

# Advice changes lives.

**citizens  
advice**

**Barnsley**

**Your local advice charity.  
Making a difference in Barnsley  
Annual Report 2015-16**

# Welcome from the Chair of Trustees and the Chief Executive

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Barnsley



**Roger Smith**  
Chair of the Trustee Board

There is no doubt that last year has seen the Bureau undergo changes within its Management and Board structure. This has not diminished the quality, skills and dedication of our volunteers and paid staff,

and their keen focus on ensuring that everything we do benefits our clients. I would like to thank the previous CEO Pat Heath for the work that he undertook at the Bureau, and wish him a happy retirement. Also welcome Jo Clark as our new CEO.

I am very grateful for the generous support that has been provided to me by my colleagues on the Trustee Board, the paid staff team and our volunteers. We should all feel very proud of the positive impact that our work has on the lives of countless local people.

We are all conscious of the implications of the welfare reform agenda along with other pressures. These changes have only just started and we can expect their effects to continue for several years to come. This both increases the demand for advice from our clients as well as requires our advisors to learn what amounts to, a complete new set of regulations.

We are all equally aware of the financial pressures on our Local Authorities, one of our key sources of funding, and thank them and all of our other funders for their support. These challenges make it even more important to be sure that we focus on helping our clients as efficiently and effectively as possible.

We have continued to expand our partnership work with other like-minded organisations within our local community. We are also looking at ways in which we can strengthen our position both within our current area of operation and outside.

We are always looking for additional volunteers to join our advice team which gives advice to our ever increasing client base or to become members of our Trustee Board. If you are interested in joining either of these groups please contact our office using the details on our website - [barnsleycab.org.uk](http://barnsleycab.org.uk) - or in person at 1st Floor Wellington House.



**Jo Clark**  
Chief Executive

2015/16 has been a challenging but interesting year in the life of Citizens Advice Barnsley. The service has seen several changes throughout the year including the retirement of the Chief Executive Officer

in September, Pat Heath and my recruitment as the new Chief Executive. We have also welcomed our Interim Chair, Roger Smith and several new members to our Trustee Board.

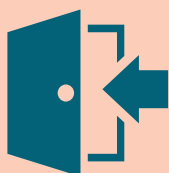
Our dedicated team of volunteers and paid staff have continued to assist more unique clients than the previous year and dealt with more problems for those clients. I would like to thank them for their commitment to their clients and to the service.

Our volunteers have contributed over £167,000 worth of volunteering hours to Barnsley and this has helped us to assist clients to secure £962,816 of welfare benefits and to help clients manage over £13.5 million worth of problem debt. All of which is a significant boost to the local economy.

Citizens Advice Barnsley is an independent local charity and we rely on various forms of funding in order to continue to provide a robust advice service for the residents of Barnsley and the surrounding areas.

We would like to thank all of our funders, past and present, particularly Barnsley Council whose support has enabled us to provide our core volunteer service and thus attract funding from other organisations which enables us to provide specialist and additional services, such as our outreach advice sessions in many areas of the borough. We would also like to thank all of our partners whom we have worked with so successfully throughout the year.

We look forward to the coming year and will continue to establish new and innovative ways to help people to access our services. We aim to ensure that everyone receives the advice that they need to enable them to deal with the problems that affect their lives.



## Accessibility

Over the last year we've made it even easier for our clients to access advice.

As well as the sessions in the bureau we ran 900 different face-to-face outreach advice sessions in community venues all over Barnsley. We also offered advice via telephone, email and webchat!

## Partnership Working

We're proud to be working together with local and national organisations to support the people of Barnsley.



Funders and organisations we work with include Age UK Barnsley, Berneslai Homes, BMBC, The Area Councils and Ward Alliances, Big Lottery, DIAL Barnsley, JCP, Money Advice Service and BMBC Welfare Rights.



## Innovation

Barnsley is one of only a handful of bureau in the country to be able to offer advice via email and webchat.

Digital advice channels were introduced for our debt clients in June 2015. The response from clients has been so overwhelming that the service has now been extended to all clients and we now offer email advice directly through our own website.



