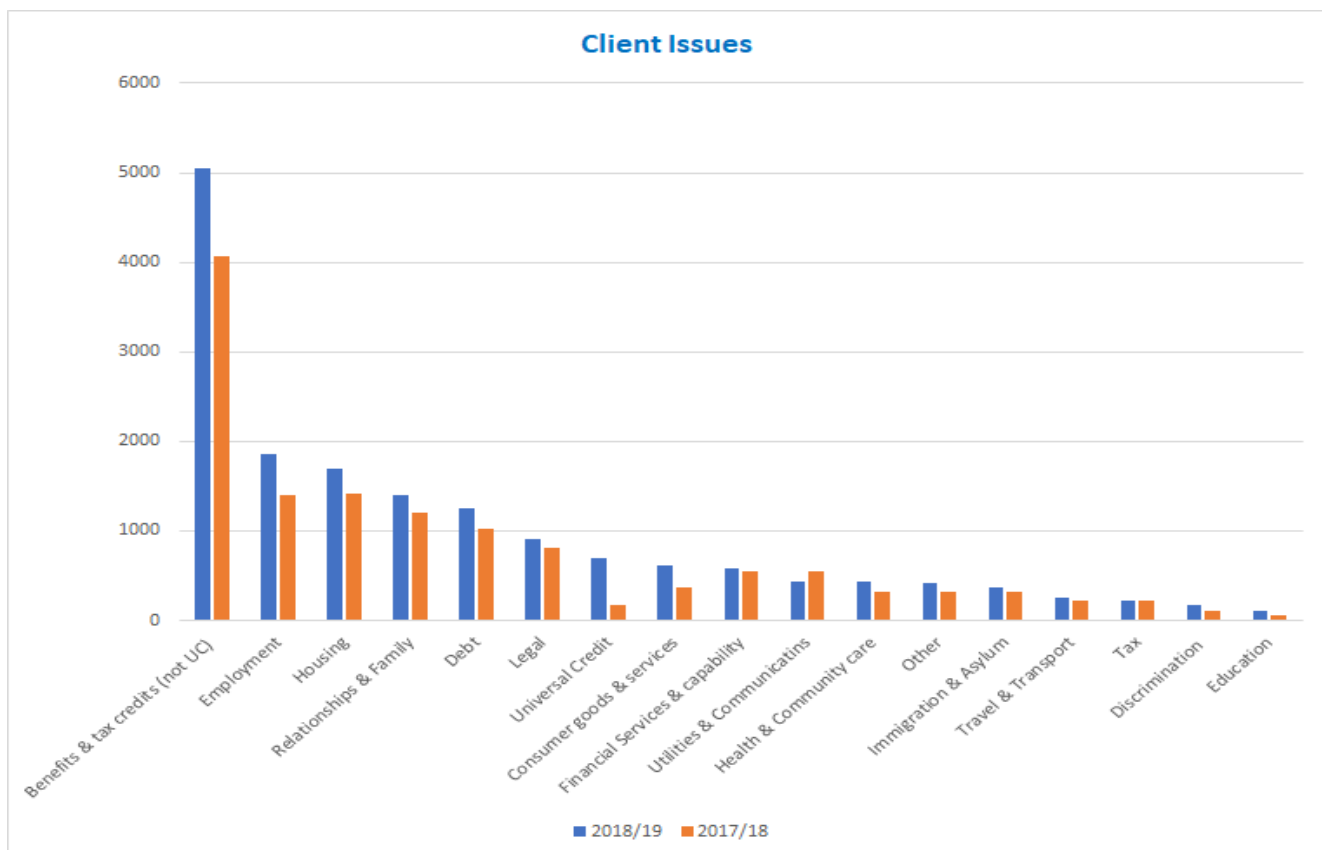


Advice trends

Enquiries have increased in all areas except for utilities and communications where there has been a decrease.

Welfare benefit issues have increased the most and our 'Help to Claim' service has meant Universal Credit queries have shown a steady increase since its introduction in December 2019. Employment has taken over from housing as the second most common issue.

We anticipate an increase in immigration enquiries in the run-up to Brexit and Citizens Advice is working hard to keep their information updated and relevant in the face of continued uncertainty.

