

**citizens
advice**

**Central
Dorset**

Working on the frontline

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



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We give people the knowledge and the confidence they need to find their way forward – whoever they are, and whatever their problem.

The aim of Citizens Advice Central Dorset is to provide the advice people need for the problems that they face and flowing from this, the improvements of policies and practice that affect their lives. Our core principles are to:

- value and respect diversity,
- promote equality,
- challenge discrimination and unfairness,
- work together and value the contribution of colleagues.

We give free, confidential, independent and impartial advice to anyone, regardless of age, disability, ethnic origin, gender, race, religious belief or sexual orientation.

Chairman's Report

I am pleased to report another successful year for Citizens Advice Central Dorset. Face to face consultations are increasing and we are holding more actual than virtual meetings. We owe all our teams - staff and volunteers – a great debt of gratitude for maintaining the service, despite severe difficulties, over the last few years. The rapid move to working from home, switching to virtual e-consultations and telephone were all done positively, with everyone keen to make the service work – and it did! Thanks too to our clients for working with us so well to keep everybody safe.

We are now faced with the consequences of the national finances. Whilst all are affected, it is the most disadvantaged in the community who are most severely and acutely so. On the ground the “Cost of living crisis” is immediate and severe. Those previously struggling to make ends meet, now have difficulties in putting food on the table, providing adequate heating and meeting transport costs. We anticipate a sharp increase in the number of clients seeking help with the rising costs of mortgages. National assessment identifies a number of local areas of deprivation, many of whose occupants particularly need our help. Citizens Advice Dorset is fortunate to have 145 volunteers and over 40 staff, who are highly trained to provide clients with the information and other help to best cope with many complex problems, including management of debt and claiming benefits. Our 4 offices and multiple satellite centres take our service to our clients.

CACD is an independent charity. We liaise closely with the other Citizens Advice Offices in the Dorset County area (Bridport and East Dorset/Purbeck); developing combined projects to help clients. Each Office is a member of National Citizens Advice which provides an extensive information system and, with rigorous annual audits, ensures all offices are objectively quality assured. Through a continuous programme of “Research and Campaigns”, Offices collect local data on a large range of items (e.g. Universal Credit).

Citizens Advice collates this data and identifies national problems which frequently influence Government policy.

Our Dorset County Council contract provides the majority of our income, without which we could not function, and for which we are most grateful. Thanks too to the many other organisations and individuals who provide grants and donations to fund our service. The support we provide is shown in the personal feedback stories and the statistics defining the benefits accrued to clients. On behalf of the Trustee Board we thank all the staff and the army of volunteers whose professional and dedicated work makes our service so effective and successful.

Dr David Cove, Chair of Trustees



Chief Officer's Report

One definition of the word frontline is the following: "the most advanced, responsible, or visible position in a field or activity"

There is no doubt that the year 2021/22 matched that definition in every way. By advanced we mean that our teams across the Central Dorset area were often the first point of contact for clients who were experiencing extreme hardship and stress. The combination of Covid and the Cost of Living Crisis is a potent one which has layered people's problems and increased the complexity of the issues that need to be unravelled by our superb advisers. As is highlighted in the summaries of our various projects, our core team of volunteers took the brunt of the work in supporting people who presented to us with no food, no means to cook food or heat their homes. The emphasis of our work has shifted towards dealing with those in extreme situations and I would like to thank those volunteers who have maintained their energy, professionalism and dedication in such a tough year.

Being responsible is about recognising that our aims and principles exactly match the current circumstances; to alleviate poverty and solve people's problems. It is also about recognising that even Citizens Advice cannot solve everything on its own. Our long standing strategic partnership work is a clear demonstration of how we share the workload. Our role in delivering the Advice Dorset Partnership, alongside our Dorset Citizens Advice and other advice agency such as Age UK and Shelter colleagues has played a considerable role this year. Regular newsletters have efficiently spread the word on the myriad of support packages, initiatives and support for Dorset residents. The feedback has been very positive and has allowed the advice community to be better integrated and respond quickly when called upon. Our partnership with Dorset Council has been both practical and targeted. We have delivered many specialist advice projects with their support and we have helped shape the strategic direction of local policy by providing data that highlights the high

level of need. Our connections with Town Councils remain crucial and I have been particularly struck by how they have supported grassroots initiatives such as Food Banks and Community Groups which have worked alongside Citizens Advice. I would like to thank both Dorset Council and all the Town Councils in our area for their support and common purpose.

