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nicola.revolta@winchesterdistrictcab.org.uk



Citizens Advice Winchester District's AGM welcomes guest speaker, Tim Houghton, Chief Executive of Community First

News release – 26 September 2016

Citizens Advice Winchester District Public Meeting - 3rd October 2016

Local charity Citizens Advice for the Winchester District holds its Annual General & Public Meeting on Monday, 3rd October 2016 from 6.30pm – 8.00pm at the United Church, Jewry Street, Winchester.

The Trustee Board, staff and a core team of nearly 100 volunteers welcome all members of the public to the meeting.

This year's guest speaker is Tim Houghton, Chief Executive of Community First. The organisation provides support and representation for the voluntary sector in East Hampshire, Havant and Winchester. Wine and soft drinks will be served after the AGM.

Citizens Advice Winchester District provides a free and confidential advice service to anyone in the local district who needs it. The charity runs face-to-face sessions in Winchester, Alresford, Bishop's Waltham, Denmead, Wickham, as well as a phone helpline and web chat to make it easier for people to access the service.

Anyone requiring advice or support can get help online at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/winchester-district or by calling the Adviceline on 03444 111306.

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Notes to editors:

For media enquiries, please contact Nicola Revolta, Media, Marketing and Fundraising Officer – nicola.revolta@winchesterdistrictcab.org.uk or 07845 694030.

About Citizens Advice Winchester District

Citizens Advice Winchester District (CAWD, and previously known as Winchester District CAB, Citizens Advice Bureau), is an independent registered charity and a member of the national Citizens Advice network of England and Wales.

The charity provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We aim to provide the advice local people need for the problems they face and to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives. We receive no national funding from either central government or the national Citizens Advice service.

We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination. Our core service is a team of nearly 100 volunteers supported by around five full time equivalent paid staff.

For details of Citizens Advice Winchester District office and outreach locations visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk/winchester-district or call the Adviceline on 03444 111 306.



Lesley Rose, Advice Services Manager for Citizens Advice Winchester District

Citizens Advice Winchester District advice column – Issued 20 September 2016 for immediate use or for publication in September/October 2016

Lesley Rose, Advice Services Manager for Citizens Advice Winchester District looks at your rights if you have a housing-related problem and dealing with your landlord.

Q. I have a problem with rising damp in my flat, but I'm worried that if I complain my landlord will evict me. What should I do?

A. Until recently, landlords could evict tenants without a reason. However, a new law passed last year means it's now illegal to evict tenants for reporting a problem with the property.

Start by checking your contract for when your tenancy began. If it was on or after 1 October 2015, you are protected from eviction provided you report the problem using the right procedure.

First, write your landlord an email or letter explaining the problem. If they don't respond within 14 days or respond with an eviction notice, contact the council who will inspect the property.

If the Council confirms with the landlord that there is a health and safety problem, any 'no fault' eviction notice is invalid and you won't need to leave the property. The council will also advise the landlord on next steps, which could include being legally required to fix the problem.

If your tenancy began before October 2015 it's not illegal for your landlord to evict you but it's still unusual to do so.

Again, you should start by raising the problem in writing. If your landlord doesn't offer to repair the damp, or serves you with an eviction notice, contact your local Citizens Advice straight away who will advise you on your next step.

Citizens Advice Winchester District is an independent charity and runs face-to-face sessions in Winchester, Alresford, Bishop's Waltham, Denmead, Wickham, as well as a phone helpline and web chat to make it easier for people to access its free and impartial advice service.

Anyone requiring advice or support can get help online at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/winchester-district or by calling the Adviceline on 03444 111306.

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6 September 2016 – Team Rose is fundraising for Citizens Advice Winchester District

Find out more on Charlotte and Alex's Winchester Half Marathon Just Giving page - <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Charlotte-Rose9>



Lesley Rose, Advice Services Manager for Citizens Advice Winchester District

Citizens Advice Winchester District advice column – Issued 30 August 2016 for immediate use or for publication in September 2016

If something went wrong with your holiday you might be able to get compensation from the company you booked with. Lesley Rose, Advice Services Manager for Citizens Advice Winchester District explains more.

