

A stylized map of England and Wales, divided into regions and colored in various shades of blue, green, yellow, orange, and purple. A target graphic with concentric circles is overlaid on the map, centered over the Midlands region.

# Developing partnerships, enhancing services

## Citizens Advice in Wales

### Introduction

The Citizens Advice service is one of the best known organisations in England and Wales. We score highly on trust and recognition in public polls, with 95 per cent of the population having heard of us.

We provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity and challenge discrimination. Our aims are two-fold; to provide the advice people need for the problems they face, and to improve the policies and practices that affect their lives.

### Partnership

The Citizens Advice service works in partnership with agencies from all sectors, at local, regional and national level. We are always striving to achieve more and recognise this is often best done by partnering with others. This briefing sets out the benefits of working with the Citizens Advice service for regional agencies and the local communities they support.



## Comprehensive coverage in Wales

In Wales the Citizens Advice service is the largest third sector provider of advice, operating from 53 high street premises, with at least one bureau in every local authority area in the country. Bureaux also provide outreach services from an additional 260 outlets.

During 2007/08, over 100,000 people in Wales were able to turn to Citizens Advice for help to resolve their money, legal, employment or other problems.

## High quality advice

Every Citizens Advice Bureau is an independent charity and a member of Citizens Advice, the national body that:

- provides bureaux with training and specialist support
- audits the operational efficiency of bureaux and the quality of their advice
- coordinates national policy and campaigning work.

Together we are the Citizens Advice service, combining the resource and experience of a national organisation with the intimate local knowledge of frontline agencies.

## All issues, all people

In 2007/08 bureaux in Wales advised on 267,594 issues. Many clients are advised on multiple issues as their problems are dealt with holistically.

The most common issues in Wales are:

- debt 35%
- benefits and tax credits 33%
- employment 7%
- consumer and utilities 6%
- housing 5%.

Twenty two bureaux in Wales are able to provide civil legal advice through contracts with the Legal Services Commission.

The Citizens Advice service is also a leader in equality and diversity best practice. We aim to develop and deliver discrimination advice from first point of contact to resolution, in partnership with others.

Over eight per cent of clients using the service in Wales are from black or minority ethnic communities, 27 per cent are disabled, 11 per cent are below the age of 25 and 11 per cent are over 65 years.

## Informing policy

Bureaux record all enquiries in a central database, providing a unique picture of the problems faced by residents in Wales. This service data can be analysed at a national or local level, and allows for tracking trends year on year.

This intelligence informs the development of local services as well as the setting of policy objectives for Wales.

In addition to statistical data on enquiries, bureaux record detailed, anonymous descriptions of cases. These provide rich, qualitative information which demonstrates unquestionably

to policy makers and service providers, the impact of their decisions on individuals' lives.

## Partnership working for client-centred services

Bureaux belong to networks of statutory and third sector community agencies. They frequently identify common goals and separate strengths, leading to partnership work that delivers more joined up, client-centred services for people throughout Wales.

As a service, we recognise that it is only by working with a range of partners that we can improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable groups in society.

We currently work with partners from the public, private and third sectors to ensure our experience, and that of our clients, is used proactively to inform policy and practice for the better. Our existing partnerships include the sharing of statistical information to facilitate advice needs assessment, as well as the development of new and existing services.

Examples include:

- Participating in anti poverty coalitions, for example to effect policy change on rent arrears.
- Delivering new financial capability services in schools.
- Working with health trusts and addiction centres in promoting advice surgeries.
- Developing prisoner release advice services with Jobcentre Plus.
- Promoting advice services to employers on issues such as retirement, health and absenteeism.

## Case study

Across Wales, 29 bureaux deliver *Better advice: Better health* advice services in 73 primary and secondary health care settings, such as GP surgeries and community-based clinics.

*Better advice: Better health* brings together health and advice specialists to make a real difference to people's economic, physical and mental health. Since 2001 the service has raised over £22.5 million in additional income for clients.

Client feedback shows 95 per cent satisfaction with the advice service, and 94 per cent of GPs said it had helped improve patients' access to statutory services, as well as their quality of life. 77 per cent of GPs said it had helped improve the health of their patient, with 49 per cent citing it as an important factor in reducing sick leave through earlier intervention.

*Better advice: Better health* is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government.

