

# Annual Report 2022/23



**citizens  
advice**

**Barnsley**



# Welcome from the Chair of Trustees



**Please  
read this report  
and share it widely.  
Barnsley people need  
Citizens Advice and  
we need you.  
Thank you!**

**You will see from this report, how busy the year has been; our heartfelt thanks must go to all the staff, volunteers and management team who have worked so hard following the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic. This includes the dedicated Board of Trustees.**

Our data reflects the difficulties the people of Barnsley face in relation to the cost of living; the challenges of high levels of economic inactivity and general health and well-being.

We continue to offer multiple 'channels' of contact to open access to an ever increasing and diverse population.

I continue to be impressed by the huge efforts everyone makes to reach, advise and guide people. This includes working with partners and associates in multiple outreach settings, taking services to where people live and work.

Our latest Leadership and Management Assessment gave us top grades in all areas. This endorses the quality of the CA Barnsley service.

In addition to the usual ways of promoting our services, we rely upon our partners to advocate and support new and different people to contact us. We thank all our Friends of Citizens Advice, Barnsley who support our vital work! If you are not a Friend already, do join us – it's free!

**Dr Janine Eldred, Chair of Trustees**

# Welcome from the Chief Executive

**As a local independent advice charity, we are here to ensure that people in Barnsley have the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are and whatever their problem.**

It has been a difficult year for individuals, communities and organisations to withstand the cost of living increases but our diverse funding streams have enabled us to help by providing a range of advice services to residents of Barnsley and the surrounding areas.

I would like to thank all of our funders and partners for their support throughout the year.

We have used the evidence brought to us by our clients to help us to campaign both locally and nationally to challenge unfair policies and procedures that impact on local people.

My thanks must go to our trustees, volunteers and paid staff for their continued commitment to our clients and our service.

We are looking forward to further expanding our funding and services throughout the next year.

I hope you enjoy reading the CAB highlights of 2022-23 in our annual report!

**Jo Clark, Chief Executive Officer**



**Our diverse funding streams have enabled us to provide a range of advice services to residents of Barnsley.**

# Our results: April 2022 - March 2023

Last year we helped **8,404** people with **38,062** different issues

That's a  
**34% increase**  
on the number of  
problems we helped  
people deal with  
compared to the  
previous year!

## Top 5 issues

Benefits Universal Credit	7,297
Debt	7,138
Benefits and Tax Credits	4,507
Housing	1,468
Utilities and Communication	1,097

"My chat with the adviser helped me a lot. They have sorted out a lot of things I didn't even know existed. Thank you!"





# Our results: April 2022 - March 2023

**Supporting local people with their debt and benefits issues continues to be a significant amount of the work we do.**

Improving financial circumstances has such a big impact on people's health and well-being, reducing stress and anxiety, and helping to improve quality of life.

**"With the help of Citizens Advice with my PIP application, I am hoping that I will be able to pay for someone to help me look after my personal wellbeing."**



We helped people claim over  
**£3.4 million**  
in Universal Credit  
and other  
benefits.

We helped people manage  
**£6.7 million**  
of problem debt.



# Advice Trends - Contact Channels

In 2022-23 our most popular access channels were:

Telephone/Adviceline	44%
Email	40%
Face-to-Face	7%

By the end of the year, many of our advice services returned to face-to-face delivery. We currently deliver advice from 14 different venues across Barnsley, including libraries, churches, and community centres.

**However, based on client feedback and current levels of demand, we expect that in the future more of our projects will be delivered as 'hybrid' services, combining both digital access channels and face-to-face sessions.**

In 2022/23  
we answered

**9,417**

advice queries via email.

That's a 23% increase  
on the year before!



In 2022/23  
we helped with

**10,300**

advice queries via  
telephone.



# Advice Trends - Cost of Living

Across the last year we saw a significant increase in the number of clients who needed to access emergency charitable support, such as food parcels, fuel vouchers and shopping vouchers.

Last year  
**274**

people who couldn't afford to eat were referred for help from a local food bank.

That's a  
**114% increase**  
compared to the  
previous  
year!

We saw a  
**45% increase**  
in debt issues. We  
dealt with 7,138 issues  
compared to 4,926  
the year  
before.

We distributed  
**119**  
shopping vouchers to help  
local people who were  
struggling with the  
cost-of-living  
crisis.

We made  
**279**  
fuel voucher referrals  
for people who  
couldn't afford  
to heat their  
homes.