Q. I've just come back from a package holiday where our hotel was miles away from where we booked. We couldn't contact anyone to change hotels, and had to pay to travel back and forwards to the destination we'd booked. Can I claim compensation?

A. It's reasonable to ask for compensation when you haven't got the holiday you paid for. Your accommodation should be as agreed. If not, it's usually considered a breach of contract.

You can't claim the total cost of the holiday, but you can ask to be reimbursed for the extra travel costs, plus a fair sum for the change to your holiday.

Start by writing an email or letter to the tour operator's customer services department. Give your booking reference number, explain your grievance and specify the amount of compensation you'd like.

As evidence for your claim, include the details of when you tried to contact your tour operator while you were away, and copies of any taxi or car hire receipts.

The firm may come back with an initial offer that is lower than what you are asking for, so be prepared to negotiate.

If you're not offered any compensation, check your tour operator's website to see if they belong to a UK trade body, like ABTA. If they do, you can lodge a new complaint through the trade body's website. The tour operator is obliged to respond to the complaint.

Should you still not receive a satisfactory response, contact the Citizens Advice consumer service on 03454 04 05 06 or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk for guidance on your next steps.

Citizens Advice Winchester District is an independent charity and runs face-to-face sessions in Winchester, Alresford, Bishop's Waltham, Denmead, Wickham, as well as a phone helpline and web chat to make it easier for people to access its free and impartial advice service.

Anyone requiring advice or support can get help online at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/winchester-district or by calling the Adviceline on 03444 111306.

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Julie Gallagher (left) from Hampshire County Council's Trading Standards Service with volunteers from Citizens Advice Winchester District at the free Scams Awareness event held on 26th July 2016 at Winchester Discovery Centre

News release – 26 July 2016

Local MP supports Scams Awareness

Steve Brine, MP for Winchester and Chandler's Ford has backed Citizens Advice Winchester District and Hampshire County Council's Trading Standards Service after they held a free event

on 26th July 2016 at Winchester Discovery Centre to raise awareness of scams and how local people can protect themselves from scammers.

The event was part of Scams Awareness Month organised through a partnership between Citizens Advice, Trading Standards and many more public and private sector partners. Throughout July, the campaign has focused on a variety of scams including phone, online, mail and doorstep scams.

Steve Brine MP said: "I'm pleased to support this local partnership initiative between Citizens Advice Winchester District and Hampshire County Council's Trading Standards Service to promote scams awareness. We want people to be scam aware – to take a moment, trust their gut instinct so that they get advice, report scams and tell others about their experience".

Every day Citizens Advice sees clients who have fallen victims of scams. Locally, Citizens Advice Winchester District has dealt with clients experiencing a variety of scams.

One client was getting regular scam telephone calls purporting to be from BT and demanding payment for internet services, whilst their contract was with another provider. The issue was reported to Action Fraud, the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and internet crime.

Other local clients have experienced email and telephone calls relating to computer scams, as well as a cold-calling doorstep scam using pressured selling techniques on a vulnerable person.

If you suspect you're the target of a scam you can get advice from Citizens Advice consumer service on 03454 04 05 06 or www.citizensadvice.org.uk. You can also report a problem to Trading Standards through the Citizens Advice consumer service. To report a scam call Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or use the online reporting tool at www.actionfraud.police.uk.

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Lesley Rose, Advice Services Manager for Citizens Advice Winchester District

Citizens Advice Winchester District advice column – Issued 18 July 2016 for immediate use or for publication in August 2016

Lesley Rose, Advice Services Manager for Citizens Advice Winchester District advises that you walk away from job ads that ask for money in advance.

Q. I've applied for a job at an accountancy firm, but they've emailed to say that I would need to take a three month training course first which costs £4,000. I'm keen on the job, but should I pay for the training?