Finally, we must remain as visible as possible and our promotional work has increased over the year. We have delivered webinars to partners and large employers, we have organised and delivered Cost of Living workshops and we have used our website and social media more than ever before. Our aim is to reduce social isolation and we recognise that for many of our clients, physically travelling to get help is more expensive and difficult than ever.

Looking forward we will continue to argue the case on behalf of our clients. That means maintaining the funding from our wide range of organisations that allow us to deliver our work. The upcoming economic pressures will mean that our case for funding will need to be more robust and compelling than ever before. We will also continue to shout loudly on behalf of our clients most in need. Times of uncertainty can often drown the voices of those who are experiencing the greatest hardship and our team will be there for them and all our clients for years to come.

Daniel Cadisch, Chief Officer



Treasurer's Report

The last year has seen us gradually recover from the pandemic. Significant additional funding was obtained in 2020-21 to assist with combatting Covid 19 that was no longer available this year. Partly as a result, we recorded a deficit of £56,000 compared to a surplus of £64,000 in the previous year. Despite the continuing funding challenges, rapid inflation and pressure on services, we had another financially sound year.

Our total income dropped by 5% year-on-year to just under £1 million. Dorset Council provided us with 41% of the total, which effectively funds the 'core' Citizens Advice service. The Council entered into a fixed price 3 year contract with Citizens Advice in Dorset in 2021 which may be extended for a further 2 years from October 2024. While we are grateful to the Council and this provides welcome certainty, its fixed price nature provides a growing challenge in the current inflationary environment.

We are also contracted to provide services for various other charities, the NHS, central government and utility companies which, between them, account for the bulk of our 'project' income. Major clients include Macmillan, the Ministry of Justice (through the Access to Justice Initiative) and the Money and Pensions Service. Donations and legacies accounted for a reduced 3% of our income; the charitable status of Citizens Advice is not widely recognised and this is an area that we intend to develop. Town and Parish Councils within our area of operation also contribute generously.

While our total income fell in 2021-22, total expenditure increased by almost 7%. Demand for our service remains high and we must continue to provide the support that clients require. Salary costs make up the bulk of our spending, representing over 70% of total. The total employee cost was marginally below the prior year, since some staff are employed on fixed term contracts to deliver specific contract wins: when that funding ceases, so does the associated employment.

Another major area of spend is IT, as we respond to the increased use of technology. We changed our accounting policy last year so that new equipment is fully depreciated in the year of purchase, pushing IT spend up to almost 5% of this year's total. The cost of maintaining our main office hubs in Weymouth, Dorchester, Sherborne and Gillingham is another major expense: we will continue to explore cost effective ways to deliver our service as the nature of client demand evolves from face-to-face. Several contracts for which we are responsible are delivered in conjunction with local CA partners and a further 10% of our total expenditure is paid to them.

At March 2022 we held total reserves of £398,000. £57,000 of this relates to 'restricted' purposes where money is received for a specific purpose and can only be spent in that area. A further £18,000 is in a 'Designated' reserve, covering the final tranche of the remaining book value of IT equipment held at year end. The balance of £323,000 is 'unrestricted', meaning that it can be applied for any purpose. This complies comfortably with our reserves policy, which requires us to hold a figure equal to between 3 and 6 months of regular expenditure as fall-back should our funding dry up.

To summarise, we have come through the last two difficult pandemic years in good shape and, despite the many challenges, remain positive as we look forward.

