



Citizens Advice 1066

Annual Review

2015-16



Chair's report

As my tenure as Chair of Citizens Advice 1066 finishes its second year, it gives me the opportunity to consider the positive achievements of the bureau over the last twelve months.

- We finish the year in a strong financial position.
- Our new chief executive, Tracy Dighton, has completed a consultation with staff, stakeholders and partners to develop our new three year Business Development Plan.
- We have been working very closely with our consortium partners from other bureau in East Sussex to coordinate our services and maximise funding opportunities.
- We have strengthened our existing local partnerships to ensure that together we continue to offer the maximum opportunity to access help and to support the people of Hastings and St. Leonards-on-Sea.
- We have built new relationships with key local and regional stakeholders, which will create some exciting opportunities allowing us to look at innovative ways to support the most vulnerable in our town.

- We have increased the size of our Trustee Board and although we have sadly seen some long-standing members leave, we have a truly incredible range of skills and experience.

The current national picture is very troubling. We are seeing unprecedented levels of increasing debt, poverty and deprivation. We are also in the midst of a local and national housing crisis. All of this will affect the health and well-being of a growing proportion of the UK's population.

Citizens Advice 1066 staff and volunteers from Board to frontline are fully aware of these challenges and the need for a strong, accessible and responsive bureau. Although I have little doubt that the challenges will continue over the coming twelve months, I am very confident that Citizens Advice 1066 will continue to respond to these challenges well but above all else ensure that we are fully available when we are needed most.

Marc Turczanski

Chief executive's report

Early in 2016 Citizens Advice 1066 volunteers, trustees, partner organisations and staff began work on a three year Business Development Plan. The many hours invested in this have proved well worth all the effort. We looked at our values and approach as well as developing clear objectives and plans to take the organisation forward. What emerged was a collective desire to not only meet the needs of the people currently using our service, but to actively seek out the people who could benefit from our work if we made more effort to engage with them.

Work started in earnest in late spring to develop our services for young people; people facing barriers to accessing advice and guidance due to digital exclusion; people facing issues related to deprivation that were having an impact on their health such as mental health and debt, and living in a cold and/or mouldy home.

We began to prepare for the roll out of Universal Credit in Hastings towards the end of the year. A particular focus is the risk and actuality of homelessness that has been seen by bureaux in the national roll out of Universal Credit.

We have formed close working partnerships with

many local organisations in order to meet the needs of potential as well as current clients – made easier by being located in the Advice & Community Hub. Key successes so far include:

- Work with Energise Sussex Coast, Seaview and the Women's Royal Voluntary Service on building a network of energy champions.
- Work with Amicus Horizon and Hastings Borough Council on a European funded project in St. Leonards-on-Sea - *SHINE* (Sustainable Homes in Inclusive Neighbourhoods) - to raise awareness, and make homes warmer and healthier.
- Academic evaluation of the *FADES* (First Aid for Debt East Sussex - a project led by Citizens Advice 1066 for the consortium of five bureaux across the County) has shown debt reduction and positive health outcomes for clients.

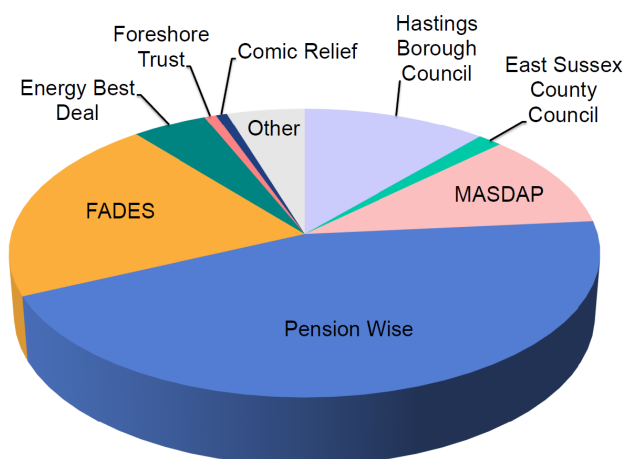
We are nearing the end of a year when we invested heavily in our systems, data analysis and new partnerships. The coming year will see the development of these partnerships, greater integration of our work and an increase in the value of our collective social impact.

