

# InSight



## WAKEFIELD DISTRICT CAB NEWS

[www.wakefielddistrictcab.co.uk](http://www.wakefielddistrictcab.co.uk)

issue 46

### **Charity brand attributes research 2009**

A nationally representative sample of 2,037 adults in Britain was asked to choose the adjectives that they thought described their 'ideal' charity. The panel then assessed each of 22 charities, including Citizens Advice, against these characteristics.

The other charities involved were: Alzheimer's Society, Barnado's, British Heart Foundation, Cancerbackup, Cancer Research UK, Childline, Crisis, English Heritage, Girl Guiding UK, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie, National Trust, NSPCC, Oxfam, RNIB, RNID, RSPCA, Salvation Army, Shelter, The Scout Association.

### **Key findings from this research include:**

- Out of 22 national charities, the Citizens Advice service is ranked by the general public as being the most helpful, approachable, informative, reputable and fair.
- 77 per cent of people trust the Citizens Advice service to provide advice that is truly independent and impartial.
- Half the population describes the Citizens Advice service as helpful and informative.
- The Citizens Advice service exceeds the public's perception of the 'ideal' charity in being helpful, approachable, informative and practical.

Full findings can be found on CABlink.

### **Goodbye Kardine, hello Sarah.....**

Our GP project worker Kardine Williams left at the end the beginning of September to continue her legal studies at university. Good luck to Kardine and thanks for her exceptional work in getting this pilot off the ground. We were fortunate to be able to recruit a volunteer adviser, Sarah Kirkham, to the post at the end of August. Sarah has slotted in really well to the role and we should find out before Christmas if the project will be rolled out.

## **Bureaux & Outreaches**

We think that the CLAS specification will ask us to provide Generalist, triage and some specialist services in Wakefield, Pontefract, Castleford and Hemsworth as a minimum. With this in mind we have started making some plans:

- Liz has been meeting with architects re making improvements to the Age Concern rooms (if we take them on) to improve reception, disabled access and the telephone room.
- We have started planning for a move from South Elmsall to Hemsworth. The South Elmsall bureau will close at the end of January.
- We have been offered space at the new Hemsworth Community Centre in June. Until then we will be using a room at Hemsworth Town Hall
- Normanton & Featherstone outreaches are running well and we are seeing approximately 16 clients per month (one morning per week.)
- Liz is in the process of submitting a bid for an outreach worker to work in Hemsworth and Castleford under the W Yorks Rural Access to Services Fund (Metro.)

## **Generalist Service**

### **Numbers of clients accessing the service in August 2009**

<b>Client Advice Contact Type</b>	
Assisted information	<b>245</b>
Full advice	<b>269</b>
Gateway	<b>941</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1455</b>

### **Numbers of Clients accessing the service in September 2009**

<b>Client Advice Contact Type</b>	
Assisted information	<b>315</b>
Full advice	<b>240</b>
Gateway	<b>1159</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1714</b>

A draft Volunteers' Handbook has now been produced and copies have been circulated for comments. It is very comprehensive and written by existing volunteers with new volunteers in mind, based on their own experience.

## **Projects & Partnerships News**

Our partnerships with Kirklees Law Centre and Switalskis Solicitors are working excellently. Unfortunately, due to staffing issues at the Springs Advice Centre, their housing advice outreach at our Pontefract office has been suspended until the end of the year. The Springs hopes to reinstate the service in the new year depending on staff numbers.

## **CRT Income maximization project**

This started on 1 May. It is being delivered from two outreaches, one in Eastmoor and one in Castleford, as well as from our three bureaux. Three appointments are offered at each session.

**The total number of clients seen up to the end of September is 196**

**The total amount of extra annual benefits identified is £415, 785.66**

We have received extra funding from CRT as another Wakefield provider has been unable to spend its share. The money has to be spent by 31 March (although we will try to get continuation funding) but it has enabled us to employ the worker on a full-time basis and offer services at Featherstone and Hemsworth in addition to current locations.

## **MONEY ADVICE UNIT**

### **Debt Relief Orders**

These orders were introduced in April 2009. Applications can only be submitted by approved personnel and we are pleased to say that we have 5 approved intermediaries in bureau who can assist and complete these applications. No other agency in the district is able to do so, therefore demand for this arm of our service continues to grow.

Mandy Larder, Julie McCann, Sasha Limbert , Hajra Bulbulia and Chris Utley, all approved intermediaries, have successfully submitted and had approved 30 applications to date, with a further 2 pending.

On the face of it the eligibility is as follows:

- Qualifying debts of no more than £15,000
- Available income of less than £50.00 per month
- No asset of more than £300

The only excluded debts are Magistrates Court Fines, Student Loans, Child Support/maintenance and obligations that have arisen out of Criminal Confiscation Orders.

