

**citizens
advice**

Clients helped by
Citizens Advice Purbeck*
April 2018 to March 2019



1,383 people asked us for advice



with **6,512** issues



2,920 benefit issues



1,114 debt issues



480 housing issues



36% of all activity was face to face advice



£685,643 income gained



£298,692 gained in debts written off

49% clients disabled or have long term condition, **28%** of whom had a mental health problem



44 volunteers with an estimated value of **£175,106**

*Provisional statistics for 2018-19

CITIZENS ADVICE PURBECK SUMMARY IMPACT REPORT 2018-19

2018-19

2018-19 was a busy year for us with demand for our advice remaining very high, and client issues becoming more and more complex. Our workforce of 14 paid staff and 44 volunteers continued to provide a high quality advice service which responded to the individual needs of our clients – from providing a single piece of information to in-depth, complicated and lengthy casework. Our audit from the national Citizens Advice office demonstrated the quality of our organisation with a maximum 5 out of 5 for all 8 areas of work.

We continued to respond to the rural nature of our geographical area by providing face to face advice in our two main offices in Wareham and Swanage, our outreaches in Upton, Bovington and Lytchett Matravers, and in libraries in Wareham and Swanage. Many of our clients are rurally isolated and unable to access our office and outreach locations. We therefore provide home visits wherever possible.

In addition, we provided telephone advice, Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm, as part of the Dorset Adviceline, manned by staff from our organisation and other local Citizens Advice across Dorset according to a rota system.

We are particularly proud of our projects (funded separately from our core service). The Lloyds Foundation funds us to provide specialist support to vulnerable clients at risk of homelessness and Purbeck District Council to provide support to vulnerable clients under the Homelessness Reduction Bill. We have developed several projects working in schools and youth clubs, delivering budgeting and independent living skills to young people. We receive funding to deliver specialist energy advice and training to consumers and frontline workers. Additional funding provides specialist advice on specific subject areas such as welfare benefits, income maximisation and debt.

2019-20 and beyond

We cover a geographical area of 404 km² and serving a population of around 46,340 people.

We face the challenge of balancing our resources to both meet the needs of a rural population with limited access to services with the significant needs arising from areas of social deprivation in our urban residents.

We look forward to two new exciting projects – supporting vulnerable families in Dorset under the Energy Redress Fund, building resilience and reducing fuel poverty. Supporting local Citizens Advice across Dorset to identify and help people register on the Priority Services Register whilst continuing to manage the increasing demand for help with applying for Universal Credit and managing ongoing claims.

We are also keen to develop and expand the work we are doing with young people across the Dorset Council area.