## Positive Outcomes

The work we do helps our clients experience a positive change in their lives.

This year we have helped clients claim £962,816 of additional benefit and manage £13,786,184 of problem debt, as well as writing off £5,389,000. But the positive results aren't just financial. 92% of clients say the help they received helped improve their health and wellbeing!



## Value For Money

For every £ of funding received from BMBC we procured an average of £3 additional funding.

Our volunteers have contributed over £167,000 worth of volunteering hours to Barnsley throughout the year.

## Campaign Success

Our Research and Campaigns Team work to challenge unfair practice and influence organisations to change.



This year we successfully challenged several large organisations and persuaded them to change their access policy so they would accept information by telephone on behalf of Deaf clients from a British Sign Language Interpreter.



## Debt Managed

During 2015/16 we helped people manage **£13,786,184** of problem debt.

## Benefit gain

We secured **£962,816** in benefits.



## Homelessness averted

During the year we dealt with **419** cases where we helped clients avoid losing their home.



## Information Assurance

The trustee board of Citizens Advice Barnsley has approved a new 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. The bureau aims to achieve an appropriate level of compliance to the Data Protection Act, the Cabinet Office's Security Policy Framework and to industry best practice, as defined by the ISO 27000 series of standards.



# Service Statistics

## 2015 - 2016



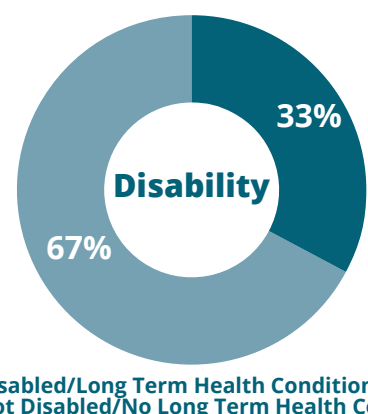
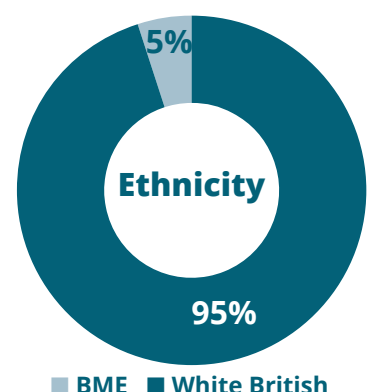
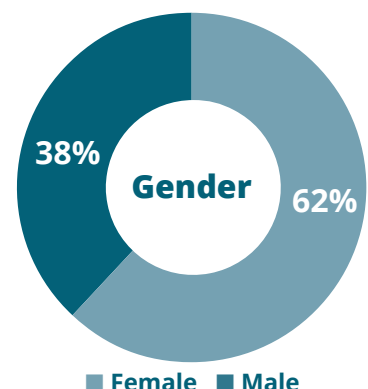
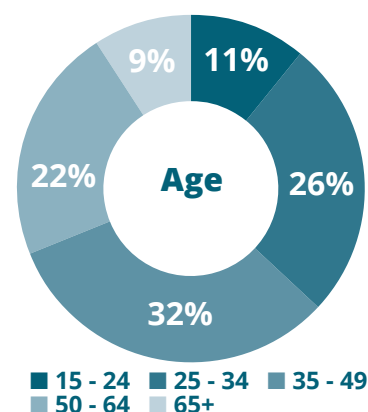
### 7,325 unique clients advised

This is a **11%** increase compared to the previous year.

### 27,694 problems dealt with

This is a **24%** increase compared to the previous year.