During 2022-23,  
advisers sent **243**  
issues to our national  
campaign team - most  
were related to rising  
costs of energy  
and living.

# Making a Difference - Phil's Story

**When a client has been referred to a food bank, that need for groceries is often only the tip of the iceberg. That was certainly the case for Phil\***

Widowed some years previously, Phil had coped with both working and raising his family, until a serious accident meant that he could no longer work. Although Phil was receiving Universal Credit, he was not as financially well off as when he was employed, and gradually, the debts had started to mount up...

We helped Phil to understand the difference between priority and non-priority debts and why it was necessary to address the priority debts, like Council Tax, first. Our adviser explained to Phil the different stages of Council Tax enforcement and how, ultimately, non-payment could result in court action and even imprisonment.

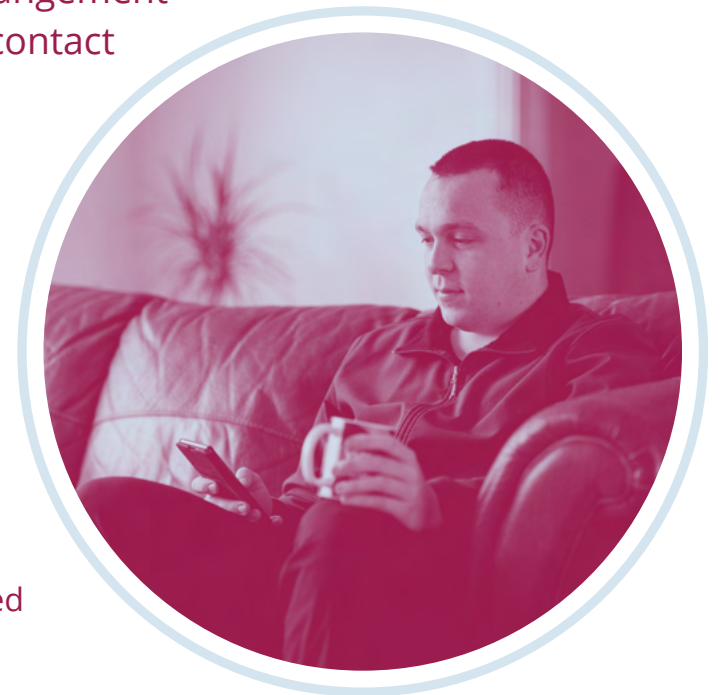
We also gave Phil advice about managing bailiffs.

With help from the adviser, Phil decided that he should try to come to an arrangement about his rent arrears with his housing association and, similarly, he should contact his energy providers to try to agree repayment terms. Phil also considered applying for assistance to deal with his water arrears, through schemes like Resolve or Water Support.

As well as helping with his debts, the adviser made sure to check Phil was claiming all the benefits he was entitled to, and encouraged him to apply for Council Tax support.

**Phil couldn't believe how much better he felt after taking action to deal with his debt. He left his appointment with a new sense of positivity.**

\* Client Storytellers have been given different names and certain details have been omitted or changed to preserve their anonymity.





# Making a Difference - Survey Results



**91%** felt less stressed or anxious after seeing the adviser

**87%** felt more able to manage their own affairs

**98%** felt the service they received was good or excellent

**99%** said they would use the service again

**99%** said they would recommend our service to someone else

**"The adviser was very calm and reassuring. I was really anxious but now I can sleep at night."**

# Projects and Services

Our projects make it easier for people to access advice services. Over the last year, support from our funders has allowed us to deliver a range of different activities including:

DISTRIBUTION OF SHOPPING VOUCHERS  
PROVISION OF A BSL INTERPRETER  
COMMUNITY OUTREACH ADVICE  
UNIVERSAL CREDIT SUPPORT  
WELFARE BENEFITS ADVICE  
VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT  
SPECIALIST DEBT ADVICE  
ENERGY TRAINING  
TELEPHONE ADVICE  
EMAIL ADVICE

In  
2022/23 we  
received funding for

**26**

different projects  
or activities!



# Quality and Assurance

## Quality of Advice

Our organisation is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

All advisers carry out Part 1 of the Senior Managers and Certification Regime to understand and comply with the FCA rules of conduct.

We are regularly audited as part of our membership of Citizens Advice through the Citizens Advice Performance Quality Framework. Our latest Leadership and Management Assessment gave us top grades in all areas.

## Information Assurance

Our trustee board oversees the information security of all personal information of our clients, staff, funders and strategic partners that we process.

