



**North Yorkshire
Citizens Advice &
Law Centre**

**citizens
advice**

Annual Report 2022/23

**Citizens
Advice
helped me
find a way
forward.**



**Become a
Citizens Advice
volunteer**

Citizens Advice helps people find a way forward. We're here for everyone, whoever you are, whatever your problem.



We are a registered charity and rely on funding and donations in order to deliver our service to the residents of North Yorkshire.

We are North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre

We provide free, independent, confidential, and impartial advice and campaign on big issues affecting people's lives.

We are an independent charity and part of the Citizens Advice Network across England and Wales. We are also part of the Law Centres Network and value the independent spirit and principles on which the Law Centre tradition lays.

We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination wherever we see it.

Our Mission

To provide advice and legal help that helps people to overcome their problems.

Our Vision

Is for people to have the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward, whoever they are and whatever problem they face.

Front cover photo features Amanda who is a Fuel Poverty Adviser based at our Scarborough office.

North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre

Registered office: 277 High Street, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL7 8DW.

Charity Registration Number 1146084.

A Company limited by Guarantee in England Number 07890996.

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN: 617621.



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Statement of Internal Control

The trustee board of North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre oversees the information security of all personal information of our clients, staff, funders, and strategic partners that is processed. North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre holds joint responsibility for client data that is held in our case management system, with the national Citizens Advice Service.

An information assurance management team exists to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all personal and sensitive data is maintained to a level which is compliant with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.

Foreword

Carl Les

Chair of Trustee Board

Our services have never been more needed, and I thank most sincerely all our volunteers and our teams of staff for stepping up to the challenge, ably led by our experienced and dedicated management.

Delivering advice services with one focus across the whole County, the largest in England, is now a reality and is working well. The new Law Centre is an immense achievement and will be greatly welcomed.

We are fortunate that our supporters, particularly councils both very small and very large, have stood beside us, and our other important funders have put their trust in us to continue to deliver. I am grateful as ever to the board of trustees for their wise counsel and continuing support.

Our impact in 2022/23



21,568
people helped



£17,316,772
income gained



104,779
Issues



£2,483,613
debts written off

Chief Executive Officer's report

Carol Shreeve

Chief Executive Officer

The theme this year has been the launch of the Law Centre and the need for us to respond to the expanding cost of living crisis. We do this to a background of Local Government reorganisation and our own recent merger into one legal entity. The first thing I must recognise is the extraordinary grit and determination of the volunteers and staff who have coped so well with raising demand you will see in these pages, alongside the gaps in public sector provision. They understand when our community is angry and work hard to find ways forward for people when they are in the most difficult of circumstances. This is, along with many other roles, a challenging job to be doing at this time and we are very grateful for those who choose to do it.

The law centre, our energy team, those providing frontline services and those working to support them are all part of a network to try and prevent our communities' needs worsening and trying to prevent individuals needing access to serious intervention, although of course we are here when they do. Please read some of our stories. I think they are our communities speaking for themselves and say more than even our data does.

This year more than ever I want to pay tribute to our funders, large and small, statutory and charity. Each Citizens Advice and Law Centre raises all its own money and we are no exception. Someone told me again today that surely there is a duty on Councils or the Government or someone to give us proper funding and I explained no. It is a choice that is based on the economics of prevention over dealing with deep poverty and crisis and a belief that all should have access to the same rights and responsibilities within society and should properly understand those rights and responsibilities. In addition, an understanding that there needs to be a source of information that is trusted and believed but separate and independent from the state. When these falter, when these are no longer the priority, funding ends. At the present time I am grateful and thankful for all the funders who are showing belief in our service and who are providing for our communities.

Contacts by channel in 2022/23



44,266

Contacts by telephone



26,721

Contacts by email



7,087

Contacts in person

Treasurer's report

Robert Pringle

Treasurer

I would like to thank all the organisations and people who provide funds to North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre (NYCALC) which allows the delivery of an increasing number of projects and services to an ever increasing number of clients. This annual report shows the wide range of projects we are delivering and the increasing number of funders we rely on.

Our income and expenditure increased significantly during the year 2022-23 (see table below) as a result of the merger of three Citizens Advice organisations to form NYCALC which now covers the whole of North Yorkshire. It also demonstrates the success of our leadership team in obtaining additional funds for new and existing projects, and that funders recognise the importance of the work we currently do and the need to fund new projects to meet emerging needs.

The increasing number of projects and range of funders and the more recent launch of the Law Centre results in an increase in complexity of the finances. The Finance team were able to successfully deal with this and ensured that the Trustee Board were fully briefed on the finances of the organisation.

As we move forward there are many challenges as highlighted by Carol in her CEO's report; we do so on a solid financial footing which will assist in meeting the many challenges which lie ahead.

	Year end 31/03/22 (£)	Year end 31/3/23 (£)	Increase (%)
Income	1,728,768	£3,948,991	128%
Expenditure	1,624,601	£3,084,806	90%

A copy of our full accounts can be obtained, on request.

Our value to society

North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre helps thousands of people every year. This provides us with unique insight into the challenges our clients face.

We are not only helping people through difficult situations, but also identifying and tackling the underlying causes of their problems.

The people we help, our funders and the organisations we work with see the value we deliver and the impact we are making. It is impossible to put a financial value on everything we do – but where we can, we have. We have used a Treasury-approved model to provide the figures detailed below.

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

For every £1 invested in our service in 2022/23, we generated:

£18.28

in public value

Wider economic and social benefits. Improvements in participation and productivity for Clients and volunteers.