## Developing the economy in Wales

- Citizens Advice bureaux in Wales are both small businesses and training agencies, employing and training 400 local staff. In addition we train and rely on over 820 volunteers each year.
- Based on current rates of pay for employed staff, the value of the contribution made by volunteers in Wales is estimated at £4 million.
- Almost a third of volunteers go into paid employment following training and support in bureaux.
- Across Wales the Citizens Advice service brings money into the pockets of families and individuals through benefit take up, management of debt, and advice on employment and housing. This extra wealth often stays in the community, boosting the local economy.
- In the course of delivering projects to improve financial inclusion, 37 new financial inclusion advisers have been brought into Wales through our successful programme – funded by the Department of Business, Employment and Regulatory Reform. In partnership with Shelter they have advised 7,500 new clients.
- The Citizens Advice service hosts two financial capability forums in north and south Wales and is expanding its work in money advice.

## Our strategic priorities


Across Wales bureaux are making an important contribution to regional priorities and the service is actively seeking to develop partnerships to deliver on our ambitious 2008-11 strategy, of which the key priorities are:

- Easier and faster access to advice and information for more people.
- To strengthen our voice in social policy.
- To develop the Citizens Advice Bureaux network.
- To develop new initiatives in advice.
- A commitment to equality.

We recognise that it is only by working in partnership that we can achieve more and we welcome contact from other agencies and stakeholders as to how we can work together on these shared agendas.

### If you want to talk about working with Citizens Advice in Wales please contact:

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A map of Wales is shown, divided into its administrative regions, each a different color. Overlaid on the map is a target symbol with concentric circles and a central bullseye.

# Datblygu partneriaethau, gwella gwasanaethau

## Cyngor ar Bopeth yng Nghymru

### Cyflwyniad

Mae'r gwasanaeth Cyngor ar Bopeth yn un o'r sefydliadau mwyaf adnabyddus yng Nghymru a Lloegr. Cawn sgôr uchel o safbwynt ymddiriedaeth a chydabyddiaeth mewn arolygon cyhoeddus, ac mae 95% o'r boblogaeth wedi clywed amdanom.

Darparwn gyngor diduedd, cyfrinachol, annibynnol ac am ddim i bawb ar eu hawliau a'u cyfrifoldebau. Rydym yn gwerthfawrogi amrywiaeth ac yn herio gwahaniaethu. Ceir dwy elfen i'n nodau; darparu'r cyngor y mae ar bobl ei angen ar gyfer y problemau y maent yn eu hwynebu, a gwella'r polisiau a'r arferion sydd yn effeithio ar eu bywydau.

### Partneriaeth

Mae'r gwasanaeth Cyngor ar Bopeth yn gweithio mewn partneriaeth ag asiantaethau o bob sector, ar lefel leol, ranbarthol a chenedlaethol. Rydym bob amser yn ymdrechu i gyflawni rhagor a chydabyddwn y gwneir hyn orau yn aml drwy wneud partneriaeth gydag eraill. Mae'r papur briffio hwn yn dangos y manteision a gaiff asiantaethau rhanbarthol a'r cymunedau lleol y maent yn eu cefnogi drwy eu bod yn gweithio gyda'r gwasanaeth Cyngor ar Bopeth.



## Darpariaeth gynhwysfawr yng Nghymru

Yng Nghymru y gwasanaeth Cyngor ar Bopeth yw'r corff mwyaf sydd yn darparu cyngor yn y trydydd sector, mae'n gweithredu o 53 o adeiladau stryd fawr, gydag o leiaf un swyddfa ym mhob awdurdod lleol yn y wlad. Mae'r canolfannau hefyd yn darparu gwasanaethau allgymorth o 260 o unedau ychwanegol.

Yn ystod 2007/08, roedd dros 100,000 o bobl yng Nghymru wedi gallu troi at Gyngor ar Bopeth am help i ddatrys eu problemau ariannol, cyfreithiol, eu problemau cyflogaeth neu broblemau eraill.

## Cyngor o ansawdd uchel

Mae pob Swyddfa Cyngor ar Bopeth yn elusen annibynnol ac yn aelod o Gyngor ar Bopeth, corff cenedlaethol sydd:

- yn darparu i'r canolfannau hyfforddiant a chefnogaeth arbenigol
- yn archwilio effeithlonrwydd gweithredol y canolfannau ac ansawdd eu cyngor
- yn cydlynu'r gwaith ymgyrchu a'r polisiau cenedlaethol.

Gyda'n gilydd ni yw'r gwasanaeth Cyngor ar Bopeth, gan gyfuno adnoddau a phrofiad sefydliad cenedlaethol gyda gwybodaeth leol bersonol yr asiantaethau rheng flaen.