David Collins, Treasurer

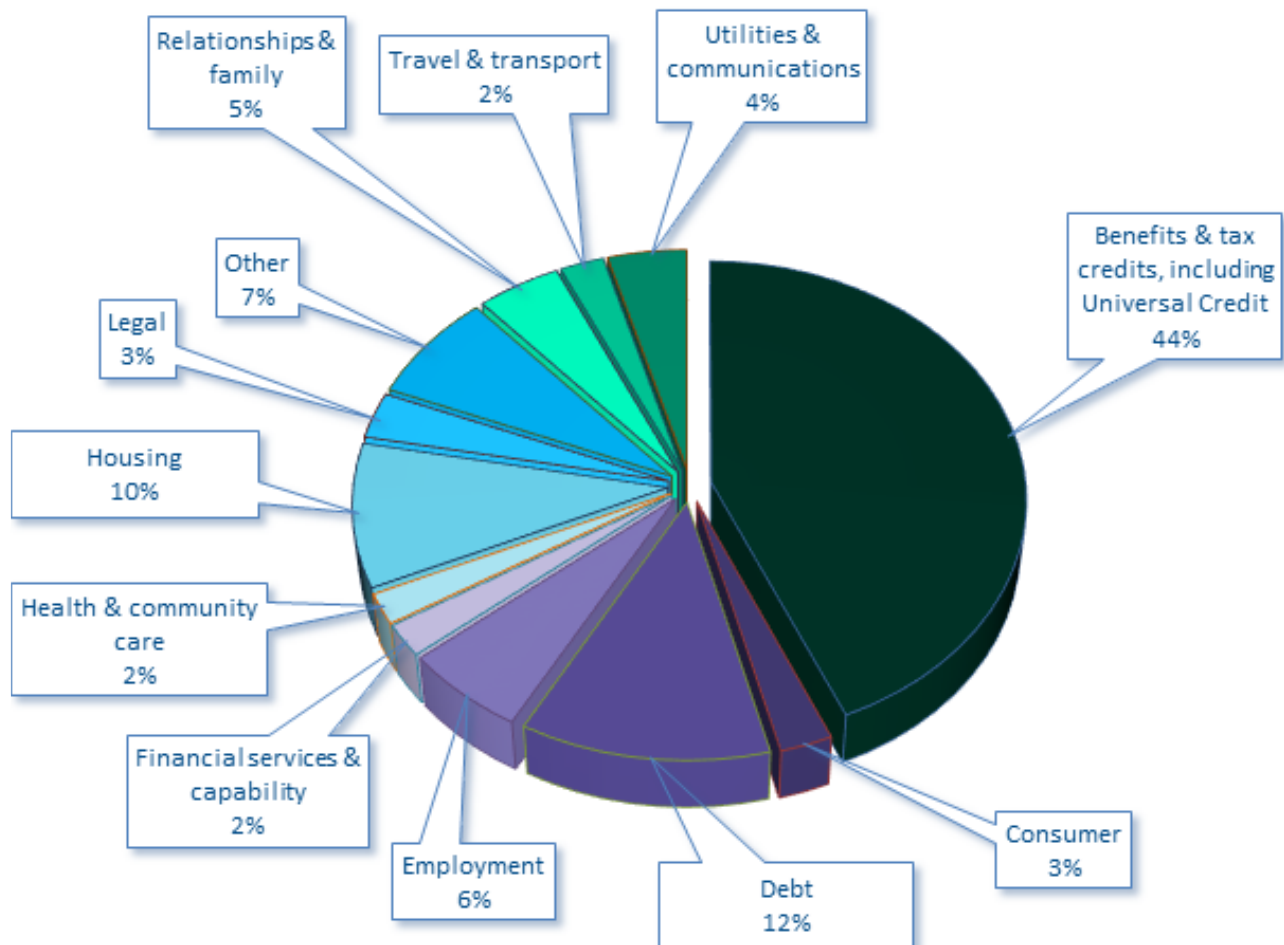


Summary of the year

In 2021/22 we helped 7,468 clients with 22,518 issues. This is a similar number to the people helped in the previous year and demonstrates a high degree of need from the community given the demands of Covid and the related financial pressures. In particular, we have seen an increase in the number of people we are seeing face to face to 13%, up from 6% in the previous year.

The breakdown of issues in 2021/22 is shown below. We continue to see a steady increase in issues relating to benefits (44% up from 39% in the previous year). Issues relating to debt rose as the restrictions on debt recovery during COVID were eased.

Outcomes 2021-22	
Income gained for clients:	£4,110,483
Reimbursements, services and loans:	£43,900
Debts written off:	£781,567
Payments rescheduled:	£22,363



Research and Campaigns

Research and Campaigns (R&C) is about making a difference: using clients' evidence to influence policy, improve services and bring about longer-term change, nationally and locally.

We have continued to show a strong commitment to R&C work across our teams and offices and to provide a voice for our clients. Much of the data comes from our 'evidence forms' and this year our staff and volunteers completed 531, compared with 408 the previous year. This means that we are really translating the issues faced by our clients into firm action to effect change and means we really get to understand the impact on the client.

As we began to see the relaxation of Covid restrictions we worked to ensure ongoing support for people. In particular, we campaigned hard, alongside our National organisation, to retain the £20/week uplift to Universal Credit (#KeepTheLifeline). Unfortunately, ultimately this campaign was not successful and as a result many people then came to us for help when the impact hit home.