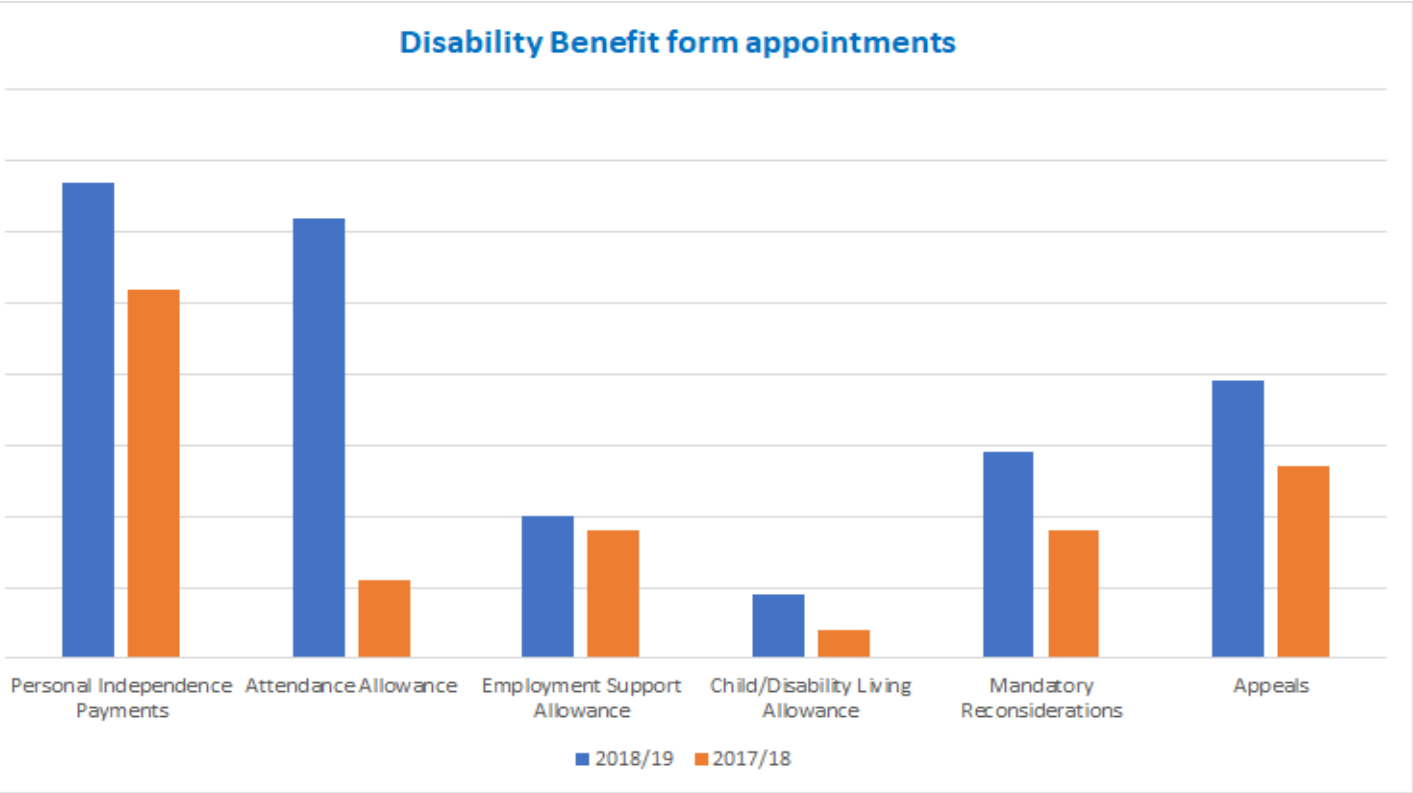




Support for those with disabilities

As well as providing generalist advice for people with disabilities, we continue to build our team of form fillers, to support people with the complex forms required to access disability benefits, and now have 3 dedicated volunteers. This has enabled us to increase our appointments from 130 in 2017/18 to 226 in 2018/19 - up 74%.