A. Some employers do ask you to pay for training, but will normally take the cost from your wages rather than asking you to pay in advance.

Asking for up-front payments is one of the classic signs of a scam, so it's important you do some research on the firm before parting with any cash.

Start by checking if they have a website. If there isn't a website, they are unlikely to be legitimate. Pay close attention to their email address too - look to see if they are using a personal email account such as Gmail or Hotmail, rather than one that's branded.

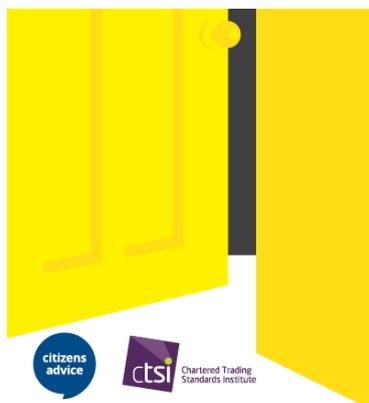
Next, check how they describe their company - if they are an Ltd or Plc they should be listed on the Companies House website. If you can't find them there, they probably aren't real.

You can also look the firm up on the internet to see what people are writing about it. People who suspect a scam or have been scammed will often post on forums or social media. Genuine companies will usually have client reviews outside of just their own website.

If you spot something that doesn't sit right and you want a second opinion, contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 03454 04 05 06 - a trained adviser can give you advice over the phone. You can also use an online form or write to them. If you think it might be a scam report it to Action Fraud.

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-Ends- (Words 304)



**“I’m glad I
didn’t panic
and sign”**

Be scam aware

#scamaware

Scams Awareness Month July 2016 – helping to give consumers the awareness that will help them protect themselves and those in their families and communities who are less able to spot scams.

News release – 18 July 2016

Citizens Advice Winchester District and Trading Standards set to expose tactics used by scammers

Cold calls, high-pressure sales tactics and automated voicemails asking for people's details are just some of the tricks scammers are using to rob people of their hard earned money, says Citizens Advice Winchester District and Trading Standards.

The organisations are promoting Scams Awareness Month during July to help stop people falling prey to scams by following a three-step rule - get advice, report it, and tell others about it.

It comes as national research by Citizens Advice finds scammers are using a variety of tactics to get people to part with their cash, with people losing an average of £2,500 across all types of scam.

Citizens Advice Winchester District and Hampshire County Council's Trading Standards Service are inviting local people to join a free event giving people the skills to stop scams in their tracks.

Both organisations will be at Winchester Discovery Centre on Tuesday, 26th July 2016 from 10.00am to 3.30pm to help show people how to spot a scam. People will learn the tell-tale signs of fraud, from being made an offer that's too good to be true, to being rushed into signing on the dotted line.

Informing the authorities and warning others is the only sure fire way of stopping scams, but people can be hesitant to even tell their friends and family.

The organisations will also show how speaking up about a scam is key to getting them closed down, and how to go about reporting suspected fraud to the authorities.

To attend this free event, members of the public can simply turn up on the day.

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Lesley Rose, Advice Services Manager for Citizens Advice Winchester District

Citizens Advice Winchester District advice column - July 2016 – Cancelling a holiday

Lesley Rose, Advice Services Manager for Citizens Advice Winchester District looks at your rights to cancel a holiday.

Q. I'm about to book our first family holiday abroad but last year friends of mine had terrible trouble cancelling theirs when they found they couldn't go after all – what are my rights?

A. Your rights to cancel a holiday (or a particular part of a holiday like a flight or a hotel booking) usually depend on the terms and conditions of your booking, and your reason for wanting to cancel. You might be entitled to cancel the holiday without a cancellation fee if the holiday company changes the holiday or puts the price up after you book.

Check your travel insurance

You might be covered for cancelling a trip if you have travel insurance - check your policy or contact the insurance company if you're not sure.

