

Our impact in 2020-2021

The difference we make

Citizens Advice

**Torrige, North, Mid & West
Devon**



**citizens
advice**

**Torrige, North,
Mid & West Devon**

We are Citizens Advice Torridge, North, Mid & West Devon

Citizens Advice Torridge, North, Mid and West Devon (TNMWD) has been part of the local community in one form or another since 1940. Our service is an independent charity. Our offices in the area are located in Barnstaple, Bideford, Ilfracombe, South Molton, Torrington, Tiverton, Cullompton, Crediton, Okehampton and Tavistock.

Citizens Advice Torridge, North, Mid and West Devon helps people to solve their problems. Our service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.



Our impact in 2020-2021

We help people with a range of problems including issues with housing, debt, benefits, employment, relationships and consumer rights. Sometimes people have more than one issue that they need help with.



In 2020-2021 we
helped **13,822**
clients across the
region



In 2020-2021 we
advised on **30,501**
issues



In 2020-2021 **58%**
of advice was
related to welfare
benefits and debt

In 2020-2021
a staggering **£7,674,776** of income gain
was awarded.

How we help

The Covid-19 pandemic significantly altered how our service operates and will continue to present challenges for some time to come.. Whereas before there was an emphasis on face to face delivery, the requirement to shift advice delivery to remote means at the start of the first lockdown proved to be beneficial and we are looking at long-term, agile ways to continue a blended delivery approach.

This period also saw a reduction in the number of our volunteers as the situation forced people to reassess their lives but we maintained a programme of recruitment and training throughout and this is ongoing.



1%
face-to-face

For reasons outlined above



61%
by telephone

With advisers and volunteers working from home we upgraded our telephone systems so that individuals did not have to use their private telephones to conduct their work.



19%
by webchat
and email

This has been a crucial means of communicating with our Clients throughout the pandemic



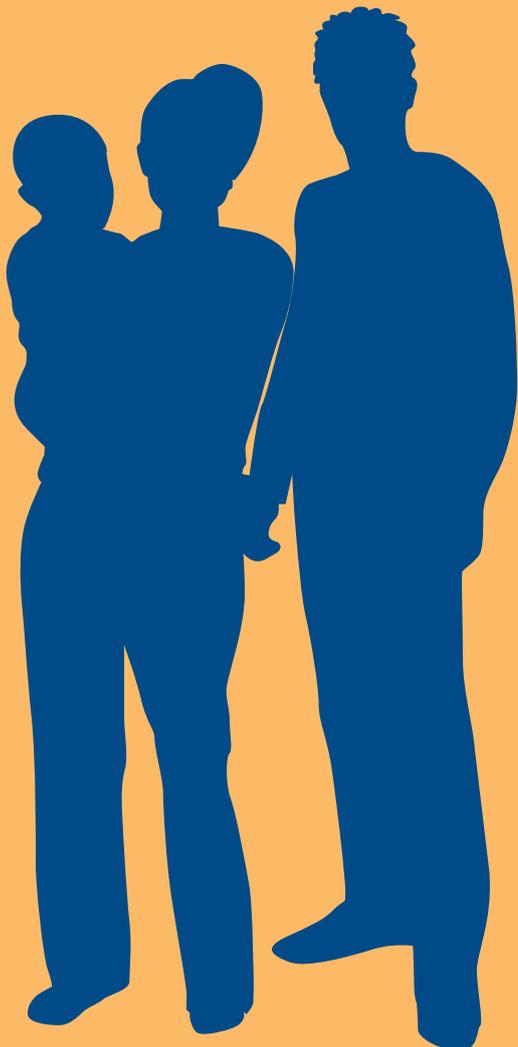
19%
by letters in
the post

We also still received 19% of our inquiries through the post as not everyone has access to other means of contacting us.

Case Study

This is just one example of how we helped people last year.

Overall we helped **13,822** people and dealt with **30,501** different issues.



Our Client had a seven year old son with learning difficulties who was awaiting assessment for Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The Client suffered with depression and anxiety and did not work due to long term ill-health. His wife did not work either and whilst the couple received Universal Credit (UC) and Child Benefit they also had some debts.

The Government had introduced a weekly uplift of £20 in Universal Credit to help during the pandemic but this took our Client's benefits to a level where the benefit cap applied and so the UC was reduced by £63.17 per month.

Our Quids for Kids Caseworker helped our Client to make a claim for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in respect of his son. This claim was successful and resulted in a payment of £60 per week care component and a mobility component of £23.70 per week. As families in receipt of DLA are exempt from the benefit cap, the UC payment was restored to its full level and an additional amount of £128.89 per month was added in respect of disabled child element. Our Client's wife was also advised that she could claim Carer's Allowance of £67.70 per week in respect of the care she gave to her son. This all amounted to an annual uplift of **£10,459.44**.

This significant improvement in the family's finances even helped them to reduce their debts.

The Client described the help he had received as 'a lifesaver.'

Our advice is effective

Problems don't happen in isolation and can have a severe consequences. Solving them stops these situations escalating.



79%
said their problem was solved following advice



90.7%
said we helped them find a way forward

Why fixing problems matter

If left unsolved, problems don't just affect the individual – they affect this community. Solving them creates considerable value to society.

A national survey of over 4,000 people who had used CA between September and December 2020 found that as a result of the help they received:-

6 in 10 felt less stressed, depressed or anxious
6 in 10 found it easier to manage day to day
Around **4 in 10** had more money or better control of their finances

What Our Clients say about us



I was very impressed at the professionalism and knowledge across different areas the person I spoke to had. As a result I applied for Carer's Allowance which I am now in receipt of and didn't know about before contacting CA. I am very grateful.



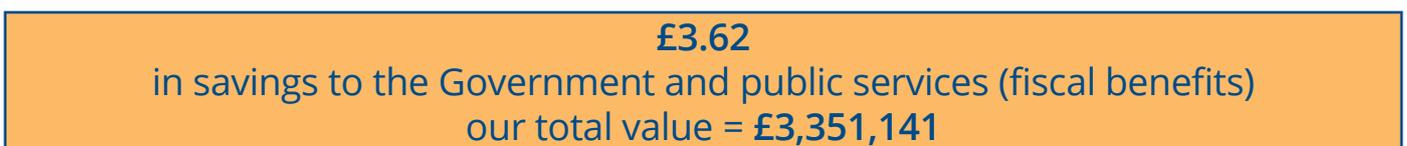
I am so grateful for the help I received from CA. Besides the friendly support, the professionalism in working towards a resolution to otherwise insurmountable problems has been a game changer.



I found it helpful to have help with how to approach my problem and to make a clear plan so I could stop myself overthinking and worrying so much.

Our value to society

For every £1 invested in our service in 2020-2021, we generated:



It's impossible to put a financial value on everything we do – but where we can, we have. We've used a Treasury-approved model to do this.

From our robust management information, we've also separately considered the financial benefits to the people we help.

Our value to this community

**Our total value
to our
community is**

£16,272,011

In 2020-2021 for every **£1** invested in our service we generated **£27.23** in value to people we help.

In cases where we helped a client with a Benefits Welfare or Debt issue:-

- On average we helped each client to make an income gain of **£6,353**
- On average we helped each client to have **£12,694** of debt written off

Citizens Advice helps people find a way forward.

We provide free, confidential and independent advice to help people overcome their problems. We are a voice for our clients and consumers on the issues that matter to them.

We value diversity, champion equality, and challenge discrimination and harassment.

We're here for everyone.

citizensadvice.org.uk



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Registered charity number 279057.