£10.63

in value to the people we help

Income gained through benefits, debts written off, and consumer problems solved.

£2.39

in fiscal value

Reduction in health service demand, LA homelessness service, and out-of-work benefits for clients and volunteers.

Financial value of our volunteers in 2022/23



£565,416

estimated worth of donated hours of our volunteers.

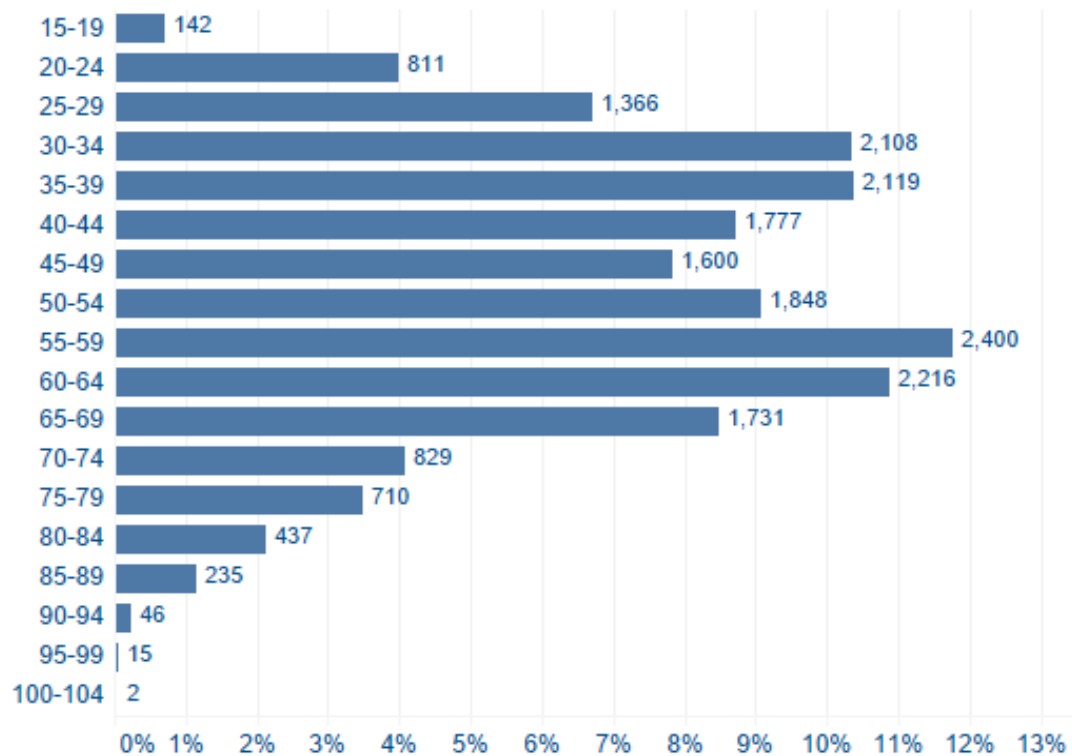
Issues we helped with in 2022/23

Breakdown of issues people wanted help with

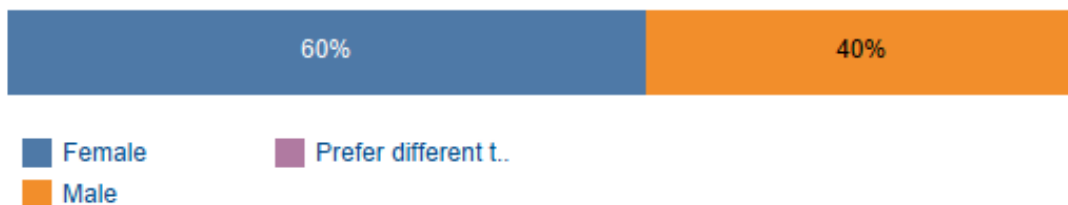
	Issues	Clients
Benefits & tax credits	24,439	9,169
Benefits Universal Credit	11,413	5,299
Charitable Support & Food Ban..	6,948	4,686
Consumer goods & services	3,824	2,219
Debt	10,000	2,866
Education	302	195
Employment	4,235	1,547
Financial services & capability	5,509	3,165
GVA & Hate Crime	290	205
Health & community care	1,315	839
Housing	5,977	2,734
Immigration & asylum	1,039	558
Legal	1,909	1,188
Other	1,147	324
Relationships & family	3,213	1,732
Tax	578	442
Travel & transport	685	500
Utilities & communications	21,956	5,383
Grand Total	104,779	

Client profiles

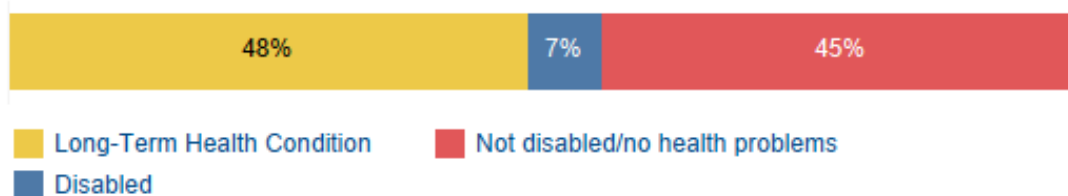
Age



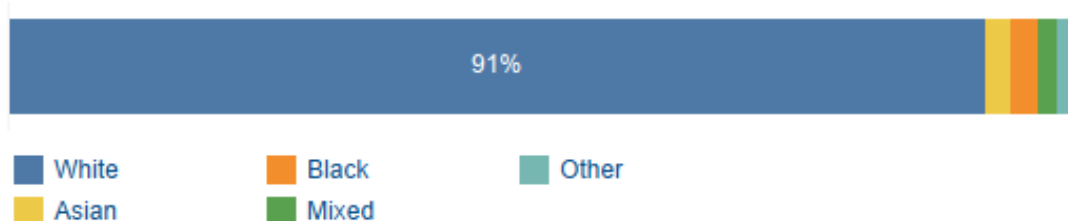
Gender



Disability / Long-term health



Ethnicity



Highlights 2022/23



April 2022

Citizens Advice Craven and Harrogate Districts and Citizens Advice Scarborough & District merged with Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire. The new organisation was renamed Citizens Advice North Yorkshire.