If you've changed your mind about a holiday or you can't go anymore (e.g. because of an emergency), you should check the terms and conditions of your booking to see what your options are. It's likely that you'll either have to pay a cancellation fee or won't be entitled to any refund at all. Contact the company if you can't find your terms and conditions.

You have the legal right to cancel without charge if the company has made 'major changes' to the holiday after you booked it. There's no exact definition for what a major change is.

Example: You booked a holiday including a large room at a resort. The company you booked with contacts you to say that your booking has changed to another resort with a smaller room. You can argue that this is a major change. Contact the company you booked with and explain to them why the original booking was important to your circumstances and explain why you think the changes are 'major'. Ask for a refund or to rearrange the holiday.

You have the legal right to get a refund or book a different holiday if the company makes a 'major increase' to the price of the holiday. There's no exact definition for what a major increase is - the Association of British Travel Agents suggests that 10% or more is a 'major increase'. However, this is only a guide.

Contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 03454 04 05 06 if you need more help - a trained adviser can give you advice over the phone. You can also use an online form or write to them.

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News release – 11 July 2016

Benefits advice is top problem facing people in Winchester District

New figures from Citizens Advice Winchester District show local people need the most help with benefits issues.

Overall, 6,696 people turned to Citizens Advice Winchester District for assistance with 14,456 problems in the last financial year (2015-16), a 25% increase on the year before.

The top five issues were:

1. **Benefits** – 3,550 issues
2. **Debt** – 2,250 issues
3. **Employment** – 1,750 issues
4. **Housing** – 1,650 issues
5. **Relationships** – 1,500 issues

Benefits advice was the most common issue facing Winchester District residents, representing one quarter of all queries.

People were most likely to seek help with disability benefits, housing benefit, Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and tax credits.

Natalie Webb, Chief Officer of Citizens Advice Winchester District, said:

“Citizens Advice helps thousands of people solve their problems every year, and we’re in a unique position to know the big issues facing people in our community. Not only do we help people solve their problems but our advice and education work can prevent issues escalating.

We are seeing an increasing number of clients seeking our help with their required move from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Anyone who needs a hand with an issue they are dealing with can contact Citizens Advice to help find a resolution.”

A core team of nearly 100 volunteers supported by a small paid staff at Citizens Advice Winchester District have been helping people in the community for 63 years.

The charity runs face-to-face sessions in Winchester, Alresford, Bishop’s Waltham, Denmead, Wickham, as well as a phone helpline and web chat to make it easier for people to access its free and impartial advice service.

Anyone requiring advice or support can get help online at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/winchester-district or by calling the Adviceline on 03444 111306. There is also a dedicated phone line for consumer issues on 03454 04 05 06.

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Notes to editors:

What to do if you have been scammed

Get advice and report it to Trading Standards through your local Citizens Advice or through the Citizens Advice consumer service on 03454 04 05 06.

For media enquiries, please contact Nicola Revolta, Media, Marketing and Fundraising Officer, Citizens Advice Winchester District - nicola.revolta@winchesterdistrictcab.org.uk or 01962

News release – 7 July 2016



Attendees at the Big Advice conference

Winchester District Advice Charter

People in Winchester who need advice will get an even better service following the launch of the Winchester District Advice Charter (attached).

The Charter was launched at a Big Advice conference for advice-givers in Winchester District in June organised jointly by Citizens Advice Winchester District, Community First Winchester, and Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC).

Natalie Webb, Chief Officer at Citizens Advice Winchester District, said, “We are seeing more and more people who need our help, and often their advice needs are quite complicated. In many cases people need advice about more than one issue, and sometimes they need specialist support from different services. That’s why it’s so important that we work with other organisations to ensure that we help our clients get the right support, from the right service, at the right time.” Natalie presented evidence highlighting issues in the community that might impact on people’s advice needs, for example mental health, an ageing population and the disparity between affluence and poverty in the District.