Citizens Advice Barnsley Stats:	15/16	14/15
Unique clients advised	7325	6581
Problems dealt with	27694	22269
<b>Main Problem Areas:</b>		
Debt	15555	12160
Benefits and Tax Credits	4724	3422
Housing	1156	1020
Employment	1120	1117
<b>Top 5 Debt Issues:</b>		
Council Tax Arrears	3500	2572
Debt Relief Order	1767	890
Unsecured Personal Loan Debt	1618	1594
Credit, Store and Charge Card Debt	913	967
Rent Arrears - LAs or ALMOs	683	595
<b>Top 5 Benefit Issues:</b>		
Housing Benefit	698	534
Working and Child Tax Credits	564	393
Employment Support Allowance	487	409
Personal Independence Payments	411	-
Council Tax Reduction	240	178
<b>Key Housing Issues:</b>		
Private Sector Rented Property	312	375
Local Authority Housing	155	94
Environmental and Neighbourhood	129	86
<b>Key Employment Issues:</b>		
Pay and Entitlements	203	215
Dismissal	160	136
Terms and Conditions of Employment	133	141



# Our Projects



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**Berneslai Homes:** Berneslai Home provides funding to pay a money advice worker to support vulnerable tenants with income maximisation, debt and money advice.

**Brighter Family Futures Project:** This project is funded by Big Lottery Reaching Communities and provides outreach advice to parents of children aged 11 or under.

**British Sign Language Drop-In:** Deaf clients who require the services of a British Sign Language interpreter can attend this weekly drop-in funded by Barnsley Council.

**Community Shop Goldthorpe:** Specialist debt advice for members of the Community Shop.

**Email and Webchat:** General advice delivered to members of the public via digital channels on all areas of law.

**Energy Best Deal/Extra:** Information and assistance on energy best deals and switching energy suppliers for savings and energy reduction.

**Legal Advice Apprenticeships:** We have recruited and trained several Level 2 and Level 3 Legal Advice Apprentices to deliver advice in Barnsley.

**Money Advice Service Debt Advice Project:** This project is funded by the Money Advice Service and delivers debt advice via face-to-face, telephone, email and webchat.

**Money Plan Financial Adviser:** Monthly drop-in providing specialist financial planning advice.

**North Area Council Outreach:** This is a joint project between Citizens Advice Barnsley and DIAL Barnsley funded by the North Area Council. Four outreaches are run every week for residents of the North Area Wards.

**North East Area Outreaches:** Monthly drop-in advice sessions funded by the Ward Alliances in Monk Bretton, Royston, Cudworth and Grimethorpe.

**Pension Wise:** Specialist weekly appointments provided by Citizens Advice Sheffield for those clients approaching retirement in relation to personal/private pensions and what options are available to those clients.

**Personal Budgeting Support (DWP/BMBC):** Generalist advice for clients in receipt of benefits to assist with barriers to employment. Referrals are received via BMBC.

**South Area Council Outreach:** This is a joint project between Citizens Advice Barnsley and BMBC Welfare Rights funded by the South Area Council. Four outreaches are run every week for residents of the South Area Wards.

# Ways to Access Advice



**We make sure that it's as easy as possible for people to access quality marked advice when they need it. Find out how to get in touch:**



## Telephone

If you want to talk to someone to get information or advice, you can call our Adviceline service on 03444 111 444 (you will be asked to input a landline number, if you don't have one please add 01226 770770). You'll speak to a trained assessor who'll talk to you about your enquiry to try and deal with your problems and help you to decide what to do. Phone lines are open Monday to Friday, from 10:00 to 16:00.



## Email

You can now access advice by email via our website. Visit <http://barnsleycab.org.uk/contact-us/>, fill in the short form with details of your issue, and a trained adviser will aim to answer your question within two working days.



## Webchat

This can be accessed via a digital link on Adviceguide <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

When advisers are available live webchat is offered, when all advisers are busy or the service is out-of-hours, clients are offered email advice.



## Face-to-Face

The majority of our face-to-face advice is delivered at outreach venues across the district, but we also run different drop-in sessions at the bureau. If you are Deaf and use British Sign Language (BSL), we run a drop-in session supported by a BSL interpreter every Wednesday from 10:00 – 12:00 noon. We also offer five additional specialist services by appointment.



## Online Information and Advice

Available on our website at <http://barnsleycab.org.uk/> for help and support on a range of problem areas.



# Our Clients

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Barnsley

## Client feedback

I really appreciate having access to this level of advice and understanding. I would like to see this service continue.