Then in the Autumn of 2021 energy prices began to increase and we saw the collapse of a number of energy companies and the consequent problems this caused people. Many people struggled to find out who their new supplier was, or what had happened to credit that they had had with the old one.

From February 2022 things got much worse with the invasion of Ukraine, further increases in utility costs and a relentless rise in inflation. Citizens Advice is a 'canary in the coalmine' in these situations, able to give early warning of the effect of these problems on local people.

Much of the last 6 months has seen us focus on what is now referred to as the Cost of Living Crisis. This means many more clients struggling to manage financially, having to make choices between 'heat or eat', or even 'heat, eat or pay for my prescriptions'. We are currently looking at evidence from the increasing number of people who have a 'negative budget' ie. even with the most stringent budgeting

and economising they cannot make their income stretch to meet their essential outgoings. Here's a typical example from an evidence form:

The client is very anxious about how she is going to pay her bills as energy prices are increasing and she already owes her utility company £795. She has returned to paid employment after a period of ill health when debts accrued. Her husband is self-employed and there are three teenagers living at home. They live in a rural area which makes looking for work harder.

In addition, we are in demand to keep our colleagues in the Dorset advice sector up to date with information on what help is out there. There have been various support measures, which are welcome, though some are only a sticking plaster, and things change rapidly requiring us to keep on our toes and regularly update our information. However, our position as the 'go to' organisation for information is highlighted by the fact that both Dorset Council and Dorset NHS has asked us to provide briefings for their teams, to ensure their workforce is supported during the current crisis.

Caroline Buxton, R&C Lead

Projects

Dorset Macmillan Welfare Benefits Team

The pandemic redefined life as we knew it but we adapted and continued to provide advice and guidance during this period and support Macmillan clients. Our team moved seamlessly to working remotely and although still working this way in some locations, we have been able to provide face to face support where required.

Late detection and management of cancers has contributed to the fact that nearly 63% of our clients had a palliative or terminal diagnosis. We have seen the sadness and anger that the pandemic brought to our clients who were unable to see a GP or had their treatment disrupted.

Our service has provided a lifeline to clients by being able to respond to a crisis which impacted on many different aspects of living:

- The impact on families when a member of the family is diagnosed, both emotionally and financially, is huge.
- The costs of getting to appointments and having to access multiple benefits is overwhelming when unwell.
- The increase of late diagnoses has resulted in clients needing help with Wills and pension advice, and accessing services at a critical time.
- Families' incomes have been impacted.

Our coordinators must be recognised and applauded as they are often the first person that someone can talk to after being diagnosed and facing the worry of how they would manage. The fear and pain that the client is going through is keenly felt and the feedback we receive acknowledges what it means to our clients to be able to talk to a caring professional.

Our successes:

- Fostering closer working relationships to provide the quality service that Macmillan clients should receive, by continuing to access benefits and provide Macmillan Grants along with local support.
- Acting as the clients' voice when we see they are being disadvantaged. The delays in receiving benefit entitlement add to the distress of having serious illness and the misery of prolonged self-isolation.
- With the impact of Covid, there were added complications for people with cancer being unable to go into the workplace.
- We have worked closely with the hospitals to respond within 24 hours to any referral.
- With Macmillan Partnership, we have been able to refer clients who needed to access Solicitors.

What difference did we make?

We assisted 516 clients and gained £3 million in financial outcomes.

FEEDBACK

"Since I have been ill, I have met with nothing but kindness and support".

"Providing me with Attendance Allowance and Pension Credit has resulted in my having care and this helps with me being on my own".

"I was overwhelmed with how quickly you gained a Macmillan Grant, this was a godsend as I had no means of getting to London for my appointment. Delays in benefits meant I had no means of paying for a train ticket".

A card from the cancer nurses at Dorset County Hospital said "Thank you for all the helpful work you do for our patients. You are the emergency service for negotiating with bureaucracy, delays and the disadvantaged."

Refugee Resettlement Programme

Syrian and Afghan families:

Support has been ongoing for Syrian and Afghan families (supported through the Refugee Resettlement Programme). We have had a large number of queries related to the cost of living crisis as refugee families struggle to balance household budgets, and a number of issues with the DWP recovering overpayments without explanation. We have also had multiple issues with benefits ending suddenly; for example dealing with Council Tax support and Universal Credit. One family was threatened with homelessness and we had to work quickly to make sure they were able to find suitable accommodation before the Section 21 notice period expired.