## Yr holl broblemau, yr holl bobl

Yn 2007/08 bu i'r canolfannau yng Nghymru gynghori ar 267,594 o broblemau. Caiff lawer o gleientiaid eu cynghori ar amryfal faterion oherwydd y rhoddir sylw i'w problemau mewn modd cyfannol.

Dyma'r problemau mwyaf cyffredin yng Nghymru:

- dyledion 35%
- budd-daliadau a chredydau treth 33%
- cyflogaeth 7%
- defnyddwyr a chyfleustodau 6%
- tai 5%.

Mae dwy ganolfan ar hugain yng Nghymru yn gallu darparu cyngor cyfreithiol sifil drwy gontractau gyda'r Comisiwn Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol.

Mae'r gwasanaeth Cyngor ar Bopeth hefyd yn arweinydd o safbwynt yr arferion gorau ym maes cydraddoldeb ac amrywiaeth. Rydym yn ymdrechu i ddatblygu a chyflenwi cyngor ar wahaniaethu o'r cyswllt cyntaf nes datrys y broblem, mewn partneriaeth ag eraill.

Mae dros wyth y cant o'r cleientiaid sy'n defnyddio'r gwasanaeth yng Nghymru yn dod o gymunedau pobl dduon a lleiafrifoedd ethnig, mae 27 y cant yn anabl, 11 y cant o dan 25 oed, ac mae 11 y cant dros 65 oed.

## Dylanwadu ar bolisïau

Mae'r canolfannau'n cofnodi'r holl ymholiadau mewn cronfa ddata ganolog, gan ddarparu darlun unigryw o'r problemau y mae trigolion Cymru yn eu hwynebu. Gellir dadansoddi'r data gwasanaethau hwn ar lefel genedlaethol neu leol, ac mae'n ein galluogi i olrhain tueddiadau flwyddyn ar ôl blwyddyn.

Mae'r wybodaeth hon yn dylanwadu ar ddatblygu gwasanaethau lleol yn ogystal ag ar osod amcanion polisi ar gyfer Cymru.

Yn ychwanegol at y data ystadegol ar yr ymholiadau, mae'r canolfannau'n cofnodi disgrifiadau manwl, di-enw o'r achosion. Mae'r rhain yn darparu gwybodaeth gyfoethog, ansoddol, sy'n dangos yn ddi-gwestiwn i swyddogion llunio polisïau a chyrrff darparu gwasanaethau, effaith eu penderfyniadau ar fywydau unigolion.

## Gwaith partneriaeth sy'n canolbwyntio ar y cleient

Mae'r canolfannau'n perthyn i rwydweithiau o asiantaethau cymunedol, statudol a thrydydd sector. Maent yn aml yn gweld nodau cyffredin a chryfderau gwahanol, gan arwain at waith partneriaeth sy'n cyflenwi gwasanaethau mwy cydgysylltiedig, sy'n canolbwyntio ar y cleient i bobl ledled Cymru.

Fel gwasanaeth, rydym yn cydnabod mae dim ond trwy weithio gydag amrywiol bartneriaid y gallwn wella bywydau rhai o'r grwpiau mwyaf agored i niwed mewn cymdeithas.

Ar hyn o bryd rydym yn gweithio gyda phartneriaid o'r sector cyhoeddus, y sector preifat a'r trydydd sector i sicrhau bod ein profiad ni, a phrofiad ein cleientiaid, yn cael eu defnyddio'n rhagweithiol i ddylanwadu ar bolisïau ac ymarfer er gwell. Mae ein partneriaethau presennol yn cynnwys rhannu gwybodaeth ystadegol er mwyn hwyluso asesiadau o'r angen am gyngor, a hefyd er mwyn datblygu gwasanaethau newydd a'r rhai presennol.

Dyma rai esiamplau:

- Cymryd rhan mewn cynghreiriau gwrthdlodi, er enghraifft er mwyn sicrhau newid yn y polisi ar ôl-ddyledion rhent.
- Cyflenwi gwasanaethau gallu ariannol newydd mewn ysgolion.
- Gweithio gydag ymddiriedolaethau iechyd a chanolfannau dibyniaeth i hyrwyddo cymorthfeydd.
- Datblygu gwasanaethau cynghori i garcharorion a gaiff eu rhyddhau gyda'r Ganolfan Byd Gwaith.
- Hybu gwasanaethau cynghori i gyflogwyr ar faterion megis ymddeol, iechyd ac absenoldeb.

