



BY EMAIL

December 2016

Dear Colleague

Citizens Advice Service in Stratford District

I am writing to give you an update on the Citizens Advice service in Stratford District and to ask for your continued support.

- **Our service is free, confidential, impartial and non-judgemental**
- **Our motto is, “Whoever you are, whatever the problem”**
- **Our clients live in all parts of the District, and come from all backgrounds**
- **We are a local charity, and dependent on local funding and we need our local communities to invest in our service**
- **In 2015/16 we dealt with 6,300 new enquiries, which spanned 23,000 issues**

I attach our Annual Review for 2015/16, and also some data relating to your locality. I do hope you find this informative, and if you would like any further information please do let me know. We also have a selection of leaflets about our service – again, just ask if you would like any of these.

Your Citizens Advice service helps people to resolve their problems. This is what we are all about. It's not until you need our service, or someone you know gets into difficulties, that you get to see the range and depth of how we help people. Everyone, at some time, will experience problems. Life events such as illness, bereavement, loss of a job, retirement, can all bring changes and take people into a realm of challenges that can be hard to tackle alone. Even in our affluent and attractive district there are people who are disadvantaged or isolated, who need our help.

We are here for everyone in the District. Our Ward statistics show that we are reaching people from all across the District, but there is always more to do to get across the message of what we provide, and how people can access our help.

Anyone can get our help via:

- Face to face drop ins and appointments at our main office in Meer Street, Stratford upon Avon
- Outreach appointments at Alcester, Bidford, Lighthorne Heath, Shipston, Southam, Studley and Wellesbourne
- Home visits
- By phone, email, or our website www.stratforduponavoncab.org.uk

The range of help we give is unique. We can help with any issue, for anyone, spanning debt and employment to consumer and housing, and everything in between. Some issues are quite small and quickly dealt with, but much of our work spans several issues over a series of appointments, providing holistic help.

Our work covers:

- Debt
- Welfare benefits
- Housing
- Employment
- Relationships
- Consumer issues
- Immigration

Future plans for our service. In these changing times we recognise that we need to keep evolving to maintain our vibrant and vital service. To that end we are exploring the merits of a merger with Citizens Advice in Warwick District and we have been working together, sharing best practice and resources and delivering joint services. Since July of this year, the Manager of Warwick District Citizens Advice has also been our manager. This has improved our understanding of the services we can provide together. We are supported in the merger work by the County Council.

The essential purpose of the merger planning is to maintain and develop our service. The aim of growing in this way is to enable us to access more opportunities and help more clients. Our focus on client needs and the wide spread of our District will be maintained, and this is where we need your help.

Please promote our service in your area – we can provide you with leaflets and information. There is always more we need to do to get the message out about our vital service.

What our clients say

“You put people at ease and explain everything in an easy, simple manner”

“Two months ago my life was in crisis. Now I have a more settled income, my debts are being rescheduled and now I can see a way forward.”

“Cannot imagine what I would have done without your help”

Any donation your Parish Council is able to make to our service would be gratefully received and put to good use in helping clients for whom the Citizens Advice service may be the only thing standing between them and despair.

If I can help with any further information, please do contact me.

Yours sincerely

Yvonne Hunter
Chair