I speak to the families that I am the caseworker for on a weekly and sometimes daily basis and meet them face to face whenever there is an issue that cannot be dealt with over the phone.

One family recently moved into a new property, and this involved a number of issues that would be impossible for the client to solve without caseworker support. For example, the new property appeared to be supplied by the same energy supplier as their previous supplier, OVO. However, after a number of phone calls to OVO it became clear that although OVO now own SSE, not all SSE properties have been transferred - the client's property being one of them. This meant that a new account had to be set up over the phone - requiring a 90 minute wait in the phone queue. As well as setting up a new account and direct debt, I also set up the client with an app to track his energy consumption more easily.

Ukrainian Families:

More recently we have received funding from Dorset Council to support Ukrainian Refugees, and we are working closely with our partners to ensure that we are providing the most essential and up-to-date advice to our Ukrainian guests. There are now more than 1,000 Ukrainian refugees in Dorset.

The majority of queries in our offices have related to benefits, immigration and food banks, whereas the biggest problems more generally have been around re-matching and housing. We have also seen a number of issues that have been raised around the country where there are/were no clear answers, for example around the issue of National Insurance numbers for Ukrainian pensioners (see case study) and lack of financial help for students who are still enrolled in full-time education in Ukraine.

The initial 6-month hosting commitment has or is about to end for a number of families in Dorset and we are aware that a proportion of hosts are deciding not to continue with the Homes for Ukraine scheme, for reasons such as skyrocketing energy prices, lack of support around issues such as mental health, and hosts wanting to have their own families to stay during the winter. Supply of new hosts is unlikely to meet demand and so we anticipate that we will see a growing number of queries about housing and homelessness.

Internally, my role is to assist with complex cases and to provide support for generalist advisers on matters related to Ukrainian refugees. I am also working with our partners at Dorset Council and Help & Kindness to deliver workshops to host families and their guests where I introduce our service and answer specific questions around benefits, immigration, consumer issues and employment rights. The workshops have been very useful for establishing the main concerns for refugees and identifying potential Ukraine-specific research and campaigns queries such as only being able to convert a Ukrainian driver's licence to a British automatic licence.

A host family was having difficulty helping their guest with benefits, including how to get a National Insurance Number (NINO) when none of the conditions required for an online application are met by a Ukrainian pensioner who has never worked in the UK. I determined that the guest would be eligible for Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance and decided to send a covering letter with the PC application outlining the DWP's decision makers' guidance that an application for a benefit should be considered also as an application for a NINO. Just over two weeks later, the NINO arrived along with the successful application letter for Pension Credit. With the NINO received, I could then proceed with the AA application as normal.

Tom Hensher, Refugee Resettlement caseworker

Employment Unit Dorset

The Employment Unit has been busy with more than 370 cases since December 2020. Currently, we have above 30 open cases with ACAS or in the Employment Tribunal system. Our three specialists have advised, shared their knowledge, reviewed cases and explored different ways that they can help other advisers and clients. We have a small stalwart team of volunteers who have worked incredibly hard on behalf of clients.

The most recurring issues are pay, dismissals and redundancies. Care and Hospitality are the sectors which have given the highest percentage of cases - 15% and 12%. We are working with our Research and Campaigns colleagues on a summary of Care sector cases, which will hopefully raise the profile of these workers and their challenges. Happily we have achieved more than £260K for our clients in financial settlements and outcomes.

We are grateful to the wider teams who understand our revised thresholds for the type of case that needs to be referred to us, meaning we are seeing suitable

cases including many tricky ones which often involve supporting clients who have additional needs.

We have worked in many ways with clients: alongside generalist advisers who preferred to keep their slow-gained trust with a client; or taking on clients who started with a generalist, went to an EUD Volunteer and have finally been supported by a paid specialist as the complexity of the case revealed itself.

The waiting time for a case to get to an Employment Tribunal is still over a year, although preliminary hearings have been added to help speed up the process. As the stresses of running a business in a time of rising costs hit home, I fear we will see more cases and issues heading our way.

Sarah Campbell, Coordinator, EUD

From our paid specialist case workers:

Being able to support the people of Dorset with their employment issues is a privilege. As would be expected we get a real mixture of clients and issues. It is noticeable that since Covid we have a significant increase in the number of clients with mental health issues. This can be very demanding on our resources and our skills. This is of course in addition to the support we give regarding the impact on their working life. We will negotiate with employers on behalf of clients to achieve the best outcome for them. Clients will always have the option of going further to a full tribunal hearing or coming to a pre-hearing settlement, and we support them whichever route they take. Where appropriate we represent or support clients at hearings.