These break down as follows:








Through this work we were able to identify problems with the Mandatory Reconsideration (MR) process for Personal Independence Payments (PIP). In Surrey Heath alone we dealt with 200 PIP applications, 52 MRs and 67 Appeals. All too often clients were being given 0 or low points on the initial application and this was upheld at MR stage. However, at appeal these decisions were being overturned. Clients were therefore suffering extensive delays in getting the benefits they were entitled to and the MR process appeared to be not fit for purpose.

We worked with other local Citizens Advice in Surrey to gather evidence and compile a report ‘A Rubber Stamp? Mandatory Reconsideration in the Personal Independence Payment application process’. This was published and circulated to MPs and local councillors in May 2019. (See Research & Campaigns p.18)



Working in partnership

Camberley Jobcentre 	<p>DWP has provided funding to Citizens Advice for us to assist clients to make their initial application to Universal Credit, through to their first payment. We call this our 'Help to Claim' service. We have been working closely with our local Jobcentre to ensure the rollout of Universal Credit in Surrey Heath goes smoothly and clients are given the digital support and guidance to make a claim with the least delay.</p>	<p>358 clients supported with issues around Universal Credit including making an application and budgeting advice</p>
Social Prescribing 	<p>Citizens Advice Surrey Heath is working with Voluntary Support North Surrey, Surrey Heath Borough Council, Surrey Heath CCG and Surrey Heath Primary Care Network to deliver social prescribing across the borough. This means that, as well as being able to offer clients practical advice to improve their wellbeing, we can also link them in to local services, community groups and activities to reduce social isolation and reduce reliance on clinical services for non-clinical issues</p>	<p>132 clients supported by our Wellbeing Adviser</p> <p>352 by the project as a whole.</p>
Healthwatch Surrey 	<p>Our continued partnership with Healthwatch Surrey has helped to support improvements to health and social care in Surrey Heath, highlighting the need for better discharge information from hospitals, the long wait for Children's mental health services and improved meal choices in care homes</p>	<p>304 client experiences recorded and shared anonymously.</p>
 Big Energy Saving Network	<p>Our work in this area has targeted vulnerable people who are struggling with their fuel bills. We have also trained frontline staff in other organisations to recognise fuel poverty in their clients and help them to better manage their fuel costs</p>	<p>65 clients helped to reduce their energy bills</p>
 Surrey County Council Crisis Fund	<p>This scheme provides emergency support to those in financial crises. We help clients complete the online application and, with SCC's authorisation, distribute prepaid support cards to successful applicants. We also support clients to ensure they are getting the benefits they are entitled to and are accessing appropriate grants or other forms of support where applicable</p>	<p>38 clients assisted with applications.</p> <p>28 prepaid cards distributed.</p>

 BESOM Foodbank	<p>We can provide our clients in emergency need with foodbags donated by The Camberley BESOM and refer them for on-going support. We also provide vouchers to food banks in other areas when necessary</p>	<p>137 referrals were made and parcels given out to feed 245 people in Surrey Heath</p>
 Local Solicitors	<p>A rota of local solicitors continue to generously give their time and expertise to support our Tuesday morning legal clinic. They offer a variety of specialisms and the free 15 minute appointments they provide allow clients to get a legal perspective on their issue when required.</p>	<p>101 Appointments</p>
 Frimley Fuel Allotments	<p>We make referrals to this local charitable trust and work with them to support local people in need. We also help our clients to complete applications to this charity. In addition they generously part-fund our Independent Living Adviser, enabling us to carry out home visits to offer advice and support to those who struggle to leave their homes on issues that matter to them.</p>	<p>142 Home visits 87 Outreach appointments</p>



Research and Campaigns

Research and campaign work is a significant part of what we do in order to challenge and improve processes and systems. The following activities were carried out in 2018-19.

Homeless support survey of banks and Job Centre in Camberley

Surrey Heath CAB and Ash CAB assisted National CAB with a survey of Banks in Camberley and the Job Centre in Camberley to ascertain whether the Banks and Job Centre would support homeless people in setting up an account with the use of a P O Box Number address or the physical address of a Post Office. Our findings in Camberley indicated that only 1 Bank would agree that this could be a possibility. The Job Centre suggested that homeless people could use the Job Centre address to set up an account for a Universal Credit or Jobseekers' Allowance claim.