Tracy Dighton

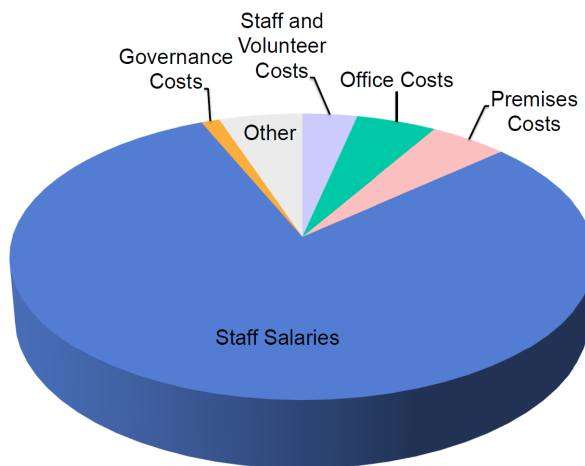
Summary of accounts 2015-16

2015-16 was another challenging year, but the bureau was successful in securing new grant funding for expanded and newly introduced projects. Total incoming resources for the year were £532,595, while operating expenses were £544,806. At the end of the year total unrestricted reserves were £132,335 and restricted reserves were £14,237, giving a balance of £146,572.

Income



Operating expenses



We would like to thank Hastings Borough Council, East Sussex County Council, the Foreshore Trust, Comic Relief and others for their grant funding.

About us

Citizens Advice 1066 is a local charity offering residents information and advice on some of the most pressing issues they face today, including debt, housing, benefit entitlement, employment and relationship problems. The service is independent, confidential, impartial and free of charge, and is run with the help of around 40 trained volunteers supported by a core team of staff.

A dedicated *Money Advice Unit* at the bureau provides tailored help with more complex debt problems, including working with clients to manage down their debt. Specialist money advisers at the bureau work with clients - sometimes over months - to review their expenditure, maximise their income, prioritise their debts and agree a manageable repayment plan with their creditors. If necessary, they can help clients with applying for a debt relief order or bankruptcy.

A mental health programme provides debt and more

general advice to clients who are experiencing mental health issues. Other bureau services include help with reducing energy costs under the *Energy Best Deal* programme.

A bureau *Research and Campaigns* team uses the experiences of our clients to lobby local and central government for system-wide improvements for the benefit of everyone. Aside from debt, the problems most frequently presented by clients locally include obtaining suitable housing - particularly in the private rented sector, poor practices by local employers and scams.

Going forward we have been busy developing our new *Financial Capability* service to help clients to better deal with short term financial shocks and build financial (and therefore personal) resilience over the longer term.

You can support our work by making a contribution at:

www.virginmoneygiving.com/charities/CitizensAdvice1066

Our service in 2015-16 at a glance

We helped
5,524
clients

With
17,605
issues

For every

£1

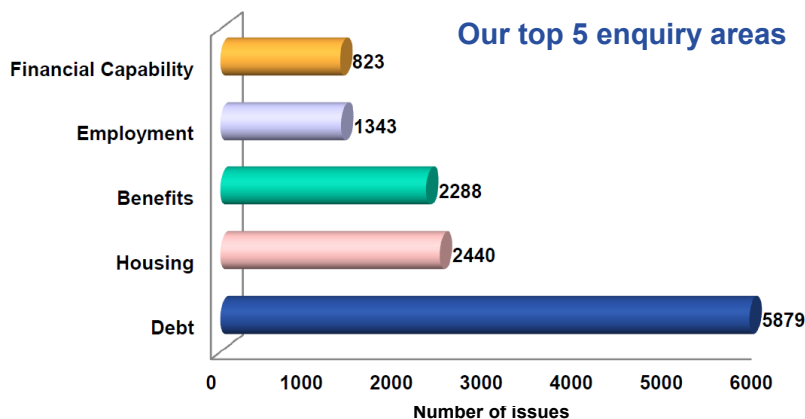
funded or invested
we generated:

£5.45 in local
authority savings

£2.95 in government
savings

£12.72 in individual
income gains

Our volunteers
generated a total of
£202,717 in wider
economic and social
benefits



Our main enquiry channels

93%

face-to-face

5%

by phone

2%

by email

We helped 1,124 clients with debts totalling **£4,607,099**
giving an average debt per client of **£4,099**

A volunteer recently commented "There are many good reasons to volunteer for the bureau. You join a friendly team and receive excellent training, and can use your experience here to progress to other things - including paid work. But more importantly you get the opportunity of help local people work through and find solutions to some of the very difficult issues they face."

You can apply to volunteer by emailing: recruitment@citizensadvice1066.co.uk