Rough Sleepers Initiative

The RSI project is a long term multi agency initiative funded by Dorset Council which targets support for those experiencing homelessness or are threatened with homelessness. I work three days a week based at the Lantern Trust (a local housing charity in Weymouth) assisting clients who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, with debts and benefits. Clients are referred to me from many organisations including Julian House (a regional homeless organisation), Shelter, the Community Mental Health Team, REACH (a regional mental health and addiction service), Steps 2 Wellbeing (who provide psychological support), Footprints (a regional organisation helping to reintegrate offenders in the community), Dorset Council and Jobcentre Plus. I provide a wide range of advice including:

- carrying out initial debt assessments and referring clients to our debt team for further action.
- making claims for Wessex Water low income schemes, such as 'Assist'.
- advising on welfare benefits, including benefit calculations, making the initial claim, completing claim forms, requesting mandatory reconsiderations and appeals - especially relating to Personal Independence Payment.
- helping clients check Universal Credit journals and take action to resolve or avoid sanctions.
- applying to Dorset Council for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payments, and Blue Badges.
- applying for food bank vouchers.
- referring clients to our internal specialists to check the validity of eviction notices, or if there are family law or employment issues.

In recent months there has been a marked increase in requests for benefits checks, suggesting that many clients are struggling with the cost of living.

Naomi Meneghini-Relf, RSI caseworker

Outreaches in GP surgeries

We currently have advisers working in eleven GP surgeries. Here is a flavour of that work from Ann Macdonald who works in two Weymouth surgeries.

The work is getting busier, and we are receiving more and more referrals directly from GP's and other healthcare professionals. The relationship between the outreach worker and the health professionals is very good and I am able to ask for information as and when needed with the clients. The use of patient summaries has increased, as this is a very good way of getting the information needed on medical issues to support benefit claims. The reception staff are very helpful and accommodating.

The majority of cases seen relate to benefits and budgeting. We have also seen an increase in housing-related issues since the Covid lockdown has ended and private landlords are now starting to evict clients. We are completing an increasing number of referrals to food banks and charity/government support for help with gas and electricity, as the cost of living is rising and people are unable to manage.

86%

felt their enquiries were partially or fully dealt with
(14% were still ongoing)

100%

felt that it had been helpful to see the adviser in the surgery

45%

thought that the advice they had received contributed to a reduction in visits to their GP

81%

thought the advice they received improved their physical or mental wellbeing



Working with Kushti Bok to support the Gypsy Roma Traveller Communities

Citizens Advice Central Dorset (CACD) and Kushti Bok have received grant funding from Dorset Council to provide an Advocacy Worker to work with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community across Dorset. This project brings together CACD, with its expertise in providing information and advice services on a range of subjects with Kushti Bok, a group of like-minded people made up of Gypsies, Travellers and others who have strong links with those communities. Kushti Bok are dedicated to spreading cultural awareness and understanding, and endeavour to give a voice to the Gypsies and Travellers of Dorset. Working together on this project is enabling us to gain the trust of people in these communities and open up access to advice for a previously under-represented client group.

During my time as Citizens Advice's Gypsy and Traveller Advocacy Worker I have been working on a number of issues including housing and problems on Council sites; money advice including benefits and accessing grants; education, especially around accessing SEND provision; health and social care; and discrimination.

People's situations are often compounded by other factors such as poor physical and mental health, digital exclusion, poverty, and people having had a poor experience of 'officialdom' or 'getting help' before. In the short time I have been working with our Dorset Travelling Communities I have been struck by their strength and resilience.

Abby Young - caseworker

"My mental health hasn't been so bad recently, because of you, I know there's someone here helping us"

"Thanks for helping me - it was making my head swim!"

"Thank you so much for all the advice, help and support over the last few months. Although the DWP/UC completely messed up due to a lack of adequate training for the work coaches, my UC claim has now finally been back-dated to the original date with the missing payments in line to be paid. Keep up the excellent work."

"Thank you so much for helping me. Now I can afford the care I need."



Energy projects

We have continued to deliver several energy projects. Our adviser Louise Taylor provides detailed advice on energy issues and income maximisation under the Energy Advice Project. We've taken information out to consumers at coffee mornings and other events under the Big Energy Saving Network. As part of the new Carbon Monoxide Advice Project, we advise people on the dangers of Carbon Monoxide; we can order them a free CO alarm if they don't have one.