November 2022

New website launched



May 2022

Our Legal Services Department gained Lexcel Accreditation.



December 2022

We became a member of the Law Centre Networks. In March 2023 we officially changed our name to North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre.



Our service

We are a vital open-door service for many people. Our service is delivered through our core service, projects, and specialist advice including debt, welfare benefits, employment, housing, family law, discrimination, and immigration.

Our communications team promotes our service through social media platforms and the news section on our website. The team also promote the work of our partners and keep MPs of our areas up to date on our activities and campaigns.

Local offices

We have 8 local offices based in Harrogate, Malton, Northallerton, Richmond, Skipton, Scarborough, Selby and Whitby.

Adviceline

You can contact us every weekday, 9.00 am to 4.30 pm, by calling **0808 278 7900 Freephone.**

Drop-ins

We run drop-in sessions at all our offices and at outreach locations.

Website

Visit our website at www.cany.org.uk

This gives information about all our services and how to access them.

What people said about our service

88% overall client satisfaction with our service.

86% of clients would recommend our service to others.

80% of clients stated it was easy to access our service.

74% of clients stated that their problem had been resolved.

85% of clients stated that the service had helped them find a way forward.

"The CAB in Scarborough runs an excellent service with very approachable and helpful staff."

"Using CAB took away all the stress I was getting regarding form filling. I have already told a friend to use them as I found it brilliant."

"Very kind, understanding and helpful man. Sorted me out with a delivery of central heating oil with funds for fuel bank foundation."

"Thank you for not only helping me out in the past but also to thank you for everything you are doing for others in these difficult economic times. I wouldn't hesitate to use you again and recommend your services to my friends and family."

Law Centre

In 2022/23 the Law Centre team helped a total of **923** people with **1,469** issues and achieved income gains of **£94,940**.

North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre covers York and North Yorkshire. The Law Centre has a range of funding contracts to provide services in family law, housing, discrimination, and asylum and Immigration.

To make a referral into any of our specialist legal teams please email our Law Centre team at: lawcentre@northyorksca.org.uk or call our FREE advice line on **0808 278 7900**

We're always looking to make connections with local solicitors who would like to offer pro bono advice. If you'd like to talk to us about opportunities, please get in touch.

THE
ACCESS
TO JUSTICE
FOUNDATION

Lexcel
Legal Practice Quality Mark
Law Society Accredited

**Law
Centres
Network**

Areas of law covered

Family and relationships

Providing guidance, support and casework for people with family and relationship issues. This includes support at all stages with:

- child arrangements
- divorce
- domestic abuse

Housing

Providing advice and casework a variety of housing issues. This includes:

- housing register reviews
- matters related to possession and eviction from your home
- homelessness
- disrepair within your home

Discrimination

Providing guidance, support and casework for people with discrimination issues related to someone's employment, welfare benefits or housing. This includes:

- initial advice
- support drafting documents
- ongoing advice to prepare for and represent yourself at tribunal

Asylum and immigration

Providing guidance, support and help accessing legal services for people with asylum and immigration matters. This includes:

- initial advice
- support with some applications
- guidance and support

Warm & Well in North Yorkshire

In 2022/23 the Energy Advice Team helped a total of **5442** people with **24,927** issues and achieved income gains of **£1,415,581**.

The Warm & Well in North Yorkshire single point of contact allows people to access information, advice and support on a range of issues.

Support Available

Our Energy Advisers can provide information, advice, and practical support on various energy issues including:

- Full benefits check to make sure you are claiming all you are entitled to.
- Budgeting and income maximisation.
- Practical advice on energy efficiency measures.
- Help signing up to the Priority Service Register.
- For those eligible, emergency fuel vouchers, help towards bills or help towards the costs of oil, LPG, coal and logs.

**Warm
& Well**
in North Yorkshire



- Energy comparison and switching.
- Warm Home discount.
- Referred to our debt service or other specialist services where needed.
- Referred to other organisations if they are better placed to help.

Subject to eligibility, through the NYC Household Support Fund, British Gas Energy Trust and other funders, Warm & Well in North Yorkshire can provide financial support through the distribution of fuel vouchers, help towards energy bills or other energy costs including LPG, oil, coal and logs.

Health and Wellbeing Board
North Yorkshire



Energy Advice projects

Energy Redress

Funded through the Energy Industry Voluntary Redress Scheme',
www.energyredress.org.uk

£273,000 over 2 years to fund two specialist energy advisers and one community champion to reach vulnerable consumers. The project started delivery in October 2022

Scarborough Energy Advice Project Funded by the British Gas Energy Trust



£119,265 over 19 months; Funding specifically for Scarborough and districts, funding 2 specialist energy advisers and £15,000 in practical measures such as electric blankets, low energy cooking and warm packs. We have also received £150,000 in fuel vouchers for clients on pre-payment meters to supplement the Household Support Fund and other pots of funding for direct financial support. The project started delivery in October 2022.

