

# InSight



## WAKEFIELD DISTRICT CAB NEWS

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

issue 54

### PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CAB NETWORK

CITa is proposing major changes to the network of bureaux over the next few months. The proposals are open for consultation and the consultation document can be found on CABlink. All staff and volunteers should read and respond if they have comments to make – the consultation period closes on 20<sup>th</sup> June.

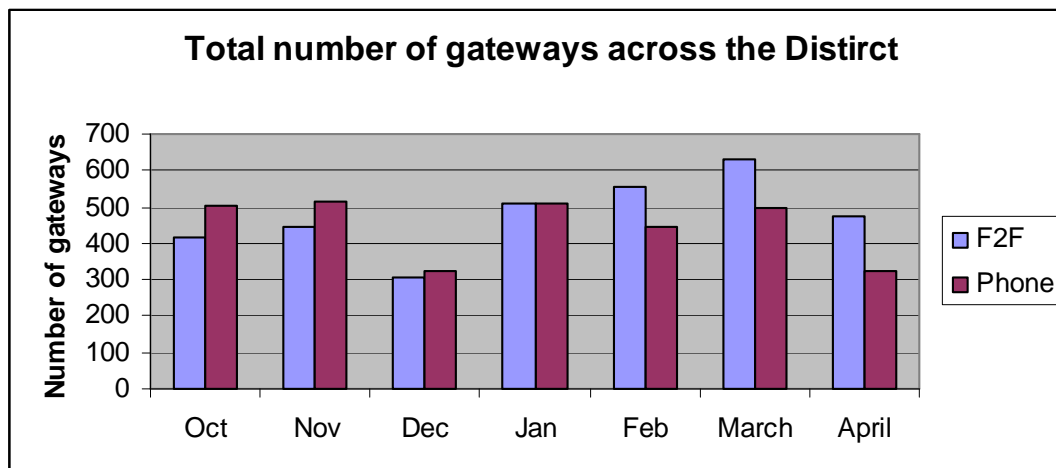
### PREMISES UPDATE

Structural repairs to the cellar at King Street and refurbishment of the former Age Concern rooms are now well under way; much quicker than expected after the long wait and the builders hope to finish in a couple of weeks! There is still a lot to sort out, not least the positioning of the new substation and reconfiguring the parking to ensure disabled clients and volunteers have good access.

We will be having a celebration when the new rooms are completed.

### WAKEFIELD DISTRICT CLAS

At generalist level CLAS targets are being exceeded. Clients receive a Gateway on the day they present and the vast majority of those needing a further appointment are seen within 2 days. The number of clients not attending their appointments decreased in April



## **Outreaches:**

All the outreaches remain busy. The Hemsworth outreach has now moved to the Hemsworth library and as it is located next to the bus station in the middle of Hemsworth we expect the numbers of clients attending the outreach to increase.

Many outreaches are now starting to introduce a charge for rooms which has been a challenge to the CLAS budget.

## **Specialist clinics:**

- Solicitors Halliday Reeves are now holding a weekly immigration clinic at the Wakefield office on a Tuesday.
- Switalskis are holding a welfare rights clinic in the Pontefract office on a Wednesday. This is in addition to the housing clinics at Pontefract on Wednesdays and Fridays.

## **Specialist referrals:**

Referrals to Switalskis have increased significantly over the last two months particularly in welfare rights and employment which is now exceeding target.

During the first 6 months of the CLAS contract the CAB specialist debt team has achieved 292 new matter starts against a target of 308 and expects to fully achieve targets over the course of the year. The vast majority are offered within the 10 day time frame. Client non attendance continues to be the biggest challenge to this service, averaging 19% over March and April.

## **Social Policy**

### **The main issues for March & April were:**

- ESA clients scoring zero points at medical assessments.
- Poor administration of benefits causing hardship for clients
- Parking fines
- Collection agencies not responding to CAB letters
- Employers trying to avoid paying redundancy.

## **PROJECTS UPDATE**

- **CRT Income Maximization project.** The funding for this project was due to end on the 31<sup>st</sup> March but was extended at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour for a further year. This means we can retain our Income Maximisation Worker, Ellen. It will also fund extra ASS hours and Jane is to lead a team of volunteer Disability Benefits Assistants.
- **GP Surgeries** have been funded for another year. All the GP outreaches are busy and are usually booked up a week in advance. The two outreach workers, Sue and Michelle, have developed a very good working relationship with all the health care professionals at the surgeries. They are also gathering information which will enable us to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of the service on clients' health and wellbeing.

- **F2F Debt Awareness Project.** We have now signed the new contract for this project; we continue to work under the old FIF targets which are 225 new clients per quarter and which we have always achieved.

#### **Funding for several projects ended on 31 March:**

- **Lloyds TSB Welfare rights project.** This wonderful project delivered by Carol which met the needs of many of our most vulnerable clients with very complex needs has now ended. So many clients have asked us to thank Carol. We wish her well and a swift recovery from her recent operation.
- **Additional Hours project/Financial Inclusion Fund gateway assessors pilot.** The funded Gateway Assessors have now finished. Thanks to both Julie and Yim. Yim has moved to another role and Julie is continuing to volunteer so it is not goodbye!
- **Metro Rural Outreach Project.** We have been able to continue the funding of an Outreach Worker; a job shared by Michelle and Yim. Outreaches are an important method of meeting client need across the district and the role of outreach worker is often unpopular with volunteers as it can be quite isolated.
- **Future Jobs Fund.** This was used to fund our Receptionist, Nikki. She is a great loss to the bureau but is now volunteering for us. Good luck to Nikki for the future.

#### **External Referrals to the Money Advice Unit 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>No.</b>
Wakefield District Housing (inc Health Equality Workers)	50
Open Door	7
Community Mental Health Teams	4
The Springs	9
Family Services	2
Direct Outreaches	2
Illegal Money Lending Team	1
Childrens Centres	5
Stonham Housing	8
Langley House Trust	2
Rightsteps	8
Foundation Housing	1
The Sanctuary Project	1

## **Training**

The 9<sup>th</sup> group of 'Straight to gateway' volunteers have just started their training. As usual this group included some volunteers training to be receptionists and for the first time they were joined by a couple of Trustees for the first couple of sessions. The Trustees felt that joining these sessions helped their understanding of how the CAB works, particularly our principles and the types of problems we deal with as well as getting to meet some new trainees.

Yorkshire Forward NVQ pilot project - Another volunteer, Sheila Townend, has completed her portfolio ready for external verification.

All volunteers and staff are currently undergoing 'Information Assurance training. The training consists of a 60 minute e-learning module.

*'Information assurance is an organization wide risk management strategy which serves to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all the data employed within an organization- whether that data is held on paper, in digital files or is, perhaps, even just a conversation'*

Throughout May all volunteers will be shown a preview presentation on the new system to replace our current case recording system CASE in October 2011. This along with the Information Assurance training is the first stage of the training plan drawn up by the management team to introduce the PETRA system.

## **Other DTB News**

**Andrew Young has taken over the role of Paid Staff Representative on the Trustee Board from Pete Hudson. DTB would like to thank Pete for his useful and humorous contributions to meetings over the last few years. Also Welcome to Barry Blakemore, who was co-opted on to the Trustee Board at the last meeting.**

**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)**