

**citizens
advice**

Shropshire

Impact report 2024 - 25

86 years of
community advice
for Shropshire
residents



Fletcher House, 15 College Hill, Shrewsbury SY1 1LY

Charity registration number 1085220. Company limited by guarantee.
Registered number 4099352 England,
Authorised and regulated by The Financial Conduct Authority - FRN: 617564.

The difference we make

Citizens Advice has had a community presence in Shropshire since 1939 delivering high quality advice and information services across the County.

At Citizens Advice, we believe no one should have to face problems without good quality, independent advice.

Last year, we supported 9,346 unique clients with 39,261 issues and 9,957 cases and delivered services across 12 community venues in foodbanks, GP surgeries, and



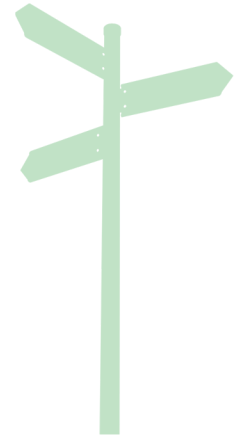
79% of our clients are working age (3% under 25) and 22% of pensionable age

We helped individuals increase their income by a total of **£5.3 million**

54% were managing a disability or long term health condition

66% of issues were Welfare Benefit related, especially relating to disability benefits including Personal Independence Payments, Attendance Allowance, Pension Credit & Employment and Support Allowance.

Other problems resolved include: Employment, Housing, Relationship & Family, Utilities (help with fuel debt) Charitable Support & Foodbanks, Consumer, Health & Community Care, Travel & Transport



We give people the knowledge and the confidence they need to overcome their problems. We help people find their way through complicated processes and difficult situations they may never have faced before. With the right information and support, people can make the best choices for themselves.

How we help

Pauls* story:

Paul, a man in his late fifties, lives in a private rented property. He had been very unwell following an accident several years ago and a recent heart attack. Because of his health, Paul was also severely depressed. He was unable to work and his only income was Universal Credit (UC) with no housing costs included. He tried applying for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) but was unsuccessful.

Paul was finding it difficult to make ends meet. He tried cutting down on expenditure and used the food bank for essentials. Paul got into rent arrears of £3,200. His landlord was putting pressure on Paul to pay off the arrears or face eviction and become homeless. He was happy in the property and wanted to stay. Paul didn't know he could claim housing costs through Universal Credit. Because of this, his application for Discretionary Housing Payment was turned down.

Our debt adviser helped Paul contact DWP to add housing costs to his UC award and asked for housing costs to go directly to the landlord from now on. As the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) did not backdate the housing costs we supported Paul to apply to Local Support and Prevention Fund to clear the arrears so Paul could stay in the property.

Our community adviser supported Paul with a PIP appeal. Paul was awarded PIP daily living component at an enhanced rate £101.75 a week and the mobility component at a standard rate £26.90 a week. He also received backdated payment of £6,600.

As Paul scored 10 points for mobility, he was now automatically entitled to a Blue Badge for parking. Our community adviser has completed the online Blue Badge application on behalf of Paul.

Paul was very relieved he will be able to stay in the house he loves so much. He was over the moon with the outcome of the PIP appeal. He now has extra money to pay for essentials. Paul thanked the advisers for their support and said he couldn't have done this without them.



* name changed to protect identity

Client Outcomes

“Feeling lost stressed very low and needed help, the adviser ... helped so much, although my difficulty is still ongoing I can't thank CA enough for just being there in a real desperate time”

91% of clients scored top marks when rating their overall experience of Citizens Advice Shropshire

- 89% of positive responses would recommend the service to their friends and family
- 90% said we had helped them find a way forward with their queries
 - 34% had their problem resolved completely
 - 28% had their problem mostly resolved
 - 25% had their problem partly resolved.
- 89% said they could not have resolved their problem without Citizens Advice Shropshire
- 52% felt a great deal less stressed, depressed or anxious and 39% commented they felt somewhat or a little less stressed.
- 61% had felt that their physical health has been impacted in a positive way



Source: Client comments

John is 64 years of age. Alongside his physical disabilities including, osteoarthritis of knees, ankles and hips, Asthma, COPD & type 2 diabetes, John also has suffered with complex mental health issues since 1983, alongside severe anxiety and depression.

John was referred to our Community Adviser via his GP for support and advice around his money issues, following the death of his mum for whom he was a carer.

As John had been unable to deal with the financial issues following his mum's death, he had built up personal debt, benefit overpayments and rent arrears, was having to pay back his mum's care needs costs to Shropshire Council. Client was accessing the Foodbank for food.

We had several appointments with the client following the referral. He needed a full benefit check to put in new benefits following losing his Carers Allowance. We supported the client with applications for Employment & Support Allowance, Personal Independence Payments, Housing Benefits and Council Tax Support.

We also referred him to our in-house Money Advice Team who supported John with his debt issues, sorting out what debt he was liable for and which were his mum's and not his responsibility to pay back.

As John had mental health issues he was eligible for 'Breathing Space' a debt respite scheme for an unlimited time to help him stabilise his financial wellbeing. We worked with the health professionals and also referred the client to Samaritans and for bereavement support.

During these appointments the client would often break down and stated that whilst he was so grateful for our support he did not know what he had to live for anymore. However, everything is now in place, client is in a stable position financially and with his housing and his wellbeing much improved.

Client wished to have on his case file how grateful he is for our support as he was suicidal and without our support did not think he would have been able to continue. Now client has the benefits in place, he stated he is going to have his hair cut and is now able to afford dentures as his teeth are in a poor state.

Other outcomes...

We can put a financial value on our role in:

- keeping people in employment or helping them back to work
- preventing housing evictions and statutory homelessness
- reducing the demand for mental health and GP services

Impact of our Debt Advice

£625,940 in fiscal benefits

Wider Wellbeing Impact is £20,724,011 in improved emotional wellbeing, family relationships, positive functioning

Savings to Shropshire Council

£185,215: Preventing homelessness and housing evictions
£19,769: Council tax arrears repayment schedules

Savings to the NHS

£544,902: Reduced use of health services
£79,058: Keeping people in work
Total: £623,960

Other Government Departments

£1,238,581: DWP (keeping people in work)
£17,958: Criminal Justice System (preventing evictions)
£433,339: Housing Providers

**In 2024/25, every £1 invested in
Citizens Advice Shropshire
generated**

£2.15 in fiscal value

£22.42 in public value

£15.51 to the people we help

Our Total Value to Society

Fiscal value: £2,499,053

Public value: £26,092,875

Value to people helped: £18,048,503

Contact us



Adviceline: **0808 278 7894**

Text relay: **18001 0800 144 8884**

For general enquires (not advice):
contact@cabshropshire.org.uk

For more detailed information about
Citizens Advice Shropshire go to
www.cabshropshire.org.uk

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