Woodsmith Foundation: Face to face advice in Whitby



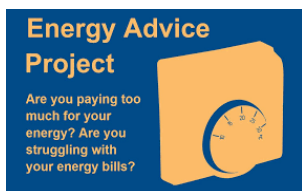
£11,000 awarded by the Wordsmith Foundation to support local people in the Borough of Scarborough and the North York Moors National Park who are facing financial difficulty including struggling with the cost of fuel, food and other essentials as the cost of living increases. Funding is to contribute to the face to face service in Whitby.

Two Ridings Community Foundation: Surviving Winter Fund



£3000 awarded by the Two Ridings Community Foundation to purchase and distribute warm packs (containing hot water bottle, handwarmers, blanket, scarf and hat) in Citizens Advice offices and Warm Spaces across North Yorkshire.

Energy Advice projects



Energy Advice Programme 2022/23

£15,000 awarded by the Warm Home Discount initiative and provides one to one specialist energy advice to clients. The project targets clients who are in or at risk of fuel poverty.



Big Energy Saving Network (BESN) 2022/23

£14,000 awarded by Citizens Advice. Supporting eligible organisations and community groups to deliver help and advice to vulnerable consumers, focused on helping them reduce their energy costs and consumption.



Carbon Monoxide Awareness 2022/23

£16,900 awarded by the four Gas Delivery Networks (GDNs) across England and Wales. Southern Gas Network (SGN) are the lead partner. The project is aimed at supporting consumers in vulnerable situations and addressing carbon monoxide (CO) safety issues.

Fuel Bank Foundation and Heat Fund

We continue to work with the Fuel Bank Foundation, supplementing the funding from the Household Support Fund. After undergoing training, our advisers are given access to a portal which can issue same day vouchers of £30 in warmer months (April to October) and £49 in colder months (November to March). We can also make applications to the Heat Fund for off grid financial support

Money and Pension Service (MAPS) Debt Advice Project



**Money &
Pensions
Service**

This year the Debt Team, led by Bev Dixon, has:

- Helped 1,165 clients (an increase of 37% compared to 2021/22)
- Wrote off over £2.163 million of debt via insolvency options
- Actioned 125 Debt Relief Orders (£1,131,244) and 18 Bankruptcies (£716,394)
- Dealt with an average of £11,382 worth of debt per client

With the gradual changes to working life following the end of the pandemic, 2022-23 saw the debt team move back to pre-Covid working. Telephone advice has continued to be the predominant source of advice for most of our clients, however face to face services have started to return for the most vulnerable clients with most offices providing this service on a weekly basis.

The Cost of Living crisis has had a huge impact on many of our clients with an ever-increasing number of budgets seeing a deficit after paying essential bills. For many, this means making the choice between paying their rent, council tax, water, fuel or stop these payments in order to buy food to feed themselves and their families. Whilst Government support has provided help towards fuel bills, the huge increase in the cost of gas, electricity and oil has meant many clients are still struggling to cover these essential costs. The mild winter has helped but doesn't address a bill that's doubled or in some cases tripled.

The consequence of not paying essential bills means many of our clients present with debt for priority costs (rent, council

tax, fuel, water). Gone are the days when credit cards, store cards and payday loans were the biggest concern. Now clients are faced with a decision of paying the greatest priority that week.

As well as looking at ways to deal with the clients debt, advisers will also look for ways to help bridge the gap between income and outgoings. This could be a benefit check, charitable help or better deals to help with saving money. This has become more and more important and sadly, signposting to a local foodbank is a common occurrence these days.

At a time when debt and budgeting is at its worst, funding for the MAPS project has been extended until March 2025. This was a huge relief and means we can continue to provide this much needed service for a further 2 years.

Unfortunately, many of our cases are complicated and complex and need much more than debt advice. In order to achieve the best possible outcomes for clients we have to consider the whole picture. Following the merger of offices we are able to refer to other specialist advice teams.

Case Study how we helped John (name has been changed)

John had suffered a breakdown following the end of his marriage and also the failure of his business. John's income had reduced considerably - his only source now was from benefits. John had accrued debt for his mortgage and rent as well other non priority debts.

John lived alone in a shared ownership property (part mortgage/part rent). John was reluctant to move as he needed somewhere for his children to live when they came to stay with him on alternate weekends. John had been struggling with his mortgage payments for some time and had secured help via a government scheme – Support with Mortgage Interest.

The scheme helps with payment of the mortgage interest. However due to the severe change in income, John was unable to pay the remaining mortgage and rent costs. After negotiation, John's Father agreed he would make the payments in order for his son to keep his home.

After considering all options, it was agreed we would apply for a Breathing Space procedure to be put in place. This stops all enforcement action on a client's debts for a period of 60 days. The bankruptcy proceedings were halted and the Court hearing was reset. This gave more time for us to gather further information and evidence. Unfortunately, due to John's mental health, we were

unable to do this within the 60 days and the case was finally heard in Court. The judge listened to John's evidence, which was supported by our involvement, and the case was put on hold on the grounds that the creditor had failed to take into account John's circumstances and vulnerability.

We are now working with the John's mental health team to secure evidence of his ill health. This will enable us to put in place a Mental Health Breathing Space (MHBS) which will stop further enforcement action on the debts until he no longer needs support and can manage by himself. The MHBS isn't time limited like the previous one which gives John peace of mind knowing his creditors can't take further action.