Nearly 50 representatives from around 30 organisations, from Age UK to Friends of the Family, agreed to work more closely together. They welcomed the Charter, which they hope will become the gold standard for anyone who gives advice in Winchester District.

Hampshire County Council, which was represented at the conference, is reviewing advice provision across the whole county. “Winchester today, Hampshire tomorrow!” said Chris Holloway of WinACC. “I’m hoping that the Winchester District Advice Charter will be taken up across the county, so that we all work together to get the best possible advice to everyone who needs it.”

Other ideas for the future included bringing volunteer advisers together so that they all know what each other can do, a shared website for organisations that sign up to the Charter and have a quality standard, and pooling expertise so that advisers can support each other. Someone

who works with older people, for example, could get specialist advice from someone who focuses on housing; someone linked to a school could draw on the knowledge of a disability organisation.

-Ends- (Words 343)

Notes to editors:

For more information, contact:

- Nicola Revolta, Media, Marketing and Fundraising Officer, Citizens Advice Winchester District - 01962 848008 nicola.revolta@winchesterdistrictcab.org.uk
- Tom Belshaw, Head of Business Development, Community First - 01962 807036 tom.belshaw@cfirst.org.uk
- Chris Holloway, Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC) - 07779 283451 chris.holloway@winacc.org.uk



Lin Kelly of Citizens Advice Winchester District receiving the cheque for £2,000 from Roger Morfill of the Meon Valley Lions Club (with Mike Betts organiser of the Wickham Charity Beer Festival and Lions members and Citizens Advice volunteers)

News release - 27 June 2016

Wickham Charity Beer Festival pulls in £2,000 for local Citizens Advice service

The Meon Valley Lions Club received a donation of £2,000 from the 16th Wickham Charity Beer Festival held on 9th April 2016 at The Wickham Centre. The Lions, who provided the BBQ at the festival as usual and organised a Citizens Advice volunteer team from Bishop's Waltham to man the bar, decided that all of the £2,000 should be given to Citizens Advice to support their outstanding work in the local area.

The cheque presentation was held at The Hampshire Bowman near Bishop's Waltham on 20th June 2016. Lin Kelly of Citizens Advice Winchester District's Bishop's Waltham office said: "We are extremely grateful to the Meon Valley Lions for their very generous donation to the service.

As a charity we are always looking for fundraising opportunities so are very grateful to Mike Betts the organiser of the Wickham Charity Beer Festival (pictured right of Roger Morfill) and to the Lions for supporting us. The donation will help towards the cost of re-carpeting the office and updating our computer system.”

Roger Morfill, President of the Meon Valley Lions said: “We chose Citizens Advice in the Bishop’s Waltham area because their volunteers provide such an invaluable service to the local community on a whole range of issues. They are so much more than a charity, offering advice, information and support to anyone who needs it.”

The Bishop’s Waltham office in Brook Street is open for drop-in appointments on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 to 14:00, or visit outreach locations at the Merry Go Round Children’s Centre at Wickham Primary School on Thursday 09:30 to 11:30 or at Denmead Community Centre on Thursday 13:00 to 15:00. Alternatively call the Adviceline on 03444 111306 or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk.

The 17th Wickham Charity Beer Festival will take place on 8th October 2016 at The Wickham Centre.

-Ends- (Words 301)

20 June 2016 – Office Manager vacancy

If you have excellent administration skills and are looking for a new Office Manager role in a fantastic local charity, we would love to hear from you. This role is mostly based at our Winchester office and involves providing the Chief Officer, Advice Services Manager and Trustee Board with appropriate administration and office management support. You will be responsible for making sure our offices continue to be professional, organised and well run. Applicants must have proven administration skills, be confident with IT, be highly organised and be committed to the principles of our service. The salary is £15,633 (£21,033 full time equivalent) for 27.5 hours per week (hours to be agreed, job share welcome). For an application pack email: advice@winchesterdistrictcab.org.uk (CVs not accepted). Closing date 4th July 2016 (interviews will be held on 13th July 2016).