The adviser put my mind totally at ease. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for this help from CAB.



## Annual Client Survey Results

**95%**

of clients were satisfied with the overall level of service.

**98%**

of clients found the information that they had been given was easy to understand.

**98%**

of clients felt that they were treated fairly by the bureau at all times.

**88%**

of clients found it easy to access the service.

**100%**

of clients who visited the bureau in person, found the reception welcoming.

**98%**

of clients would use the service again.



**98%**

of clients would recommend us to someone else if they required advice or legal help.



# Our Team

**citizens  
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**Barnsley**

Now I'm retired I like to volunteer so I feel like I am still contributing. I get the satisfaction of helping those who are living with difficulties.

Knowing my help made a client happy and left them with peace of mind is so rewarding.

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## **Tony Marsden**

Volunteer Adviser

As a trustee and a member of the Board, I have found my involvement with the strategic direction of the Bureau very rewarding, as you see the changes you have been involved with come to fruition, showing a positive effect on the wellbeing of the people who live in Barnsley and the surrounding areas.

Why not contact us for a chat and see how you can become involved?

Being an adviser at Barnsley CAB is a very varied job because we now give advice via face-to-face drop-in and appointments, telephone, email and webchat. We see a lot of vulnerable people, people with mental health issues and language difficulties. We're a very good team, working together and picking each other's brains when we need help! Our admin staff are a really important part of the team and we'd be lost without them. It's really rewarding being able to help clients out of their tricky situations and receiving a thank you from a client you've helped gives a real boost.

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## **Sue Yip**

Debt Adviser

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## **Roger Smith**

Trustee



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## Volunteering

Our service wouldn't be the same without the involvement of volunteers.

Volunteers operate in a variety of different roles, and last year our team of 28 contributed 11,232 hours of work to the bureau - that's the equivalent of 6 full time staff. The annual value of the work done by our volunteers is estimated as over £167,386!

### Could you be our next volunteer?

We have vacancies for receptionists, administrators, money coach advisers, trainee gateway assessors, trustees... Every volunteering role involves full training and ongoing support and supervision, and we pay your travel expenses, so don't worry about the cost of commuting!

If you're interested in volunteering with us, please get in touch! We'll be glad to hear from you.

## Donating

We are a local independent charity and we're here to support people when they don't know where else to turn... Making a donation can make a real difference to the life of someone who needs our help.

### How can I donate?

- A REGULAR DONATION: This can be done by clicking the Donate button on our website.
- GIFT AID: If you are a UK tax payer, 25% can be added to your donation by agreeing to Gift Aid it, you'll find details of how to do this at mydonate.
- A ONE OFF DONATION: You can make a one off donation as an individual or from a fundraising event. Simply send a cheque to our office address for the attention of our Chief Executive.
- TEXT: You can make donations of up to £10 by texting BCAB12 and either £1, £2, £3, £4, £5 or £10 to 70070 to make a donation (e.g. BCAB12£5). The text message is free and all of the donation will be passed to us. The value of the donation will be taken from your phone credit balance or be added to your next bill.