Report on Mandatory Reconsideration in the Personal Independence Payment application process

The Surrey Research and Campaigns Group produced a report entitled “A Rubber Stamp? Mandatory Reconsideration in the Personal Independence Payment application process.”

Mandatory Reconsideration, often called ‘MR’, has contributed towards unnecessary delays and distress. This extra step, introduced in 2013, requires PIP claimants to request that the DWP reconsider their original decision before they are allowed to apply for appeal. This is intended to resolve disputes early and reduce unnecessary pressure on HMCTS. However, there is little faith amongst PIP claimants that the MR process does anything more than ‘rubber stamp’ the original decision and PIP appeal tribunal judges themselves have expressed similar concerns about its thoroughness, in some cases indicating that certain PIP cases should not have had to progress to appeal stage at all, as the entitlement to PIP was so apparent.

Nationally, for 81% of people making new PIP claims and 76% of people having their existing PIP claim reassessed, the initial DWP decision is unchanged at MR. However, 73% of those who go on to appeal have these decisions overturned by a tribunal judge. This is a considerable majority and suggests that MR in its current form is not working.

PIP was the most common benefits area on which people contacted us for advice across Surrey from 2018 - 19, comprising 20% of all instances of people being advised on benefits of any kind. This proportion has risen steadily from 6% in 2014, when the effects of the 2013 introduction of PIP first began to impact our services, to 20% . In Surrey Heath we advised clients 200 times on PIP applications, 52 times on PIP MRs and 67 times on PIP appeals in the last year alone.

Survey of primary and secondary schools in Surrey Heath re help with school uniforms

A survey of all primary and secondary schools in Surrey Heath was carried out by phone and email to find out what their policy was with regard to the cost of school uniforms where parents were struggling financially. This information is used to advise clients on the various options available to them and access support where necessary.

Scam Awareness week

We promoted Scam Awareness week with leaflets and posters in our waiting room, and a presentation to an older people’s group on Old Dean, making sure they were aware of the various scams that might be circulating and ensuring they knew what to look out for, how to avoid them and how to report them.

Universal Credit

In 2018/19 we wrote to Michael Gove MP to enlist his support in influencing change to the way this welfare benefit is being delivered and to ask for rollout to be delayed until changes were made. He, in turn, wrote to the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions on our behalf. The combined evidence of local Citizens Advice across the country has had a major impact on the delivery of this benefit including reduced waiting time, a free helpline and reduced deduction percentages. Citizens Advice continue to campaign for improvements.

Resources

We appointed a volunteer Research & Campaign lead who has attended quarterly meetings of Surrey Citizens Advice Research & Campaigns group as well as national meetings in order to share evidence and highlight local issues. She is also helping to raise the profile of research and campaigns amongst our staff and volunteers.



Information assurance

The bureau trustee board has approved an information assurance strategy, having identified the risk presented by the significant amounts of client data held in the bureau.

An information assurance management team exists to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all our sensitive data assets is maintained to a level which is consistent with the requirements of our clients, our funders and our strategic partners.

Citizens Advice Surrey Heath aims to achieve an appropriate level of compliance to the Data Protection Act 2018, the Cabinet Office's Security Policy Framework and to industry best practice, as defined by the ISO 27000 series of standards.



Our Volunteers

This is Claire

Claire is an example of one of our 56 trained volunteers.

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

This year our volunteers gave up over **£296,000** worth of volunteering hours to help deliver our services. We couldn't help as many people as we do without them.

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

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

- 8 in 10 of our unemployed volunteers believe they are overcoming barriers to employment.
- 54% of our employed volunteers state that they are using it to change or evaluate their career.



In 2018/19 we took on 5 additional trainee advisers, 1 receptionist and 2 admin volunteers.

Our volunteers continue to be our most valuable asset and one which we are continually grateful for. Our service would not be possible without their hard work and commitment.

This also goes for our trustees who have had to navigate Citizens Advice Surrey Heath through a major change in the move to our new premises as well as the adoption of a number of new projects. Their good governance and unstinting support has meant the organisation is in a strong position to face future challenges.