We hold joint responsibility for client data that is held in our case management system, with the national Citizens Advice Service.

Our information assurance team ensures the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all personal and sensitive data is maintained to a level which is compliant with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.



**All paid  
and volunteer  
advice staff are  
trained to AQS  
Advice Quality  
Standard.**

**We also  
have the AQS  
Telephone Advice  
Standard and the  
Debt Casework  
Standard.**

# Ways to Access Advice

## **FREEPHONE TELEPHONE:**

0800 144 8848

Freephone helpline open Monday to Friday 9am till 5pm.

## **EMAIL:**

[barnsleycab.org.uk/contact-us/](https://barnsleycab.org.uk/contact-us/)

Fill out the online contact form to receive a response via email. (Usually within 2 working days - however, at busy times this may take slightly longer.)

## **FACE-TO-FACE:**

Face-to-face outreach advice is being delivered from community venues across Barnsley. Please see [barnsleycab.org.uk/get-advice/](https://barnsleycab.org.uk/get-advice/) for full details.

## **BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE:**

Deaf clients who require BSL interpretation can drop-in to Wellington House to receive face-to-face advice between 10am and 12 noon every Wednesday.

## **WEBCHAT:**

Available for selected topics from the Citizens Advice website: [citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/web-chat-service/](https://citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/web-chat-service/)

## **ONLINE ADVICE:**

Self help information and advice can be found on our website: [barnsleycab.org.uk/](https://barnsleycab.org.uk/)



# Other Specialist Citizens Advice Services

## **UNIVERSAL CREDIT:** 0800 144 8 444

For help with the claiming process - from making an application to getting your first payment.  
Available 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

## **DEBT:** 0800 240 4420

If you're worried about money or debt, call the debt helpline. Available 9am to 8pm, Monday to Friday and 9.30am to 1pm Saturday.

## **CONSUMER HELPLINE:** 0808 223 1133

If you need more help with a consumer problem.  
Available 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

## **PENSIONWISE:** 030 0330 1001

Book an appointment with a pensions guidance specialist to talk through your pension options.  
Available 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday.



**"Citizens Advice are my first port of call if I need advice or support!"**

# Work for us

**We couldn't run any of our projects or services without our wonderful team of staff and volunteers!**

## Want to join us?

PAID STAFF - We're always on the look out for more funding to expand our services, and when new projects start we often need to recruit paid staff! Keep an eye out for vacancies on social media or visit:

**[barnsleycab.org.uk/jobs/](https://barnsleycab.org.uk/jobs/)**

VOLUNTEER VACANCIES - We accept new volunteer applications all year round...

You'll get full training and support from our Training Officer, and travel expenses will be paid.

More information about our volunteering vacancies can be found here:

**[barnsleycab.org.uk/volunteering/](https://barnsleycab.org.uk/volunteering/)**



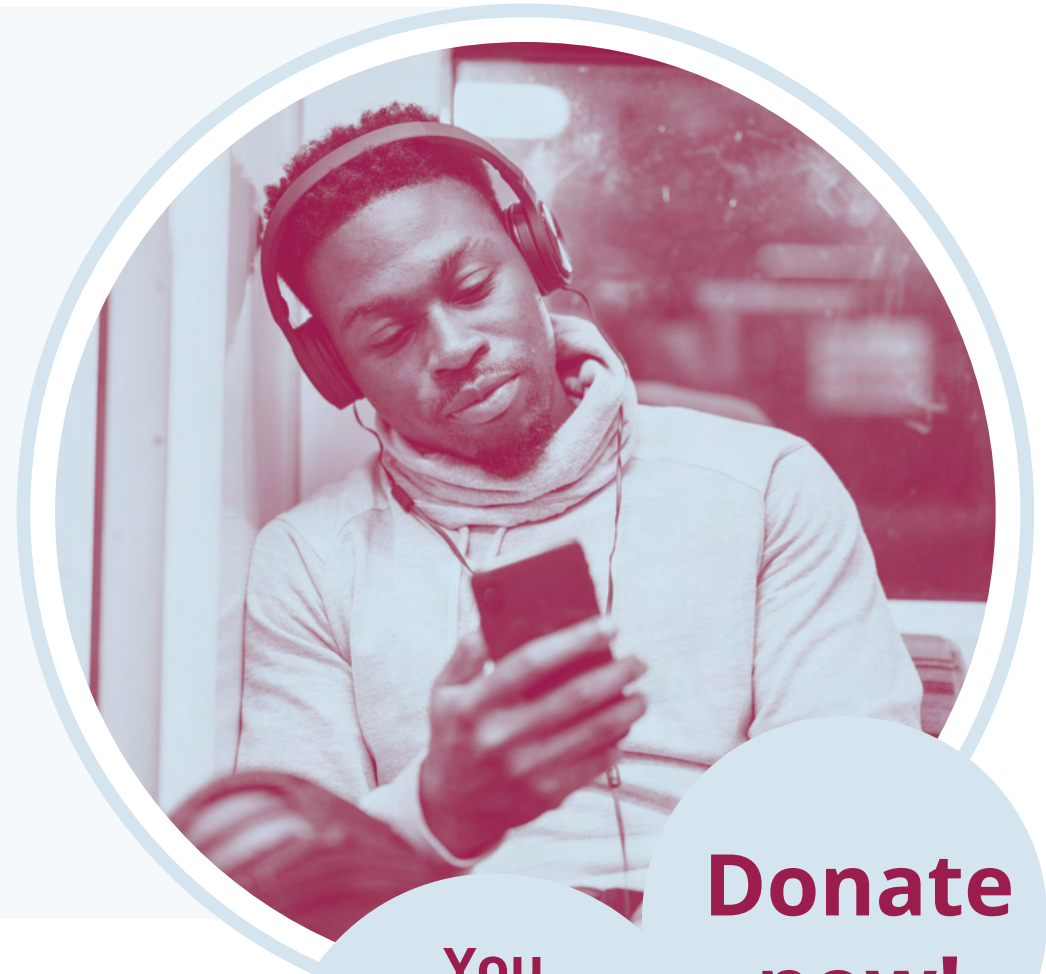
# Support Our Charity

We've registered Citizens Advice Barnsley with #easyfundraising, which means over 4,000 shops and sites will now donate to us for FREE every time you use #easyfundraising to shop with them.

These donations help SO MUCH, so please sign up to support us – it's completely FREE and doesn't take long.

Use this link to sign up:

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/citizensadvicebarnsley/?invite=1O9KXH&referral-campaign=c2s](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/citizensadvicebarnsley/?invite=1O9KXH&referral-campaign=c2s)