Training

Training for Generalist Advisers takes about 18 months and requires a great deal of hard work and commitment from those who are training. The end result is an adviser who has the knowledge and experience to serve the community for many years to come. Our training is both professional and rewarding and the in depth issues out there demand in depth training.

For approximately five months there are weekly tutorial sessions covering a number of subject areas including benefits, housing, employment and debt.

Trainees are asked to complete a significant amount of homework, such as study packs, e-learning and online assessments. After the initial training the trainees start advising for two sessions per week, gaining experience, and there is further assessment after a year or so to ensure trainees are competent before receiving their certificate.

During the training we ask advisers to come into the office for one session per week to observe and gain more experience. They often work on reception which is an excellent way of getting client experience, becoming part of the team and finding out what we really do!

We recently started our first group of 'face to face' training since lockdown and these trainees are a mixed group from Dorchester, Sherborne and North Dorset offices. We are using a training room in Poundbury, which has been generously offered to us by a local company RiskStop. This has allowed us to train a larger group than we may otherwise have been able to and is a superb venue for both trainees and trainer. Trainees are already coming in to the office and gaining valuable experience which supports their learning.

Helen Cadisch, Training Supervisor

I started training with CACD with very little experience of dealing with the kind of topics we covered. I found the training both informative and challenging, in a good way. Overall the training was thorough and set me up brilliantly for what happens in the office. I was able to go into the office as a receptionist fairly early on which was a fantastic experience and gave me an overall view of what happens on a day to day basis - even down to learning how to use the scanner and photocopier (which can be daunting!). Producing a good case write-up has been a learning curve; I try to focus on providing clear and complete notes.

There is a tremendous variety that we deal with in the office; some days are really busy but the ASS (supervisor) keeps that all together. The office atmosphere is great, and I feel fully supported if there is a difficult case. It is hard to learn not to take it home with you - I am still learning how to do that, but I know I can talk to the ASS or more experienced advisers if I need to. Overall training to be an adviser is an exciting experience, rather than a daunting one.

I know we cannot 'fix' people but for me knowing that I might have made a difference gives me so much pleasure and I really look forward to coming in every week. I would like to progress in the future to specialise in dealing with mental health issues.

Annaleigh – one of our newer advisers

From our volunteers

In 2021-22, we had 159 volunteers working across our four offices in a variety of roles – admin & support (including reception), generalist adviser, supervisor and trustee with an estimated public value of £841,415 p.a.

PEGGY
 "I enjoy meeting all sorts of different people, and really like being able to help them."

WILLIAM
 "Even after 14 years of volunteering, every session presents new challenges."

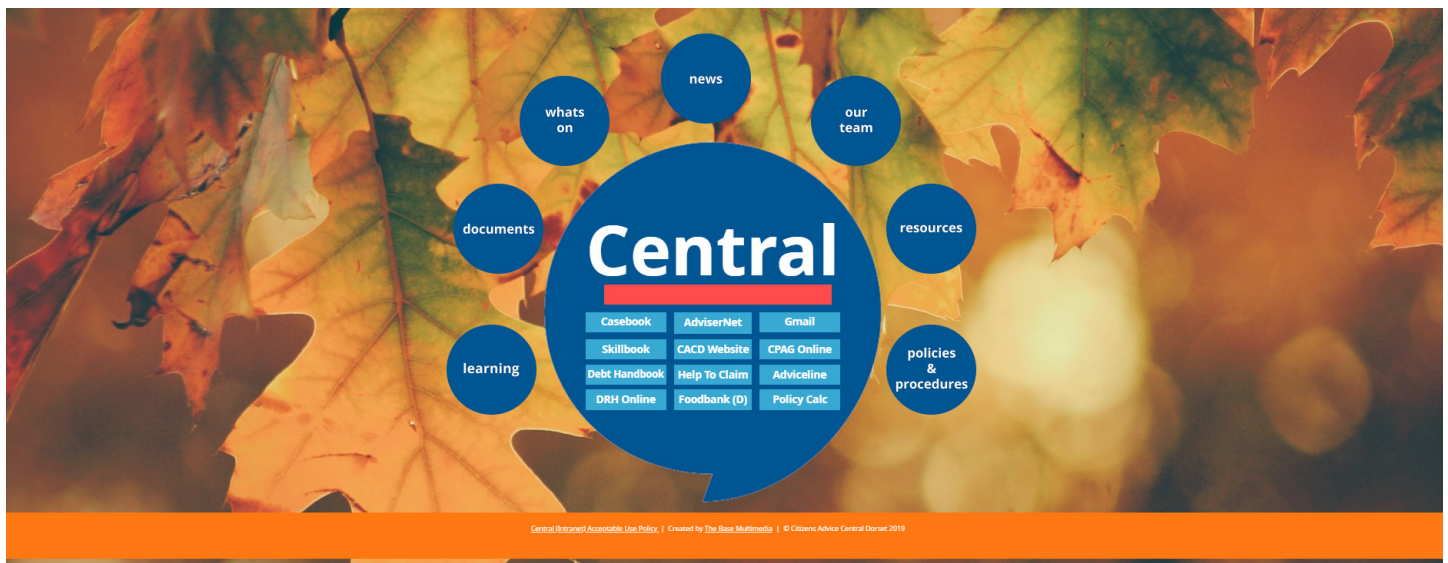
HELEN
 "This is a unique opportunity to do something positive for the community."