John is hoping to return to work at some point in the future. Once his situation has stabilised we will be able to reassess his circumstances and offer advice on options for dealing with his debts going forward. For now, the pressure of losing his home has been taken away from John and he can concentrate on becoming well without having to worry about his debts. This has been a huge relief for both John and his Father.



Rural Reach Information and Advice Bus

Rural Reach Information and Advice Bus

Funded through National Lottery, local council, and various other grants and trusts. In July 2022 we secured another 3 years funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their continued support of this valued service for our rural communities.

During the past year our Advice Bus has supported 1029 clients and we've increased our monthly sessions to cover 11 towns across Hambleton and Richmondshire:

- Bedale Market
- Leyburn
- Reeth
- Hawes (Community Café or Market)
- Bainbridge
- Stokesley
- Easingwold
- East Thirsk Community Centre
- Middleham
- Catterick Garrison
- Boroughbridge.

In addition to the regular monthly sessions, over the past year the bus has been invited to adhoc events at Catterick Village warm space, Stokesley Community Day, Richmond Climate Action Partnership day, Richmond Safeguarding event and Wensleydale show. The team are regularly joined at the monthly sessions by our community partners: IDAS, Darlington & Northallerton MIND, North Yorkshire Fire



& Rescue Service, Carers Plus, Easingwold Community Care, along with colleagues from our internal projects Warm and Well and Homes for Ukraine.

The main issues the team deal with are: Benefit queries, Cost of Living, Consumer, Health and community grants and Housing. The team arranges for a follow-up call from our specialist advisers or refer directly to our community partners whilst with the client. By working in conjunction with our community partners, we're able to deliver a multi-agency support service for clients who may struggle to contact organisations due to lack of knowledge, travel costs or communication issues.

Results from satisfaction survey

90% people felt less stressed and more confident dealing with their situation after accessing the Advice Bus

23% people felt less isolated and have increased awareness of support available within the local community

40% people were referred for specialist advice in Debt, Benefits, Cost of Living and Pensions which resulted in them being financially better off after accessing the Advice Bus.

Local projects

Macmillan Benefits & Advice Service - Hambleton & Richmondshire

Funded by NHS Tees and Esk Valley and NYCLAC. The project is dedicated to provide support and advice to those affected by cancer, and their families. Mainly deals with welfare benefit issues but also other areas of advice that are affecting patients' lives. Delivered with help from the Cancer Information and Support Services Centre at Macmillan Centre, Northallerton..

York Against Cancer Project - Scarborough

Funded by York Against Cancer. A project dedicated for those affected by cancer, and their families. Mainly deals with welfare benefit issues but also other areas of advice that are affecting patients' lives. Delivered with help from the Cancer Information and Support Services Centre at Scarborough Hospital.

Hambleton Outreach - Extended and Enhanced Housing Support

Funded by Hambleton DC. Project delivered across Hambleton District, utilising a blended mix of advice channels but focusing on accessibility by offering face to face advice at outreach locations focussing on the market towns within the District, as well as Northallerton.

Eastfield Outreach - Scarborough

Funded by Eastfield Town Council. Providing generalist advice to the people of Eastfield Town, who are often unable to access our main office service.

Mental Health Advice Project - Scarborough

Funded by Henry Smith Charity. Project provides tailored intensive generalist advice to those struggling with mental health issues, whether long or short term. This project is delivered in conjunction with Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale MIND, whose support worker provides money management learning, finds practical solutions to money-related problems and helps people access longer term mental health support.

Housing Matters - Selby

Funded by the Nationwide Community Foundation. Specialist Housing Caseworker supporting clients to prevent homelessness by providing housing-related advice, information, and support, including legal advice and court representation for those at risk of eviction.

Outreach Advice Van - Ryedale, Scarborough and Selby

The Outreach Advice Van makes scheduled visits on market days, and visits to local community groups and events throughout the year. Funded through our core service.

Specialist Advice and Projects

Advice Matters - Selby

Project aims to address the issues associated with financial hardship connected to poor mental health. We provide specialist advice on income maximisation, benefit claims and appeals, money management and debt solutions, alongside mental health interventions to ensure solutions are achievable and sustainable. Advice Matters works with York MIND and Brighter Futures who deliver mental health support. Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund for another 3 years.

Selby Advice

We co-ordinate the Selby Advice network of advice and information agencies within Selby District. We host quarterly meetings where training and networking opportunities are offered. We maintain the selbyadvice.org.uk website and circulate news and service updates within the network via email.

SHIC Cuppa Connect - Hambleton and Richmondshire

Partnership working across Hambleton and Richmondshire, signposting people to support available from Citizens Advice and other organisations.

Rydale Cost of Living project

Funded by Ryedale District Council. Advice delivered face to face advice delivered as outreach in Ryedale House or telephone appointments. Distribution of small measures, and of Hardship Fund for eligible residents.

POMOC project - Scarborough

Providing European Union Settled Status advice, as well as signposting and support to access local services for the East European communities in Scarborough and Ryedale. Working with Sprouthouse, a community specialist organisation, with community development work for the mostly Polish and Romanian communities and community cohesion work between these and local communities.

Foodbank Projects

Harrogate District Foodbank project - funded by Trussell Trust

Working in partnership with Harrogate District foodbank to provide bespoke and holistic advice and support for those identified as facing destitution who are accessing foodbank Centres throughout the District.

Selby District Foodbank project - funded by Selby & District Foodbank

Both projects deliver drop-in sessions based in foodbanks where our Advisers are on hand to provide information, advice and associated casework to those visiting the foodbank and also volunteers who work there.