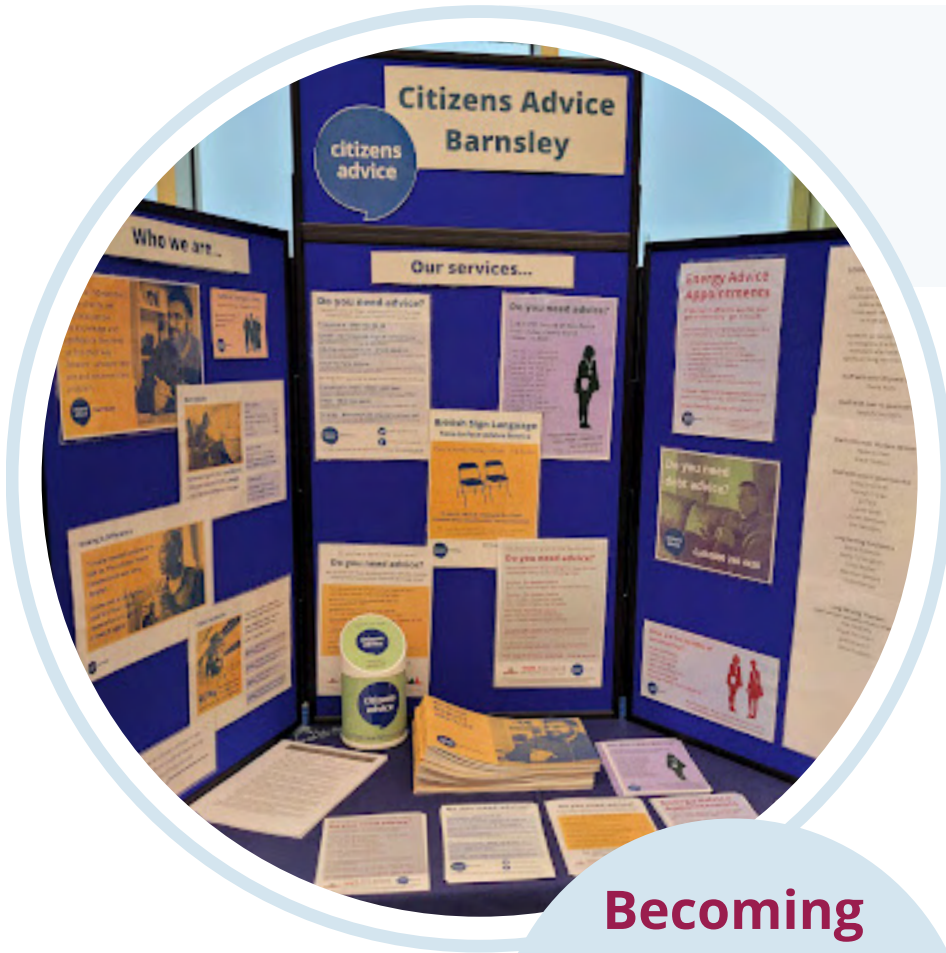
**Donate  
now!**

**You  
can also  
make one-off  
donations!**





# Become our Friend!



**Becoming  
a Friend of  
Citizens Advice  
Barnsley  
is FREE!**

**We are seeking individuals and organisations who want to become a Friend of Citizens Advice Barnsley.**

As our Friend you will receive occasional updates about the work we do and the impact it has on the people we help, opportunities to network with our other friends, as well as an invitation to our annual event.

In return, we hope you will support our charity by signposting our services to people who may need help, assisting us with research, and sharing any opportunities to develop new projects or gain alternative funding.

**For more information about becoming a Friend, please visit our website:**

**<https://barnsleycab.org.uk/friends/>**



# With thanks to the Friends of CAB & our Trustees

## Friends of CAB include:

Abbie Churchill  
Angela Andrews  
Barry Eldred DL  
Caroline Parker  
Dave Fullen  
Elaine Oliver  
Ian Guest  
Jen MacPhail  
Jonathan Tweedle  
Kayleigh Wake  
Mireille Eastwood  
Norah Gregory  
Phil Watson  
Rudo Mkumba  
Ruth Willis  
Suzanne Storey

## CAB Trustees:

Dr Jan Eldred: Chair  
Adam Leece: Vice Chair  
Alan Methley  
Cllr Joe Hayward  
Frank Parnham  
Linda Burgess  
Marie Hoyle  
Mick Neal (Retired November 22)  
Rachael Burley  
Sarah Poolman



# With thanks to our Team

**A great big thank you to all our staff and volunteers who have contributed so much time and energy to help to support the people of Barnsley. We really couldn't do it without you!**

In 2022/23 we worked with many staff and volunteers including:

## **Paid Staff**

Abbie Buckley  
Abu Ferdoush  
Adam Roznowski  
Amy Pearson  
Carl Fox  
Carol Hanwell  
Chris Rock  
David Andy  
Elisabeth Evans  
Emily-Jane Stott  
Hannah Cripps  
Helen Corker  
Jo Clark  
John Ball  
Karol Block  
Kyle Turner  
Laura Smith

Lauren Matthews  
Leanne Hopkin  
Linda Rayner  
Lindsay Heffer  
Lynda Carey  
Lyndsey Saunders  
Richard Hodgkinson  
Sharon Draper  
Simon Hickson  
Sue Shipton

## **Volunteers**

Danielle Joseph  
Jayne Robinson  
Kathy Cunningham  
Linda Rayner  
Maureen Sanders  
Richard Hodgkinson

CAB offered me so much support and encouragement that gave me the confidence to deal with my issues to try and move forward with my life.

**I can't thank you enough."**

**I would truly like to thank you guys for the help and support.** Without it, I don't know what would have happened!

I would have been lost without the help from this team.  
**Thank you so much.**

# With thanks to Our Funders



**Central** Area Council

Central, Dodworth, Kingstone, Stairfoot, Worsbrough

**Dearne** Area Council

Dearne North, Dearne South

**North** Area Council

Darton East, Darton West, Old Town, St Helens

**North East** Area Council

Cudworth, Monk Bretton, North East, Royston

**Penistone** Area Council

Penistone East, Penistone West

**South** Area Council

Darfield, Hoyland Milton, Rockingham, Wombwell

**Barnsley and District Citizens Advice Bureau**  
**1st Floor, Wellington House**  
**36 Wellington Street**  
**Barnsley**  
**S70 1WA**

**Telephone: 0800 144 8848**

**Online Contact Form: [barnsleycab.org.uk/contact-us/](https://barnsleycab.org.uk/contact-us/)**



**<https://twitter.com/BarnsleyCAB>**



**<https://www.facebook.com/barnsleycab/>**

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**Citizens Advice Barnsley is a  
Hate Crime Reporting Centre**