CHRIS W
 "It is nice to go home at the end of the day knowing you have helped someone and hopefully made a difference."

COLIN
 "I worked in commercial industry and had never seen this kind of work environment. It's interesting to see and take part in charity work. It takes me out of my comfort zone and keeps me mentally stimulated."

RICHARD
 "As a volunteer adviser, I value my additional Research & Campaign role to promote and review the submission of Evidence Forms within CA Central, so this information can be collated and addressed both locally and nationally. I feel this helps to ensure that some of the practice and administrative matters that sometimes frustrate and get in the way of people being able to deal with problems on their own have a better chance of really getting sorted out."

Our intranet – a useful tool for us all



Supporters and Trustees

Our Supporters

Our special thanks go to the following for their continued support:

- Dorset Council
- Blandford Forum Town Council
- Dorchester Town Council
- Gillingham Town Council
- Portland Town Council
- Shaftesbury Town Council
- Sherborne Town Council
- Parish Councils
- Access to Justice Foundation
- Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Charitable Foundation
- Arnold Clark Foundation
- Big Energy Savings Network
- Big 4 Littlemoor
- Corton Hill Fund
- Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group
- Dorset Community Foundation
- Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust
- Gillingham Foodbank / Trussell Trust
- Macmillan Cancer Care
- Money Advice Service
- NHS Charities Together
- Prince Zeiger Trust
- Simon Digby Charitable Trust
- Valentine Trust
- Wessex Water

Many thanks also to our smaller but no less important individual supporters and donors, whether clients or friends of our local Citizen Advice service.

Every Citizens Advice office is an independent registered charity. Without funding and volunteers, we could not continue to provide our services in the Central Dorset area.

Trustees

- Dr David Cove (Chair)
- Mr Richard Baker
- Mr Stephen Beare
- Ms Mandy Binsley
- Mr David Collins (Treasurer)
- Mr Stuart Dawson
- Mr Jean-Paul Dervley
- Mr Adrian Goldsack
- Mr Peter Green
- Ms Tracy Mcgregor
- Ms Clare Stephens

How to get help

Citizens Advice Central Dorset offers free, confidential, impartial and independent advice based around our Dorchester, North Dorset, Sherborne, and Weymouth & Portland Citizens Advice centres.

Visit our website for more information <https://centraldorsetca.org.uk>.

Dorchester

1 Acland Road
Dorchester DT1 1JW

With outreaches in:

- Bere Regis
- Crossways
- Maiden Newton
- Puddletown

Sherborne

Manor House
Newland
Sherborne DT9 3JL

With outreaches in:

- Cerne Abbas
- Bute House Surgery

North Dorset

4 Newbury Court
Gillingham SP8 4QX

With outreaches in

- Blandford Forum
- Blandford Group Practice
- Gillingham Foodbank
- Shaftesbury
- Sturminster Newton
- Verwood & Cranborne

Weymouth & Portland

Weymouth Library
Great George Street
Weymouth DT4 8NN

With outreaches in:

- Portland Community Venue
- Portland Hospital
- Portland Library
- Portland Foodbank
- Wyke Regis Health Centre
- Royal Crescent Surgery
- The Bridges Medical Centre
- Littlemoor Community Centre
- The Lantern Trust, Weymouth
- Weymouth Westham Foodbank

Dorset Adviceline: 0800 144 88 48 [freephone]