Who does the work?

Paid Staff

Kate Sawdy	Chief Executive Officer
Helen Holbrow	Operations Manager
Rachel Turner	Advice Session Supervisor
Jackie Mitchell	Advice Session Supervisor
Mike Norris	Training Supervisor
Jen Ward	Administrative/Accounts Officer
Pam Eyre	Independent Living Adviser
Gillian Beaumont	Wellbeing Adviser
Elaine Rutherford	Money Advice Caseworker

Volunteer Advisers	Gateway Assessors	Reception/Admin
Aidan Cooney	Chrissie Spencer	Alizon Hammerton
Aileen Keen	Jacqui Durrant*	Brenda Ross
Brian Dawes	Judith Whitby*	Brian Greenberg
David Flynn	Liz Sawyer	Susan Ball
Carol Halajda	Margaret McCrirrick	Justine Riley
David Head (T)	Sally Paine	Wendy Passfield
David Richards	Sarah Weston*	Kay Vincent
Elaine Rutherford	Madeleine Allen	Linda Cantwell
Graham Searle	Madeline Denton	Patricia Vankuyk*
Helen Holbrow	Vicky Hooton	Camilla Richardson
John Dixon (T)	Debbie Bradley*	Ross Squair*
Linda Snell*	Richard Green	
Maggie Burman	Ruth Hayes	

Rachel Turner	Sarah Bryson	
Simon Strachan	Lesley Barnes	Form Filling Volunteers
Sally Frangou	Janet Elliott (T)	Madeline Denton
Bob Pritchard	Tony Lainchbury	Kay Vincent
Susan Rae	Cathy Manrique	Madeleine Allen
	Margaret Morrow	Sally Foster
	Jeanette Wright	
	Elizabeth Northcott	

(T = Trainee) *Left during the year

Trustee Board

Nigel Downey	Chair
Annie Wallace	Vice Chair
Rob Manning	Treasurer
Ray McCann	
Mani Ray	
Camilla Richardson	
Marion Park	
Sarah Jay	





Our Supporters

We would like to thank:	For enabling us to deliver:
Surrey Heath Borough Council	Our core, volunteer led service through drop in, face to face appointments, phone, email and webchat - and also our smart new premises!
Surrey Heath CCG and Dept of Health	Our social prescribing project in collaboration with VSNS and SHBC
Healthwatch Surrey	A service that captures local residents' experience of health providers in order to give them a voice
Frimley Fuel Allotments	Our Independent Living Adviser service and outreach plus support to individual clients in need
Surrey County Council	Support to clients in emergency need through the Local Assistance Scheme
Community Foundation for Surrey	An upgraded computer system and new server which has meant faster working and a more reliable service.
The local solicitors on our pro bono rota	A weekly legal advice surgery for our clients.
Our Lady Queen of Heaven Church	Emergency support to people in need
Barclays Bank	Our main fundraising golf day through the help of their staff and their financial support

We rely on donations to help us to continue to deliver a free service to everyone in Surrey Heath. You can help by:

One-off donations - Donate directly through our website at www.citizensadvicesurreyheath.org.uk

Supporting Surrey Heath Lottery - and nominating us as your chosen charity when you buy a ticket at <https://www.surreyheathlottery.co.uk/support/citizens-advice-surrey-heath>

Gifts - We welcome raffle prizes, your time, your products, your service, your support or a gift in your Will as part of your legacy.

Corporate sponsorship:

- Make us your 'Charity of the Year' or make a tax exemption one-off donation
- Enter a team or offer a product, service or experience as a prize at one of our fundraising events
- Hold your own event, with profits going to Citizens Advice Surrey Heath.

Email: ceo@camberley.cabnet.org.uk if you would like to support us.



Contact details

Citizens Advice Surrey Heath
Surrey Heath House
Knoll Road
Camberley
Surrey
GU15 3HD

Open to the public for drop-ins and appointments: Monday to Thursday, 10am to 4pm

Adviceline: 03444 111 444 - Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm

Appointments: 01276 417900

www.citizensadvicesurreyheath.org.uk