

### Welcome to the Annual Review of Citizens Advice Corby & Kettering for 2016 – 2017

I will start by quoting Martin Lewis OBE. 'Few people realise that Citizens Advice is a charity not a government agency – a shame as the work it does is truly life-saving'.



We are here to help our community of Corby and Kettering with the challenges that life throws at them. An appointment with one of our highly trained volunteers or member of staff can enable them to deal with these challenges.

Once again I say THANK YOU to everyone who has helped our clients. And I mean everyone – volunteers, paid staff, Trustees and, of course our Chief Officer, Debbie Egan. Everything you do, makes a difference to so many lives.

Trish Dewar, Chair of Trustee Board

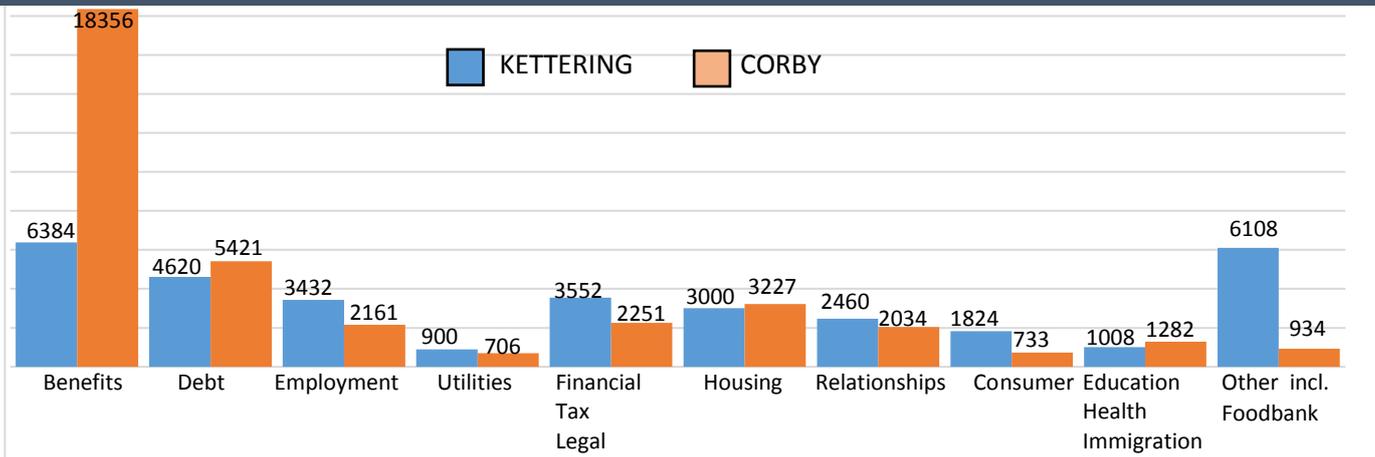
### OUR AIMS

Citizens Advice Services Corby and Kettering provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. As an organisation we value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination

### The Service aims:

- To provide the advice people need for the problems they face
- To improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives

### TOTAL NUMBER OF ENQUIRIES 70,393



### Thank you to:

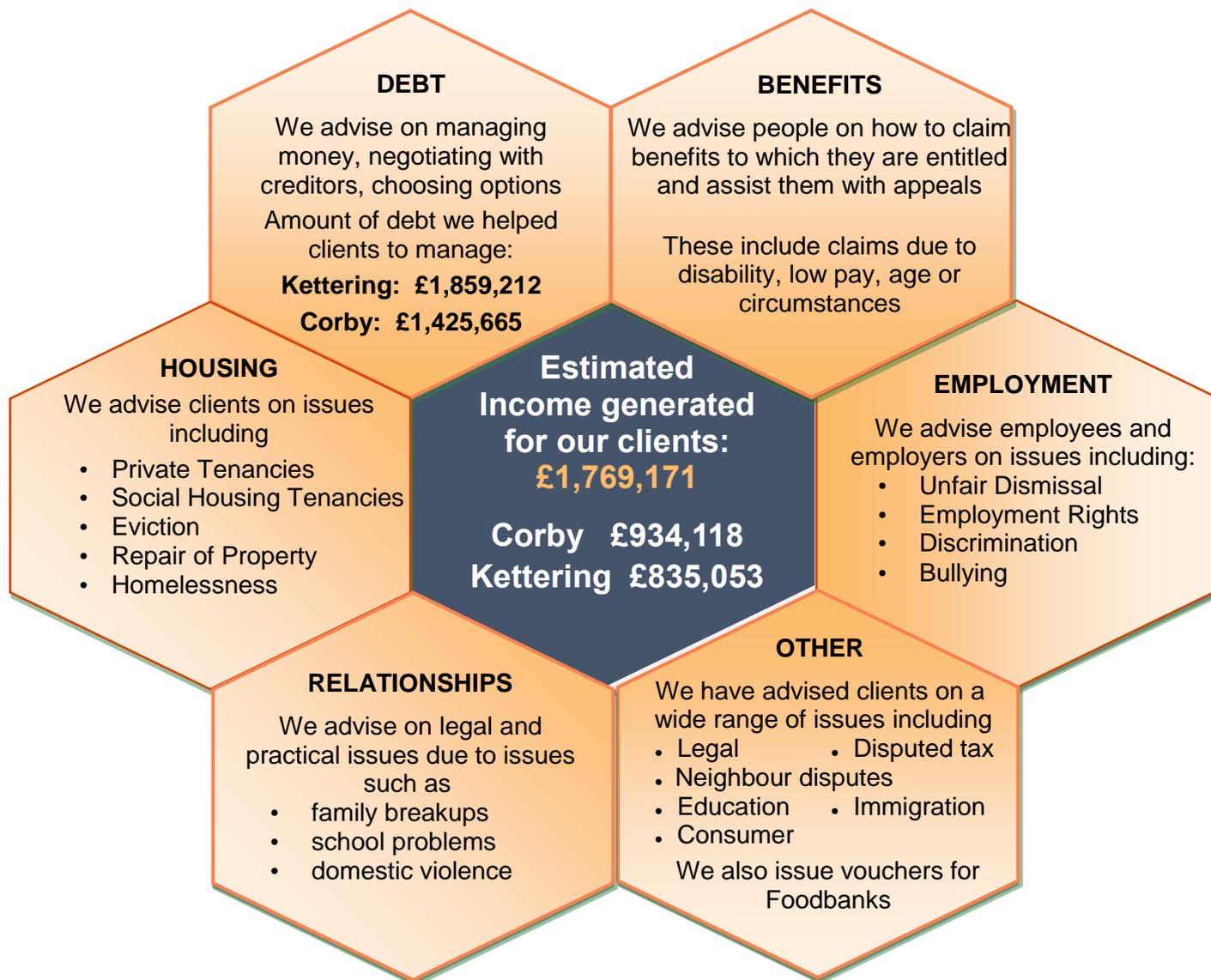
**Our funders:** CBC • KBC • Northamptonshire Community Foundation • First for Wellbeing • Santander • Big Lottery • Awards For All • European Social Fund • Citizens Advice



## OUR WORK

We are a registered charity providing **free, confidential, impartial advice** to everybody, regardless of race, religion, gender, disability or sexuality. We help our clients with the issues that are **important** to them, from debt worries to benefit entitlements, employment rights, housing and relationships.

**Whoever you are, whatever the problem, we're here to help**



### Comments taken from Client Satisfaction Survey

*"She explained all the details"*

*"I was pleased with the service; the advisor was helpful & easy to talk to"*

*"Plenty of time to discuss all my concerns"*

Our **Client Satisfaction Survey for 2016-2017** showed that 98% our clients are happy or very happy with our service and would recommend us.

The CAB is a valuable resource in the town, helping our residents through difficult times. Corby Borough Council is proud to support and work in partnership with the bureau. The CAB are based in the Corby Cube, which allows us to have a stronger working relationship with the organisation and makes it even easier for our residents to access the range of services that they may need in one central location.



**Cllr Tom Beattie, Leader of Corby Borough Council**

The CAB continues to be an excellent strategic partner and they have recently widened the scope of the work they do with us. I congratulate them on their successful year and continue to look forward to working with them in the future.



**Cllr Russell Roberts,  
Leader of Kettering Borough Council**

As a way of thanking our hard working volunteers we held our Volunteers Week Celebration on 7th June 2017 at Coronation Park, Corby.



It included a buffet lunch and a caricature portrait artist for those who felt brave enough plus other attractions and competitions.



**How much do our volunteers mean to us?**



*Did you know that...*

*Over the year our volunteers have given*

**£287,106**

*worth of time and effort to help us help the local communities*

**Our volunteers reflect the diverse communities that we live in**

- *Different backgrounds*
- *Different ages*
- *Different experiences*

After an unexpected redundancy and a period of ill health I realised that I had lost confidence in myself and my ability to return to work. I began to think about volunteering for an organisation where I could both develop key skills and possibly gain some experience in a public-facing role. The Citizens Advice was an obvious choice for me as I had received assistance from them in the past and had been very impressed with the service that they offered.

After an informational interview, I was pleased to receive a call informing me that I could begin volunteering the following week. Although I was apprehensive I was soon put at ease by the friendly and welcoming staff.

After the induction and a stage of comprehensive modular training, I began by shadowing an experienced Gateway Assessor for a number of weeks before going it alone and performing the assessment myself. I also began accompanying a Generalist Adviser while completing my training materials and attending Interview Skills workshops. I had fantastic support throughout the whole programme and everybody involved assisted me in gaining the assurance to lead my first Generalist Advice interview.

I knew immediately that I had made the right decision about volunteering for the service as I found it incredibly rewarding helping the public resolve their problems. The skills I have learned, especially when dealing with clients face-to-face, have given me back my lost confidence and I now look forward to gaining employment, preferably in a similar field. I would not hesitate to recommend volunteering at Citizens Advice to anyone in a similar position.

