



Clients helped by  
Citizens Advice Weymouth and Portland\*  
April 2018 to March 2019

 **3,347** people asked us for advice  with **11,235** issues



**4,229** benefit issues



**2,651** debt issues



**686** housing issues



**51%** of all activity was face to face advice



**£1,262,672** income gained



**£261,975** gained in debts written off

**53%** clients disabled or have long term condition, **26%** of whom had a mental health problem



**33** volunteers with an estimated value of **£119,963**

\*Provisional statistics for 2018-19

## CITIZENS ADVICE WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND SUMMARY IMPACT REPORT 2018-19

### 2018-19

2018-19 was a challenging year for us, involving extensive joint working with neighbouring local Citizens Advice and ongoing support from Citizens Advice Purbeck and Citizens Advice Dorchester, Sherborne & Districts and North Dorset. During this time of change, we continued to respond to a high demand for our services and increasingly complex cases.

Our workforce of **9** paid staff and **33** volunteers maintained a high quality advice service which responded to the individual needs of our clients – from providing a single piece of information to in-depth, complicated and lengthy casework. Our audit from the national Citizens Advice office demonstrated the quality of our organisation with a **maximum 5 out of 5 for all 8 areas of work**.

Weymouth and Portland have significant areas of multiple deprivation, some among the worst in the county. We responded to the advice needs of our local population by opening new outreaches in Littlemoor, and on the Isle of Portland, as well as providing face to face advice in our main office in Weymouth town centre, and in GP practices – Lanehouse Surgery, Portland Hospital, Royal Crescent Surgery and Wyke Regis Medical Practice.

In addition, we provided telephone advice, Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm, as part of the Dorset Adviceline, manned by staff from our organisation and other local Citizens Advice across Dorset according to a rota system.

We are funded by the Money Advice Service to provide a debt advice service to local residents and in 2018-19, we helped **448** people deal with their debts and manage their finances better.

### 2019-20 and beyond

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, we merged with Citizens Advice Dorchester, Sherborne and Districts and North Dorset to form Citizens Advice Central Dorset, covering a geographical area of **1,733 km<sup>2</sup>** and serving a population of around **238,911** people (33,000 of which are served by Citizens Advice Bridport & District).

We face the challenge of balancing our resources to both meet the needs of a rural population with limited access to services with the significant needs arising from areas of social deprivation in our urban residents.

We look forward to **three new exciting projects** – supporting Syrian families in Dorset, supporting local Citizens Advice across the South West to identify and help people at risk of gambling-related harm and introducing a new way of working in Weymouth library, whilst continuing to manage the increasing demand for help with applying for Universal Credit and managing ongoing claims.