Countywide projects

Homes for Ukraine - North Yorkshire

Support for Ukrainian nationals, sponsors or family host. We provide advice including benefit eligibility, form filling, housing issues and help with the biometric residence permit process. We also provide information about Ukrainian support groups across North Yorkshire.

NYCC Information and Advice Service - North Yorkshire

Contract funded by NYCC to deliver information and advice through a single point of contact (telephone, email, and online at www.cany.org.uk).

NYCC Money and Benefits Service - North Yorkshire

Contract funded by NYC to deliver information and advice on money management and income maximisation through a single point of contact (telephone and email).

National projects

The following projects are funded by National Citizens Advice.

Help to Claim – National helpline

Service to provide telephone or webchat advice to clients looking to make their first claim for Universal credit.

Help through Hardship – National helpline

Helpline is open to clients needing support with food parcels, the aim of the project is to offer advice to clients in crisis by giving income maximisation advice which can include benefit check and local support grants in addition to issuing a food voucher for either a Trussell Trust or local independent foodbank. Clients with mental health issues are advised and offered a referral to MIND for additional support.

Pension Wise

Funded by the Money and Pensions Service. Guidance service set up to help people aged over 50 with a personal or workplace pension. Appointments are held by telephone with one of our Guidance Specialists.

Client case studies

Welfare benefits

How we helped Justin

Justin lives with his wife and adult son. All three suffer from severe ill health. They have no carers despite their care needs and struggle to support each other with their daily care. None of the family were able to work due to their ill health.

The impact of the rising cost of living was causing them much concern and hardship. They had made several requests to us for food parcels and help with their heating costs.

Justin had applied for PIP, but he was turned down. Our Welfare Benefits Caseworker helped Justin to ask for the decision to be looked at again by the DWP, but this was unsuccessful. The caseworker then acted as his representative at the appeal, this included preparing a submission and attending the hearing.

The appeal was successful, and Justin was awarded enhanced rate for daily living and enhanced rate for mobility. Justin got a substantial back payment of £10,600 of PIP and will receive £156.90 per week.

This will make an enormous difference to the family, and they will be able to afford to heat their home adequately in winter.

Housing

How we helped Duncan

Duncan had lived in the same private rented property for 11 years without a tenancy agreement. To receive help towards housing costs through Universal Credit, he was required to supply evidence of his rent liability. When Duncan asked for written evidence to show this, his landlord drafted a tenancy agreement which included a rent increase.

Duncan has anxiety which results in indecision, and he requires additional time to process information, he was reluctant to sign the tenancy agreement due to the different terms within the agreement, such as the landlord and tenant responsibilities. Although Duncan was happy to pay the increase in rent and felt the amount was reasonable due to the size of the property, he was concerned about how often the landlord would be able to do this.

Duncan received further advice regarding rent increases, specifically, looking at how often the landlord would be able to do this and ways to challenge this if he disagrees with the amount, and also discussed the terms of the tenancy agreement in detail and how this would affect him.

Duncan clearly understood the terms of his tenancy agreement and was confident of his rights when he signed it. Duncan could now pass his rent details to the DWP so that he could receive extra support towards his rent.

Debt case study

How we helped Grace

Grace is 59 years old and was widowed last year. Her husband had been severely disabled and in poor health, and Grace had been his sole carer for many years. She was devoted to looking after him.

They had lived together in a three-bedroom council property but following her husband's death Grace had to move to a smaller property. Her income had reduced considerably, and she could no longer afford the rent. She found she was also struggling with several other financial commitments due to the fall in income.

Although Grace and her husband had been claiming benefits together, after his death she had to make new claims. The issues involved meant this was very complex and Grace was at her wits end trying to cope with her loss, move house, chase up her benefit claims and deal with her creditors as well.

Throughout all this Grace has been managing with her own health problems following cancer treatment and ill mental health. We have worked with Grace supporting her with debt and benefit advice and taking the time to listen when she just could not think straight and did not know what she needed to do next.

Grace has now settled in her new home; her new benefits are in payment, and we are applying for a Debt Relief Order to write off £13,500 of outstanding debt.

Energy case study

How we helped Jane

Jane contacted the Warm & Well team in January for advice about back billing and prepayment meters. The Energy Adviser helped to set up a direct debit so electricity usage could be monitored, and the energy provider said they would investigate the issue of back billing.

Jane contacted us again because her energy provider had increased the direct debit from £80 to £268 and this payment level was unaffordable. The Energy Adviser contacted the company to discuss the situation and they said the increase was made to recover the arrears on the account. The Energy Adviser explained that there are no 'rules' to say the arrears had to be recovered within a twelve-month period and asked them to reinstall the credit meter. The energy provider initially refused, but the adviser continued her argument that Jane would benefit from having a credit meter.

Finally the energy provider agreed to reinstall the credit meter and a dual fuel tariff was put in place – the direct debit for gas and electricity would be £224 per month which was the amount originally quoted for electricity only.

This enabled Jane to pay for ongoing usage and repay her arrears over a four-year period. Additionally the energy adviser managed to reduce the overall bill by £158 and applied for a grant to help repay the arrears.

Our Volunteers

Thank you to all our volunteers for their time and dedication throughout another demanding year. They have supported us throughout and a number have moved on to paid roles within the organisation including working on Adviceline and various projects.

Our volunteers receive 100% support and full training. Any expenses incurred as a volunteer are reimbursed, for example travel and childcare costs. Volunteers cover various roles including assessors, advisers, receptionists, administration, and trustees.

