

Our impact in 2023/24

# The difference we make to Cheshire West



# We are Citizens Advice Cheshire West

Every year thousands of people come to us for help solving their problems.

This means we're an important part of the community, with a credible understanding of local needs.

We use this to tailor our services and help improve local policies and practices.



**£3,248,277**

saved by government and public services last year. That's £2.07 for every £1 invested in our service.

# This is Kris

Kris is an example of one of the people we helped.

Last year, we saw **15,377** people about **37,087** issues.

Kris' story shows how we help people solve their problems, and why this is important.



# What we do

We help people with a range of problems including issues with housing, debt, benefits, employment, relationships and consumer rights.

Sometimes people have more than one issue they need help with.



Kris needed help appealing a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) decision.

He has physical and mental health conditions and suffers from seizures.

He was behind with his rent and didn't have enough money for food or energy bills.

# How we help

People access us in different ways:



**19%**  
face-to-face



**44%**  
by telephone



**32%**  
by webchat and email



Sabine, a Welfare Rights adviser, helped Kris.

She supported him to gather his medical evidence.

He won his appeal and received £16,000 in backdated benefit payments as well as weekly payments of £156.90.

# How we help

People often come to us with multiple or complex problems.

We can deal with most of the issues people come to us with, tailoring our advice to their needs.



Sabine referred Kris to our Community Connectors.

They were successful in applying for a Discretionary Housing Payment of £900 to settle his rent arrears.

They also helped him with food and heating bank vouchers, as well as a grant of £250 when he had his benefit money stolen.

# Our advice is effective

Problems don't happen in isolation and can have a severe consequences. Solving them stops these situations escalating.

We help thousands of people like Nina.



**7 in 10 people** said their problem was solved following advice, and 3 in 4 of them said they could not have resolved their problem without us



**7 out of 10 people** said we helped them find a way forward

# The difference this makes

The wider impact of advice – what we achieve as a result of solving problems and providing support – is just as important.



**60%**

said they felt less stress, depressed or anxious as a result of the help they received from us



Our advice helped improve Kris' financial situation.

His anxiety reduced, and his physical health improved.

He has used part of his backdated benefits to buy himself a new settee, cooker and wardrobe.

He now feels much more secure.



# Our impact



**93% of people**  
we helped were either  
highly satisfied or satisfied



**72% of people**  
found us easy to access



**more than 60%**  
of the people we help with  
crisis support are disabled  
or have long term health  
conditions



**69% of people**  
using the website to get  
advice said they found the  
advice helpful



**84% of people**  
said they would  
recommend us to a friend



**4.9 problems**  
On average, we helped  
people with 4.9 interrelated  
problems

# Our value to society

For every £1 invested in our service in 2023/24, we generated:

**£2.07**

in savings to  
government and  
public services  
(fiscal benefits)

**Total:**

**£3,248,277**

**£18.66**

in wider economic  
and social benefits  
(public value)

**Total:**

**£29,325,737**

**£10.28**

in financial value to  
the people we help  
(specific outcomes  
to individuals)

**Total:**

**£16,165,318**

# How we calculate our financial value

It's impossible to put a financial value on everything we do – but where we can, we have.

We've used a Treasury-approved model to do this.

From our robust management information, we've also separately considered the financial benefits to the people we help.

- Keeping people in employment or helping them back to work
- Preventing housing evictions and statutory homelessness
- Reducing demand for mental health and GP services
- Improving mental wellbeing and positive functioning
- Improved family relationships

# Our value to this community

Our savings to the public purse include:



**£289,138**

saved by local government,  
through reducing  
homelessness

Maximising the income for those we help prevents more costly intervention.

This helps reduce financial difficulty, promotes inclusion and benefits the economy.

This is only one fraction of our true value. We also:

- help clients negotiate local processes, such as welfare reform changes
- help local authority rent and council tax arrears to be rescheduled, and reduce the associated administrative costs

# This is Sam

## The wider value of volunteering

People like Sam give their time, skills and experience to enable us to reach as many people as we do.

There are also considerable benefits for them too, such as improved employability.

This year our trained volunteers gave up **£436,664** worth of volunteering hours to help deliver our services.



# Our volunteer impact

Our volunteers come from a range of backgrounds and communities. They volunteer an average of 5 hours a week for a variety of reasons and all help people in Cheshire West with their problems.

**9 in 10 say helping the people in their community is why they volunteer**



**6 in 10 left our volunteer service for a paid role**



**Over 7 in 10 think working within a supportive team is the best thing about us**



# Local Delivery

Our Financial Inclusion project has helped to lift nearly 400 people out of food poverty, our Heating Bank has supported those struggling to keep warm and we began a new partnership with Macmillan in October.

**397 people no longer needed to use a food bank**



**£300k distributed via our Heating Bank**



**97 Macmillan grants approved**



# Research and campaigns

We used social media to share advice on energy saving and cost of living assistance

We promoted Scams Awareness Week

We highlighted the issue of clients “Living on Empty”, having no spare money after paying essential bills





# Citizens Advice Cheshire West

[www.citizensadvicecw.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicecw.org.uk)



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