Paul Turner

**We would like to give sincere thanks to everyone, both volunteers and paid staff who work at our Corby and Kettering Offices, to provide a first class service to the residents of Corby and Kettering Boroughs and surrounding villages:**

Adrian, Anca, Anne S, Babs, Biro, Bruce, Cassie, Charlotte, Christopher, Clare D, Clare W, Coco, David, Debbie, Declan, Demi, Dorata, Edina, Fiona, Gary, Graham, Helen, Hildah, Jacqueline, Jade, James, Jane, Jean, Jenny, John B, John D, Joy, June, Karen, Katie, Keeley, Kiran, Lesley B, Lesley T, Liam, Linda, Lisa, Lorraine, Lyndzi, Lynn, Margaret, Michelle, Nadia, Nata, Natalia, Pattie, Paul H, Paul T, Paula, Pete, Rachael, Rattinan, Richard, Ruth, Ryan, Salima, Sally, Sharfaa, Sukhwinder, Teresa, Terry, Tom, Tony, Tracy, Trish, Valery, Vinny

**Declan O'Driscoll 1993-2017**

In remembrance of a committed and highly valued colleague and volunteer Declan O'Driscoll.

## RESEARCH AND CAMPAIGNS

The twin aim of the Service is our Research & Campaigns (R&C) work. We gather evidence on unfair practices and policies which affect people locally often trying to work in partnership to make mutually beneficial changes that benefit the community without detriment to the organisation or business involved.

Our evidence also contributes to the Central Citizens Advice R & C team which allows them to work with the Government and other agencies for national changes.

Our team attended a training day run by the team overseeing R&C at the Central Office. The workshops were:

- 1) Getting the most out of our data - locating and using our data in local R&C work.
- 2) Running an R&C team.

In July I set up a local R&C forum with other Citizens Advice.

National R & C forums are now run twice a year. They provide an opportunity for those involved in R&C to meet, take part in training and share ideas.

In January, the workshops were:

- 1) Practicalities of R&C and the new member's agreement.
- 2) Improving practices surrounding council tax debt collections.

In March I attended a workshop 'working with vulnerable adults to prevent homelessness and crime'. I also attended a course run by Shelter covering:

- 1) Homelessness Prevention
- 2) New changes to legislation from 2017

Information from private companies: helping councils relocate oversubscribed tenants on Keyways

## National Campaigns

### Employment Agencies

- Not giving holiday pay
- Not allowing employees to take holidays
- Keeping employees too long without offering them a contract
- Not being given basic rights
- Zero hours contracts given even after a period of time

### Secure Self Employment Campaign

- Systems introduced to encourage saving for retirement
- Self-employed people are disadvantaged by reforms to income tax and National Insurance benefit equally
- Definition of self-employed status to be simplified and clearer guidelines given.
- To be better supported when balancing family and work life.

## Local Issues

### Benefits

- DLA to PIP - help with appeals
- Universal Credit
- Wrong information given by job centres
- Not advising clients properly
- Not letting clients know their next steps following a sanction
- Too many sanctions given unnecessarily

### Housing- HMO

- Increasing problems: overcrowding, not clean, noisy and amount of rent charged.

New Members of the R&C team to be announced soon!

[Lynn Anne Wilson, Volunteer R & C Co-ordinator](#)

## OPENING TIMES & CONTACT DETAILS

### KETTERING:

Monday to Friday 9:00am – 2:00pm

Municipal Offices • Bowling Green Road • Kettering • Northamptonshire • NN15 7QX

Telephone: 01536 482281

Email: [volunteerdevelopment@casck.co.uk](mailto:volunteerdevelopment@casck.co.uk)

### CORBY:

Monday to Friday 9:00am – 2:00pm

The Corby Cube • Parkland Gateway • George Street • Corby • Northants • NN17 1QG

Telephone 01536 265501 • Fax 01536 400449

email:[volunteerdevelopment@casck.co.uk](mailto:volunteerdevelopment@casck.co.uk)

As from 7th August 2017, our reception opening hours at **Corby** will be amended to:

**Monday to Wednesday, 9am to 2pm.**

Specialist Appointments will still be available on Thursdays and Fridays

Kettering opening hours remain unchanged

## LOOKING AHEAD

Another busy year for CASCK in which we have seen a huge increase in people approaching us with multiple issues affecting their lives. The number of enquiries dealt with has almost doubled compared to last year.

We will continue to work in partnership with other agencies, both statutory and voluntary, so we can learn from and support each other to help our mutual clients find a way forward. This will ensure we are able to help more people, be more effective and continue to be the very best at what we do

As the country faces an uncertain future, we have a significant role to play to support people through the social, political and economic challenges ahead.

We will continue to changes people's lives for the better.

[Debbie Egan Chief Officer](#)

## OUTREACHES

Not only do we provide our services in our town centre offices, we also work in several outreach locations, making our services accessible to a wider number of clients Our current outreaches include libraries at:

Rothwell • Desborough • Burton Latimer