We are committed to equal opportunities for all our volunteers, staff and clients, and welcome volunteers regardless of race, gender, sexuality, or disabilities.

On the following pages you can read about some of our volunteers' experiences volunteering with us.

For further information on volunteering with us please visit

our [Volunteer with us](#) page on our website at www.cany.org.uk

On 31st March 2023 we had 84 volunteers covering various roles including:

- Administrator
- Advice bus / van drivers
- Adviser
- Benefit form filler
- Fundraisers
- IT Support
- Media
- Receptionist
- Research & campaigns
- Trustee
- Volunteer recruitment and support



Stories from our Volunteers

Mo's story

Volunteering for Citizens Advice is one of the most rewarding things I have ever done in my life! Everyone wants to feel they can make a difference and given the back up, training and support by compassionate and knowledgeable colleagues, my weekly sessions have given me more than I could have hoped for. I can highly recommend spending a few hours a week as a volunteer - some clients are so grateful they even bring you flowers or chocolates!!



Amanda's story

Like many law students, I had no success gaining experience in local law firms, it was for this reason that I decided to volunteer! Starting my role I found the local office to be warm, welcoming, and supportive. Also being part of a wider team across North Yorkshire has much appeal to me. I knew within months this is where I wanted to start my career, when I saw how much of an impact you can make on people's lives.

Chris's story

I have been an adviser in Bradford and then North Yorkshire over the last seven years. I love people and solving problems and it's a privilege to be an adviser with Citizens Advice. I get much satisfaction from encouraging self-help capability and working with clients with health problems.

John's story

I'm 73 and have been working as a volunteer assessor/adviser for Citizens Advice for some 12 years. I help with Adviceline 3 afternoons a week and love it. I have always enjoyed problem solving (or trying to!!) and you never know what is coming before every session.

It's a real tonic.

Stories from our Volunteers

Becky's story

No matter the reason for contacting us I have found a real reward in having a conversation, talking to and listening to people. Sometimes it might be that as the conversation develops the client is surprised when you discover areas where we can offer support that were separate to their initial enquiry. This is especially rewarding as often the client has accepted the situation / circumstance they are extremely unhappy or worried about and so feel a huge sense of relief to have a conversation initiated.

Neils' story

I joined Citizens Advice as part of my post-retirement portfolio following a career as an NHS manager. I currently work 2 sessions a week, one doing callbacks and another on Adviceline, dealing with what could be absolutely anything. I love the role. I think in most cases we really do help people.

Axaviyo's story

I am a final year BSc Diagnostic Radiotherapy student. Although my experience engaging with the community has primarily been focused in healthcare, I saw this as an opportunity to have a different impact, by empowering clients to make informed decisions in their everyday lives.

Paul's story

Hi, my name is Paul and I am a volunteer receptionist at our Scarborough office. I have a diagnosis of Dementia and working my 3 mornings a week with great colleagues helps my mental health no end. However, the greatest satisfaction I get from the job is seeing the reaction of clients who come into the branch, sometimes with the weight of the world on their shoulders, leaving with an almost palpable sense of relief that help is at hand.

Research and Campaigns

We undertake research and campaigns work on local issues and also contribute to national campaigns headed by Citizens Advice.

Where North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre wish to campaign on an issue we keep staff members informed and often ask them for comments and case studies which can be used in wider policy work. We contribute to calls for evidence and government consultations wherever possible.

We have a research and campaigns team consisting of staff, volunteers and trustees who assist with gathering and analysing information.



Campaigns this year included:

- **Cost of living crisis** and where people can get support. We attended various events including the BBC Radio York Cost of Living events held in January and March 2023.
- **Scams Awareness Fortnight** is a national campaign run by the Consumer Protection Partnership and led by Citizens Advice with key support from partners such as the Trading Standards service.
- **Big Energy Saving Campaign** is a national campaign that runs all year round and helps people to get financial support they're entitled to, or take action to reduce energy usage. We deliver key energy advice to clients, helping them reduce their bills while keeping warm throughout the year.
- **National Consumer Week** is a yearly campaign which aims to raise people's awareness of specific consumer issues. The campaign runs in close collaboration with the Consumer Protection Partnership, bringing together key partners in the consumer landscape to identify, prioritise and coordinate collective action to **tackle consumer detriment**.

Our Funders 2022/23

Thank you to all our funders who supported us this year.

Organisations and individuals

Access to Justice Foundation
Addleshaw Goddard
Armed Forces Covenant Fund
British Gas Energy Trust
Cllr. Caroline Goodrick
Dishforth PF and SA
Energy Redress Voluntary Scheme
Garfield Weston
Henry Smith Charity
Leonard Chamberlain Trust
Leyburn Local Quaker Meeting
Money and Pensions Service
National Citizens Advice
National Lottery Community Fund
Nationwide Community Foundation
Selby & District Food Bank
Sherburn in Elmet Community Trust
Skipton Temperance Hall
St Peter's Church, Malton
South Tees NHS
The Princes Trust Countryside Fund
Trussell Trust
Two Ridings Community Foundation
Volant Charitable Trust
Yorkshire Energy Doctor

Regional Council

North Yorkshire Council

District Councils

Craven
Hambleton
Harrogate
Richmondshire
Ryedale
Scarborough
Selby

Town Councils

Barlby and Osgodby
Colburn
Helmsley
Richmond
Selby
Tadcaster
Thirsk

Parish Councils

Amotherby
Arkengarthdale
Azerley
Beal
Bellerby
Bewerley
Bilsdale Midcable
Bradley's Both
Brafferton & Helperby
Brayton
Brompton-on-Swale
Burniston
Burton Salmon
Burton-cum-Walden
Carthorpe
Catterick
Cawood
Clapham cum Newby
Cloughton
Cowling
Draughton
Eggborough
Flaxton
Glaisdale
Glusburn and Cross Hills
Grassington
Hackness & Harwood Dale

