

Our impact in 2020/2021

The difference we make to Test Valley



We are Citizens Advice Test Valley

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.

Message from the Chair

"The continuing difficulties arising from the pandemic crisis have led to unusual operating conditions and our Chief Officer, Ange Moon, has led her team of staff and volunteers successfully through the challenges of maintaining an effective, high quality service.

The board of Trustees remains immensely indebted to our team of paid staff and volunteers who strive to deliver an outstanding service to our clients. I am personally grateful to Ange for all her support and assistance during my time as Chair of Trustees.

I am delighted to report that Stephen Bowden has agreed to take over as Chair of Trustees with effect from the date of the Annual General Meeting. Stephen will be supported by Andy Gunn as Vice Chair and a relatively new Board. I would like to express my personal thanks to Roger Clift who has provided me with considerable assistance in his capacity as Vice Chair.

I would like to conclude by acknowledging once again the continuing importance of maintaining the present strong relationships with our partners, and particularly Test Valley Borough Council as our primary funder, which are fundamental to the continued delivery of our confidential, independent, impartial and free advice services for all."

John Patience Chair

What we do

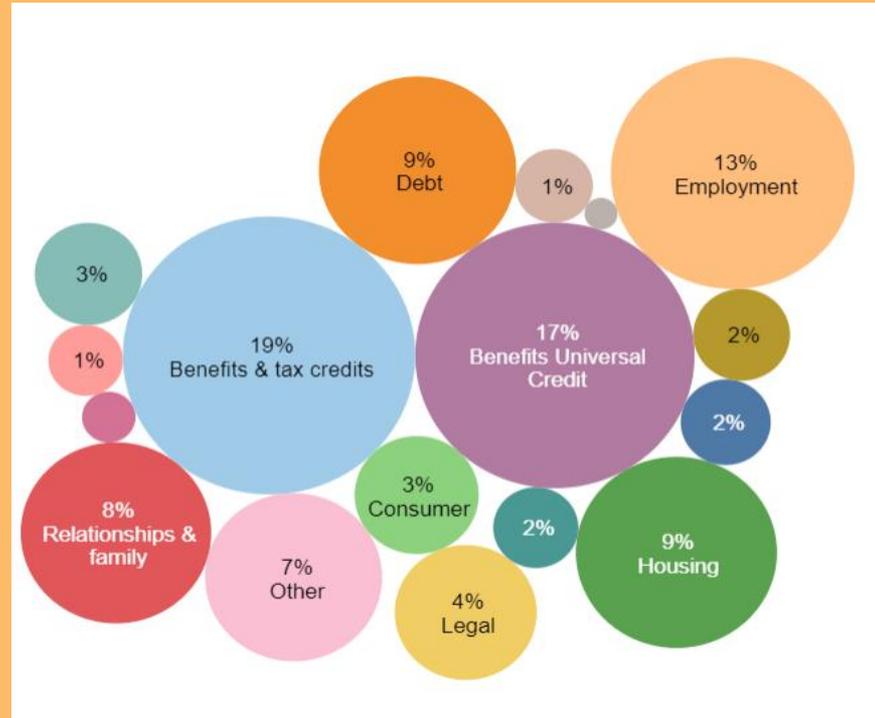
We help people with a range of problems including issues with housing, debt, benefits, employment, relationships and consumer rights.

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

We gained £293,749 for our clients in unclaimed benefit or by helping them have debts written off.

We offer our advice by telephone, email, webchat and face to face when we can.

Last year, we saw 3,301 people about 9,068 issues.



Clare's story



Clare was struggling – she was behind in paying her rent.

The threat of being evicted was making her feel very anxious.

The strain was also aggravating an existing health condition.



Sam, a volunteer adviser, helped Clare with her problem. He found out she recently had a change in her employment.

This had put added pressure on her finances, which was why she was getting behind on her rent.

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. People access us in different ways:



49%

by telephone



48%

by webchat and email



Sam helped Clare write a letter to her landlord and set up a payment plan. This stopped her landlord trying to evict her.

Together, they worked out a budget to help Clare with other debts and maximise her income.

Sam found out Clare was on a flexible hours contract, so he helped her better understand her rights at work.

The difference this makes

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

We help thousands of people like Clare



85.4% of people

said they could not have resolved their problem without us



91.5% of people

said they would recommend us to others



Our advice helped stabilise Clare's financial situation.

Her anxiety reduced, and her physical health improved. She no longer needed additional health services.

She also felt more confident and knowledgeable about handling similar problems in the future.

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 us **£553,360** worth of their time to help deliver our services. They have remained dedicated to the service in the last year despite the pandemic. They are the lifeblood of our organisation.



Our projects

Romsey Foodbank Caseworker

We started a new Project in January 2021 to help clients attending the foodbank. This has been very successful seeing vulnerable clients as they seek emergency help. We have been able to help many clients so they do not need to continue with emergency food boxes. Often this results from sorting out their benefits or helping them clear debt.

In the first 6 months of this project 20/21 we helped clients with £8,453 income gains



Help to Claim

Our Help to Claim Project works to help clients apply for Universal credit and we then support clients till they get their first payment. From April 2020- March 2021 this area of work has been very challenging as we have seen many clients become redundant from their jobs.

In the last year we have given help to 320 clients 88% of which we have done over the phone – the majority of clients need help with eligibility to apply. In the last year we have helped clients gain £10,237

The Citizens Advice logo is a dark blue circle with a white speech bubble shape at the bottom. Inside the circle, the words "citizens" and "advice" are written in white, lowercase, sans-serif font, one above the other.

citizens
advice

Impact of Covid-19

In March 2020, Covid-19 caused unprecedented challenges for our service and the people we help.

People continue to access quality advice through phone, webchat and online channels even when our service stopped delivering face to face support.



over 4,000
calls answered



Thank you



We also got funding from Whitchurch Welfare Trust, Whitchurch Methodist Church, Andover Rotary, Waitrose, MCF Masons

We work in partnership with
TVBC
Aster
Andover Foodbank
Romsey Foodbank
Mind
Mencap
Andover BID
SSAFA (Andover)
Open Sight
Deaf Plus
Jobcentre Plus
Unity

We support the Andover Advocates and Andover Charities

Citizens Advice Test Valley

Citizens Advice Test Valley

ANDOVER OFFICE

1st Floor

Chantry House

Chantry Way

Andover

SP10 2LZ

ROMSEY OFFICE

The Former Magistrates Court

Church Street

Romsey

SO51 8AQ

www.testvalleycab.org.uk

Adviceline 08082 787 862



© Citizens Advice 2021

Produced by Citizens Advice Test Valley Sept 2021

Citizens Advice Test Valley is a registered charity (1156829) and a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (08933947) Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, FRN: 618853

Our registered office is 1st Floor, Chantry House, Chantry Way, Andover SP10 2LZ