However, it is important that an in depth assessment is done before an individual can proceed with this insolvency option. All our clients receive a full holistic debt advice appointment so that this and other options that may be appropriate are fully examined and the implications of taking those actions are assessed for that individual client.

## External Referrals

As the only holistic debt advice provider in the district, our debt service is always in great demand. Clients access our debt advice service via our general gateway service but also through external partnership working.

Since April 2009 the following agencies have made direct referrals to the debt team:

WDH (debt visiting team and access point staff)	48
Open Door	7
The Springs (Debt Advice & DRO's)	11
Social/Family Services	4

Our external partnership working continues to grow.

## Volunteer Training

### Recruitment

A new 'modular' type training programme will be introduced by CitA from April 2010; more on this in future newsletters. The 'Straight to Gateway' training programme is also currently being piloted in parts of the country, prior to being rolled out nationally. We are not part of this programme but Citizens Advice Training team have agreed to give us the pilot programme for us to use early as we need to boost our Gateway Advisers as soon as possible in preparation for a future CLAS and our planned move to Gateway Assessments for all clients who visit or call the bureau.

This straight to gateway training will start in early January, initially for 8 of our existing and Information Providers. The next group of trainees on the Straight to Gateway training programme will start in March 2010 and will consist of new volunteers with some more of our existing Information Providers.

### **The West Yorkshire CAB NVQ Legal Advice Pilot**

In conjunction with the 'Advice Leeds' Project and Leeds and Chapeltown CABs , Wakefield CAB is now involved in the above NVQ pilot Project. The project is being funded by 'Yorkshire Forward'. The amount of funding, to be shared amongst all the above partners is £15,000.

Running from September 2009 until August 2010 the NVQ pilot project will enable the participating CABx to recruit, train and accredit up to 30 trainee advice workers in Legal Advice work, enabling them to achieve an Open University NVQ in Legal Advice at either Level 2 or 3. *Wakefield CAB's target is to train 15 of these 30 volunteers.*

### **The Objectives of the project are to:**

- Facilitate the training and accreditation of a group of NVQ Assessor / verifiers who will also act as tutors to new cohorts of NVQ Legal Advice trainees ie it will pay for training for Pete and Judith to train as NVQ Assessors and for one of them to train as an internal NVQ Verifier.

- Facilitate the recruitment, training and accreditation of a cohort of trainee advice workers who will participate in piloting a new NVQ in Legal Advice qualification.
- Place West Yorkshire CABx *including Wakefield CAB* at the leading edge of training in the Legal Advice area.
- Enable West Yorkshire CABx to share their expertise and experience with other CABx across England and Wales who may also wish to introduce accreditation into CAB training programmes.
- It is expected that the first candidates should be able to achieve accreditation by the summer of 2010.

## **AGM**

The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary AGM in the Town Hall on 13<sup>th</sup> October was extremely well attended and hopefully enjoyed by all. The meeting was informative and entertaining, especially the old film about the early days of CAB, and the talk by local writer and broadcaster Ian Clayton. Lunch was good too!

After the AGM, the trustees met and unanimously agreed the following appointments:

Sandra Cheseldine – Chair  
Clare Maguire - Vice Chair  
Stephen Flicker - Finance Director

It was also proposed and unanimously agreed that Douglas Dale be co-opted as a Trustee

Stuart B Lodge and Co were appointed as Auditors

## **Other News**

### **CHRISTMAS PARTY**

A volunteer has donated a sum of money once again to hold a party for all staff and volunteers at the Wakefield bureau on Friday 18 December from around 3.00pm. All refreshments free and everyone welcome. Please let Diane know if you are coming so that we have a rough idea of numbers.

### **TRUSTEE CONFERENCE**

Sandra will be attending the forthcoming Trustee conference in Leeds on 20-21 November. If any other Trustee also wishes to attend there are full details on Cablink. Sandra would welcome the company!

## **CAB BABIES**

Sasha is due to start maternity leave on the 14<sup>th</sup> December and will probably have a little Sasha or Bob by the time I write the next Insight – good luck Sasha, we will miss you!!

Congratulations to Bryn and Becky on the birth of Stanley who has been cooed over by most of the district already.

**This newsletter is produced by Wakefield District Citizens Advice Bureau. It comes out bi-monthly. Please tell us what you think of the newsletter and our service. All suggestions are welcome.**

**All comments to Liz Halliday, Chief Executive on 01924 378063 or email on [lizhalliday@wakefielddistrictcab.co.uk](mailto:lizhalliday@wakefielddistrictcab.co.uk)**