

# Our impact 2021/22



We gave advice to **8,823 people** on 21,250 issues



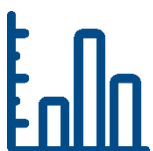
We handled **17,750 calls** – 18% more than last year



**2.6 million** financial outcomes for local people including **£172 debt** written off



We helped **21% more people** than last year with 50 volunteers and 25 staff



Our **Top Issues** were:

▪ Benefits	6,698
▪ Debt	2,233
▪ Financial Services	2,167
▪ Universal Credit	2,114
▪ Housing	1,552



We helped **336 households** across West Oxfordshire by distributing over £100,000 of Household Support Fund on behalf of West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council

We are here for everyone

***"I was desperate. My incapacity benefits and pension had been taken away"***

Gina is a vulnerable, non-computer literate client who believed she was on incapacity benefit for life. Her Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and pension were not renewed. She suddenly realised she was overdrawn and had no income. She had to live off a small ISA for 18 months. Gina is single and had stopped working due to an operation. This left her unable to maintain a healthy body weight and a requirement for a breathing apparatus.

She had been contacted twice by the DWP and asked to renew her PIP. She was unsure what to do so never reapplied for her PIP or her pension. No further contact was made by the DWP and all her benefits were discontinued. *"I wasn't checking my bank statements and then Barclays called to say I was overdrawn. I had nowhere to go so I came to Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire and explained my situation. They helped me fill in the forms and gave me some emergency food vouchers. My carers used to help me but they retired. I had to take money out of my ISA to see me through."*

**At the end of October, Gina received over £9,000 in back dated pension plus she is now receiving 175.20 per weekly pension.** *"I felt so relieved. Thanks to Citizens Advice I have had my pension paid back. When I receive the payment, I'll give my vouchers back. Citizens Advice were there for me when I needed help."*

**Being unable to work, Joe fell deep into debt. A Debt Relief Order (DRO) was arranged to provide a fresh start**

Joe lives with his wife who is disabled and has been unable to work for a number of years. Joe suffered from painful gout and arthritis and had to give up his construction job until he recovered. The couple had no savings and were almost £19,000 in debt. They were struggling to pay for rent and essentials. The couple do not have internet access and Joe is dyslexic and struggles with reading and dealing with paperwork.

Due to couple's health conditions and income fluctuation their complex situation was always changing. There was the additional stress that Joe might be dismissed from his job.

*"I couldn't work and had to give it up my job due to the gout. We were so stressed with Covid and not being able to afford to live. I am dyslexic so needed extra help."*

**Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire reviewed Joe's financial situation, helped the couple set up a DRO and gave debt management advice.** *"It's a great fresh start. As it lasts about four years, it gives me peace of mind. I am trying to find a new job too." Citizens Advice were 100% brilliant. They helped both of us. If anyone has something wrong, go to Citizens Advice."*

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