JOB TITLE:	Office Manager
SALARY:	£21,033 full time equivalent (£15,633 actual)
HOURS:	27.5 hours per week (job share welcome)
TYPE:	Part time, permanent contract
REPORTING TO:	Advice Services Manager
CLOSING DATE:	4 th July 2016 (Interviews will be held on 13 th July 2016)



Citizens Advice local volunteer, Brighid from Winchester

News release - 31 May 2016

Volunteers donate £100 million worth of time to Citizens Advice

Volunteers at Citizens Advice donate over £100 million worth of their time each year to help people solve their problems.

Natalie Webb, Chief Officer of Citizens Advice for the Winchester District is using Volunteers Week (1 - 12 June 2016) to thank the 90 volunteers who gave their time over the last 12 months and to encourage more people to get in touch about volunteering for the local charity.

Natalie Webb said, "Citizens Advice volunteers change lives. It is thanks to the generosity of our volunteers that we are able to help people take control of their finances, claim entitlements like sick pay and protect their rights at work. There are many opportunities to volunteer at Citizens Advice and new volunteers are always welcome."

One of the volunteers is Brighid (pictured) from Winchester, who has been volunteering for the charity for ten years and has handled cases in most areas of advice work including debt, employment, housing, consumer and relationship issues.

Brighid said: "I started volunteering with the service when I realised how comfortable and protected I was from a life I knew little about. I recognised that there were many people who were vulnerable and struggling with a variety of issues, including literacy problems, and wanted to help. Many people struggle to navigate their way through the bureaucracy and insensitivities of organisations large and small."

One such example was when Brighid assisted a vulnerable client to successfully challenge a local high street bank's sudden decision to increase an agreed monthly debt repayment sum without warning, on the basis that the client had been paying the agreed monthly sum

consistently. The decision had caused a corresponding deterioration in the client's health. Following intervention by Citizens Advice, the bank duly apologised to the client, refunded the amount taken from their account and also compensated the client for their poor service.

“Volunteering for Citizens Advice has provided me with a framework and discipline, and it keeps my brain active. I have learned to be more sceptical and analytical when reading or watching media coverage of social issues. I work as part of a strong team who support each other in our collective aim to achieve the best outcomes for our clients”.

Citizens Advice Winchester District volunteers support people face-to-face, over the phone and online through email and webchat. Over the last 12 months they have helped local people with 14,456 issues. Volunteers also give their time in areas like IT, fundraising, research, campaigns and administration.

The charity is currently looking for volunteers to help with fundraising. Please contact nicola.revolta@winchesterdistrictcab.org.uk or call 07881 825077.

-Ends- (Words 431)

News release – 24 May 2016

Citizens Advice Winchester District wins City Council tenants advice contract



The local Citizens Advice charity for the Winchester District has won Winchester City Council's contract to deliver its money and benefits advice and debt counselling service to City Council tenants.

The service provides practical support to Winchester City Council tenants who are struggling to make ends meet and pay their rent. It assists local people, particularly those who are vulnerable, to find a sustainable solution to manage their money and maintain their tenancy.

Natalie Webb, Chief Officer at Citizens Advice Winchester District said, “I'm delighted that we have been awarded the three year contract for the Money and Benefit Advice and Debt Counselling Service for Winchester City Council tenants. The team at Citizens Advice Winchester District look forward to continuing to deliver an excellent service to those in our community who need it most.”

Citizens Advice Winchester District has successfully delivered the Winchester City Council Housing Services project since 2003 and is a Designated Partner Organisation of the Council (2015-2018).

Citizens Advice Winchester District provides free advice, information and support on a wide range of subjects to anyone who needs it, including legal, consumer, benefits, housing and debt. The charity helps people to overcome their problems at face-to-face locations across the district, as well as over the phone and online. For more information visit www.winchesterdistrictcab.org.uk or call the advice line on 03444 111306.

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