Parish councils

continued

Hartwith-cum-Winsley
Hensall
Hillam
Hillside
Hudswell and District
Husthwaite
Kellington
Kilburn
Kirby Wiske with
Newsham &
Breckenbrough
Knaresborough
Lockton
Masham
Melbecks
Middleton Tyas
Moor Monkton
Newton-le-Willows
North Duffield
Riccall
Scagglethorpe
Scorton
Skeeby
Sowerby
Staintondale
Ulleskelf
Weeton
Well
West Tanfield
Whitley
Whorlton
Womersley

Working in Partnership

With the help and support of our partners we can help more people across all our communities.

Access to Justice
Foundation
Age UK in North Yorkshire
Age UK Selby & District
Alzheimer's Society
Brighter Futures Selby
Carers Count Selby
District
Citizens Advice York
Community First
Yorkshire
IDAS
Law Centres Network
Mencap Selby
MIND Darlington
MIND Scarborough
MIND York
NYCC County Council
NYCC Living Well Team
NYCC Stronger
Communities
District & Borough
Councils
- Harrogate
- Hambleton
- Richmondshire
- Ryedale
- Scarborough
- Selby
Town and Parish Councils

Harrogate Easier Living
Project
National Energy Action
North Yorkshire Fire and
Rescue Service
North Yorkshire Horizons
Selby Advice Partnership
Stokesley and District
Community Care
Association
White Rose Improvement
Agency
YES Energy Solutions
Yorkshire Energy Doctor
Yorkshire Housing
Castle Communication
Services
Chapter 3 Enterprise C.I.C
Community First Credit
Union
Dementia Forward Selby
Everyday Enable
Foundation Legal Services
Freeman Brown Solicitors
Homestart
Horton Housing
Horton Wellbeing Cafes
Humankind
IHL Inspiring Healthy
Lifestyles
Independent Health
Complaints

Advocacy Service
Kings Church Selby
Nigel Adams, MP for Selby
and Ainsty,
North Yorkshire Sport
Perennial
Positive Progressions
Scope
Second Chance Ostomy
Yorkshire
Selby & District Foodbank
Selby District AVS
Selby District Vision
Selby U3A
Tadcrafters CIC
The Big Community-Tea
The Salvation Army Selby
The WEA
Together Housing
Total Advocacy
Training for Employment
CIC
Two Ridings Community
Foundation
Trussell Trust
Warm & Well in North
Yorkshire Partnership
Wilberforce Trust
WLCT
Yorkshire Mesmac

Our Governance

North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre is governed by a Board of Trustees who are all volunteers for the charity.

The trustees have ultimate responsibility for the charity's vision, values, ethos, and strategy as well as for the overall performance. They ensure NYCALC complies with all legal requirements and has the highest possible standards of governance. Four formal Trustee Board Meetings are held each year.

The Chief Executive is responsible for leading the management team which includes the Deputy CEO, Head of Quality, and Head of Finance who are responsible for the quality of advice and operational activities for the charity.

Trustee Board Members 2022/23

Cllr. Carl Les	<i>Director/ Chair</i>
Robert Pringle	<i>Director/ Vice-Chair & Treasurer</i>
John Behrens	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
Liz Colling	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
Martin Collins	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
Melanie Davies	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
Nanci Downey	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
Cllr. Caroline Goodrick	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
John Martin	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
John Ritchie	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
Janet Sharp	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
Laura Tunney	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
Karen Tatham	<i>Director/Trustee</i>
Melissa Williams	<i>Director/Trustee</i>

Our Strategic Priorities for 2023/24

- Develop a unifying culture across North Yorkshire that puts first the needs of the community and clients both present and future.
- Develop the Law Centre, starting legal aid contracts and launching services.
- Focus on maintaining a multi channel service in these difficult times.
- Telling our communities stories in an effective and evidence based way.
- Influencing funding for North Yorkshire in a positive way and the advice environment in general.
- Growing our own.
- Making our service better at inclusion.
- Do the very best we can to meet demand.

Contact us

Adviceline

FREEPHONE 0808 278 7900

Monday to Friday 9.00 am – 4.30 pm
(except bank holidays).

Craven

1 Belle Vue Square, Broughton Road,
SKIPTON BD23 1FJ.

Admin line: 01423 637250

Hambleton

277 High Street
NORTHALLERTON DL7 8DW.

Admin line: 01609 776551

Harrogate

Audrey Burton House, Queensway,
HARROGATE HG1 5LX.

Admin line: 01423 637250

Richmondshire

23 Newbiggin,
RICHMOND DL10 4DX.

Admin line: 01748 823862

Website

www.cany.org.uk

Ryedale

Harrison House, Norton Road,
MALTON YO17 9RD.

Admin line: 01653 695542

Scarborough

4 Elders Street,
SCARBOROUGH YO11 1DZ.

Admin line: 01723 368710

Selby

38 Ousegate,
SELBY YO8 4NH.

Admin line: 01757 701320

Whitby

Church House,
Flowergate,
WHITBY YO21 3BA

Admin line: 01723 368710

North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre

Registered office: 277 High Street, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL7 8DW.

Charity Registration Number 1146084.

A Company limited by Guarantee in England Number 07890996.

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN: 617621.