## Astudiaeth achos

Ledled Cymru mae 29 o ganolfannau yn cyflenwi gwasanaethau cynghori *Cyngor da: Iechyd da* mewn 73 o sefydliadau gofal iechyd sylfaenol ac eilaidd, megis meddygfeydd meddygon teulu a chlinigau yn y gymuned.

Mae *Cyngor da: Iechyd da* yn dwyn ynghyd arbenigwyr cynghori ac iechyd er mwyn gwneud gwahaniaeth gwirioneddol i iechyd meddwl, iechyd corfforol ac iechyd economaidd pobl. Er 2001 mae'r gwasanaeth wedi codi dros £22.5 miliwn mewn incwm ychwanegol i gleientiaid.

Mae adborth gan gleientiaid yn dangos bod 95 y cant ohonynt yn fodlon gyda'r gwasanaeth cynghori a dywedodd 94 y cant o feddygon teulu ei fod wedi helpu i wella mynediad cleifion at wasanaethau statudol, yn ogystal ag wedi gwella ansawdd eu bywyd. Dywedodd 77 y cant o feddygon teulu ei fod wedi helpu i wella iechyd eu cleifion, gyda 49 y cant yn dweud ei fod yn ffactor pwysig mewn lleihau absenoldeb salwch drwy gamu i mewn yn gynharach.

Ariennir *Cyngor da: Iechyd da* gan Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru.

## Datblygu'r economi yng Nghymru

- Mae'r canolfannau Cyngor ar Bopeth yng Nghymru yn fusnesau bach a hefyd yn asiantaethau hyfforddi, gan gyflogi a hyfforddi 400 o staff lleol. Yn ogystal rydym yn hyfforddi ac yn dibynnu ar dros 820 o wirfoddolwyr bob blwyddyn.
- Yn seiliedig ar gyfraddau cyflog presennol staff cyflogedig, amcangyfrifir bod gwerth y cyfraniad a wneir gan wirfoddolwyr yng Nghymru yn £4 miliwn.
- Mae bron i draean y gwirfoddolwyr yn mynd ymlaen i waith cyflogedig ar ôl cael hyfforddiant a chefnogaeth yn y canolfannau.
- Ledled Cymru mae'r Gwasanaeth Cyngor ar Bopeth yn dod ag arian i bocedi teuluoedd ac unigolion drwy drefnu budd-daliadau, rheoli dyledion, a rhoi cyngor ar gyflogaeth a thai. Mae'r cyfoeth ychwanegol hwn yn aml yn aros yn y gymuned, gan roi hwb i'r economi leol.
- Wrth gyflwyno prosiectau i wella cynhwysiant ariannol, mae 37 o gynghorwyr cynhwysiant ariannol newydd wedi cael eu dwyn i mewn i Gymru trwy ein rhaglen lwyddiannus – a ariannwyd gan yr Adran Busnes, Menter a Diwygio Rheoleiddio. Mewn partneriaeth â Shelter, maent wedi cynghori 7,500 o gleientiaid newydd.
- Mae'r gwasanaeth Gyngor ar Bopeth yn cynnal dau fforwm gallu ariannol yng ngogledd a de Cymru ac mae'n ymestyn ei waith ym maes cyngor ariannol.

## Ein blaenoriaethau strategol

Ledled Cymru mae'r canolfannau yn gwneud cyfraniad pwysig i flaenoriaethau rhanbarthol ac mae'r gwasanaeth yn awyddus i ddatblygu partneriaethau i gyflawni ar ein strategaeth uchelgeisiol ar gyfer 2008-11, sy'n cynnwys y blaenoriaethau allweddol canlynol:

- Mynediad haws a chyflymach at gyngor a gwybodaeth i ragor o bobl.
- Cryfhau ein llais mewn polisi cymdeithasol.
- Datblygu rhwydwaith y Canolfannau Cyngor ar Bopeth.
- Datblygu cynlluniau newydd ym maes cynghori.
- Ymrwymiad i gydraddoldeb.

Rydym yn cydnabod mai dim ond drwy weithio mewn partneriaeth y gallwn gyflawni rhagor a chroesawn gysylltiad oddi wrth asiantaethau a rhanddeiliaid eraill o safbwynt sut y gallwn weithio gyda'n gilydd ar yr agendau cyffredin hyn.

## Os hoffech siarad am weithio gyda Chyngor ar Bopeth yng Nghymru cysylltwch â:

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