

Argyll & Bute Citizens Advice Bureau Community Planning Partnerships Update Jan 2023

Cost of living crisis

Argyll & Bute CAB has experienced a significant ongoing rise in the number of clients seeking support with energy costs. As a result we have secured additional funding to support clients across the four administrative regions

We are providing 1:1 and group information sessions on energy efficiency measures. To arrange a session please contact Libby Dobbie at the bureau 01546 605550 or email info@abcab.org.uk

Additionally our advisers can support clients to negotiate with their suppliers, and have additional supports available to those households that are off-grid or who rely on alternative sources of heating. We are referral partners to a wide range of emergency supports:

Home Heating Advice support fund

Fuel Bank Foundation

And have access to other smaller discretionary pots of money. We are delighted to announce a new partnership in this vein with the An Suidhe Windfarm fund, managed by Foundation Scotland. Households in the An Suidhe area can access confidential, free and independent advice and support from the Bureau and also may be eligible for financial assistance. We would ask partners to refer clients they believe may benefit from these funds directly to the bureau using the referral form at the base of this update report. The AN Suidhe fund is strictly limited to households in these postcode areas:

Avich:	Furnace:	Inveraray:	Eredine/South Loch Awe side:
PA35 1HH PA35 1HJ PA35 1HL PA35 1HN PA35 1HS	PA32 8XN PA32 8XX PA32 8XS PA32 8XU PA32 8XZ PA32 8XY PA32 8WD PA32 8YA	PA32 8 (but not Minard)	PA33 1BJ PA33 1BW PA33 1BP PA33 1BS PA33 1BU.

Our advisers continue to report increasing numbers of clients reporting complex or multifaceted issues and an increase in mental health issues as a result. We are looking to develop networks with existing mental health services and organisations to strengthen resources and supports to clients in these situations.

Volunteer opportunities:

The CAB is looking to begin our recruitment campaign for our spring cohort of volunteer trainee advisers. The training of an adviser within the CAB network can take around 6 months and we strive to develop confidence, research skills and strengthen confidence. The role is predominately aimed at those who have perhaps recently retired, reduced their hours within a paid role or who are looking at developing skills to return to the paid labour market. Advisers can be based anywhere in Argyll &

Bute, however we are particularly looking for individuals from the region's island communities, as well as those in an around the larger urban areas (Oban, Lochgilphead, Helensburgh, Campbeltown). We are delighted to have received funding from the HSCP Living Well Fund to support volunteer adviser wellbeing, we are holding wellbeing lunches once a month with our teams bot in person and virtually, and are looking arrange quarterly networking lunches with other 3rd sector organisations to share ideas on how to increase wellbeing and volunteer/adviser resilience. We recently held a very successful event with Lomond and Argyll Advocacy Services in the Comraich Centre in Lochgilphead prior to the Christmas break. If your organisation is interested in being part of these events please let me know by email jen.broadhurst@abcab.org.uk We would be happy to arrange an info session with our development worker to discuss the opportunity and course expectations. Partners are encouraged to invite clients/patients and service users to contact the bureau on 01546 605550 info@abcab.org.uk

Community Consultation

We are currently running our annual consultation exercise with partner organisations in order to review the work of the bureau and would welcome CPP attendee's responses to this <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ABCABCommunityPartnersSurvey/>

Research project for 2023

Partners may recall our research project last year looked into the private rental sector across Argyll & Bute and as a result we have engaged positively with the council on areas of mutual interest as we represent client's views on the private rental of homes in Argyll & Bute.

This year we are looking to report on the experiences of carers in the current cost of living crisis.

We would like to increase current engagement with local carers groups and explore research opportunities with carers in these services. We hope to be in contact with local groups and services over the next few weeks to arrange such.