

Argyll & Bute Citizens Advice bureau Community Planning Partnerships Update Oct 2023



Volunteer recruitment

Citizens Advice Bureau is a volunteer led organisation and relies on the unpaid work of our volunteer advisers. We currently have 10 fully qualified advisers and 3 trainees about to come into solo practice stage.

We are about to initiate our recruitment drive for volunteers within the Bureau and are actively looking for advisers within the following locations: MAKI, Helensburgh, Oban and Dunoon. This will support our increased outreach activity in these areas and really require stakeholders to share with their networks this valuable opportunity.

Full training is provided, and we have roles available in advice, admin and communications.

Energy Efficiency Advice Sessions

Our city & guilds qualified adviser is running our annual programme of advice sessions once again. 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- debt reduction and ongoing awards possible for PAYG & dry meters clients' dependent on details.

Fuel Bank Foundation- Emergency support available for PAYG clients and alternative fuel clients

Services with the Bureau

Welfare Rights – support with completing applications, submitting mandatory reconsideration requests and representation at tribunal/appeals.

Housing Debt – support for people in housing arrears or facing debts that threaten tenure retention. FCA regulated support to address debts and seek free solutions includes court representation where required.

Energy efficiency and debt support – Support to negotiate with Suppliers, seek debt reduction, change tariffs,, submit complaints to suppliers and Ombudsman.

Lloyds Pre-debt – referrals from Lloyds for people experiencing ‘pre-debt’.

Armed Services Advice Project, targeted support to serving and former military personnel and their dependants

Patient Advice Support Service – advice on patient rights, complaints to GP’s, HSCP, and SPSO.

Money Talks – Income maximisation project looking to reduce costs, increase income through benefits entitlements and address low persistent debt.

Carers Advice Project. – Provision of targeted advice to carers across Argyll & Bute. Support to access care, raise issues, complete applications for Power of Attorney etc, address financial supports and access benefits.

Generalist advice on Housing, Employment relationship, court processes, parking charge notices and neighbour disputes.

Outreach Locations

Dunoon [Food bank, Crossroads Carers and JC+]

Oban [Hope Kitchen and JC+]

Campbeltown JC+

Helensburgh Carers Centre

Research areas

Private Rental Sectors – looking at impact of local housing market on communities in and across Argyll & Bute

Cost of Caring – Investigating the impact of the cost of living crisis on carer’s communities.