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

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 peoplewe 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

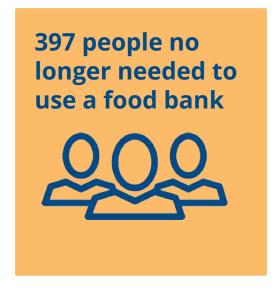


Over 7 in 10 think working within a supportive team is the best thing about us



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.







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