## At 31st March 2016

### CAB Trustees

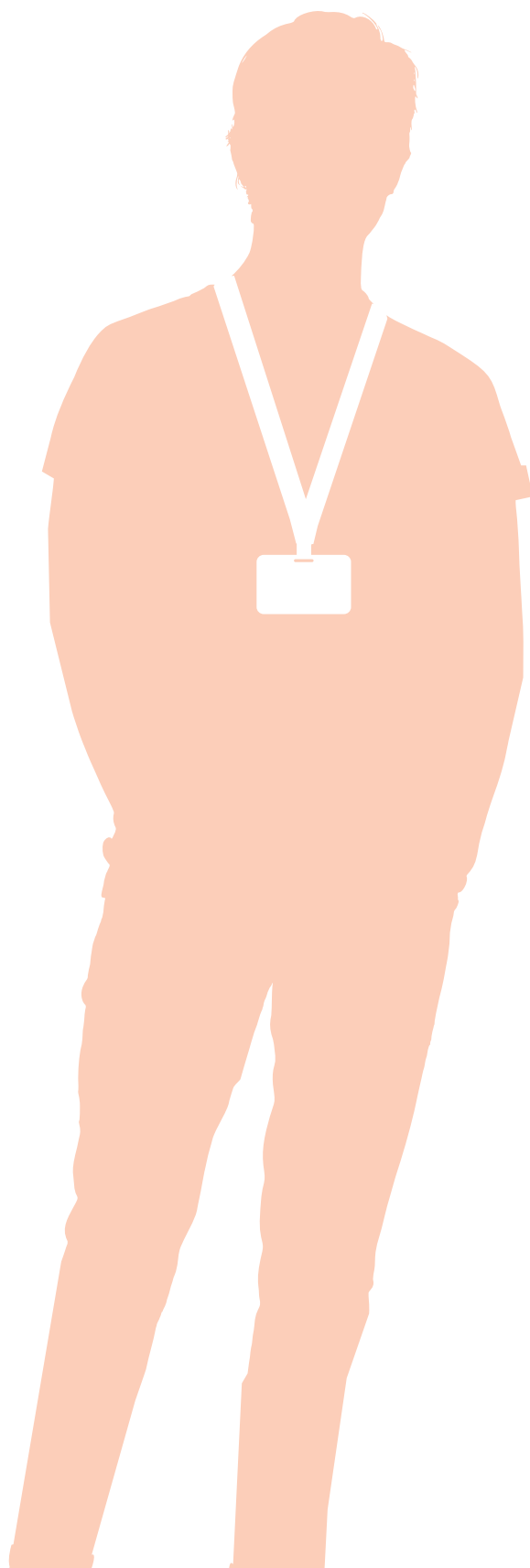
Chair: Roger Smith  
Vice Chair: Frank Parnham  
Treasurer: Chris Sykes  
Linda Burgess  
Jan Eldred  
Simon Frow  
Cllr Joe Hayward  
Adam Leece  
Jack Johnson  
Alan Methley  
Rev Mick Neal

### Paid Staff

David Andy  
Maggie Bonser  
Nigel Bonser  
Rachel Burton  
James Cameron  
Jo Clark  
Nigel Cole  
Helen Corker  
Hannah Cripps  
Elizabeth Evans  
Steven Fox  
Ryoko Fujiya  
Judith Hickman  
Simon Hickson  
Lauren Matthews  
Julie Medford  
Loren Poole  
Lyn Ross  
Lyndsey Saunders  
Laura Smith  
Emily-Jane Stott  
Marilyn Toseland  
Debbie Wilson  
Sue Yip  
Zoe Ellis-Georgiou

### Volunteers

Oyeronke Adeleke  
Sandra Barnes  
Sheila Barnes  
Danny Barraclough  
Derek Bragg  
Kathy Cunningham  
Janet Gillot  
Ginny Hill  
Shaun Johnson  
James Lawton  
Zainab Mamman-Daura  
Tony Marsden  
Ellie Matthewman  
Doug McNichol  
Nomcebo Ngwenya  
Susan Norwood  
Sarah O'Hanlon  
Rob Pearson  
Andrea Rhodes  
Jayne Robinson  
Mike Senior  
Michael Shaw  
Karen Smales  
Tracy Thistlewood  
Sheila Thurling  
Avril Tonge  
John Vaines  
Zubair Warraich



## Stay in touch



**Twitter:**  
@BarnsleyCAB



**Facebook:**  
barnsleycab



**Website:**  
barnsleycab.org.uk



**Advice Line:**  
03444 111 444

## Thanks to our funders



**South Area Council  
North Area Council  
Cudworth Ward Alliance**

**Monk Bretton Ward Alliance  
North East Ward Alliance  
Royston Ward Alliance**

**Flexible Support Fund/DWP**

### **Barnsley and District Citizens Advice Bureau**

1st Floor, Wellington House, 36 Wellington Street, Barnsley S70 1WA

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Company Limited by Guarantee Reg. Number: 4649873

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN: 617498

Registered office as above

