

CORNWALL CITIZEN

Newsletter of Citizens Advice Cornwall - We're Here for Everyone

WINTER 2020



Open for Business in Bodmin!

The new Citizens Advice Bodmin offices were officially opened by Edward Bolitho, the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall and Bodmin Mayor, Cllr Jeremy Cooper in December.

The new facilities at the Old Library in Bore Street mark the charity's return to the town centre after several temporary offices around the area.

Citizens Advice Cornwall Chief Executive, Gill Pipkin, said: "We are grateful to the management of the Old Library who made our move back into the town centre possible.

"Over the last few years, we've had a number of temporary offices out of town, which sometimes proved unsuitable for some of our clients. We're really excited about these new facilities which bring us right back into the heart of the community."

The Old Library has been developed into a community hub and includes meeting rooms, performance spaces and a café.

The new offices will open to the public on Thursday 2 January.

Gill Pipkin added: "These new premises replace the service at Cornwall Council's Chy Trevail building and we're very grateful to the council for hosting our services there for the last year."



Saltash Mayor, Cllr Gloria Challon (left) plants a new oak tree for the Citizens Advice 80th anniversary celebrations with CA Cornwall Chief Executive, Gill Pipkin, volunteer, Alison Gurdler, Service Manager, Becky Moore and HR and Facilities Manager, Bernie Buck.

Planting for Future Growth

Citizens Advice celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2019 and to mark the occasion, CA Cornwall planted commemorative trees in Saltash, Truro and Penzance.

Citizens Advice was formed in 1939, at the outbreak of the Second World War. Discussions had already taken place within Government about the need for an information service for the fledgling welfare state.

The War pushed things along and the first 200 Citizens Advice Bureaux were set-up on 4 September. By 1942 there were over a thousand bureaux, dealing with subjects such as re-housing bombed-out families, war rationing issues, locating missing servicemen and war-time regulations.

After the war, Government funding was cut but the service continued with help from charitable trusts. In 1957, there was a big increase in inquiries due to the new Rent Act and in 1960 government funding was restored.

The charity continued to expand and by 2013, more than 2 million people came to us for face-to-face advice while 12 million used our digital services across the UK.

In Cornwall, local bureaux merged to form a countywide service, helping people with new challenges such as the Universal Credit benefits system and immigration issues as well as continuing problems such as debt, housing and employment.

Bude Office

Following a successful volunteer recruitment day at Bude Library, we are now looking to expand our services in the town. We're looking for suitable premises and funding to help us offer more appointments and drop-in sessions for the town and surrounding area.

St Ives Outreach

CA Cornwall is opening a new outreach service in St Ives in January 2020. The sessions will be by appointment and take place at the town's public library. The service has been made possible with a grant from the St Ives Community Fund.

Helston Service

Our Pensionwise service has expanded to Helston and The Lizard. Appointments can now be made to see our adviser for a free, independent discussion on your pension options for anyone aged 50 or over who has a personal or workplace pension.



Welcome!

By Gill Pipkin, Chief Executive

Welcome to the Cornwall Citizen, our new quarterly newsletter which will keep you in touch with all the latest developments at Citizens Advice.

Over the last year we've been looking at ways we can improve our services and reach more people who are in need of accurate, independent advice to help them find a way out of their problem.

We've launched the new Government-funded Help to Claim service to assist people with their applications for Universal Credit, extended our Pension Wise advice sessions to cover Helston and The Lizard and we're about to launch a new outreach for advice in St Ives. We also plan to introduce a webchat service in January to help even more people access our advice.

We have many more exciting and innovative plans to extend the service to reach more clients, particularly the most vulnerable sections of our society, over the next few years but, as ever, resources remain tight.

I'd like to say a big thankyou to all our current funders, large and small, including Cornwall Council, the Macmillan Cancer Charity and the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner and all the other organisations and individuals who have kindly given us donations.

In 2020 we're planning more partnership working with other charities and service providers as well looking for new avenues of funding to keep our service going.

If you have an idea or project that Citizens Advice might get involved in please contact me for a chat.

How to Support Citizens Advice

As a charity at the heart of the local community, Citizens Advice depends on funding from a wide range of sources, including local authorities and public donations.

In the last financial year we saw almost 9,000 people with issues ranging from debts to benefits and housing to employment.

There are many ways you can help Citizens Advice. You can donate by using the Donate button on the home page of our website or send a cheque payable to Citizens Advice Cornwall to the Finance Office, Citizens Advice Cornwall, 21 Dean Street, Liskeard PL14 4AB.

We are also registered with Easyfundraising.co.uk which means if you shop online you can register us as your charity and we get a percentage of what you spend.

Work with Us

Our volunteers are the bedrock of our service. If you have time and want to put something back into the community, or you're looking for new training opportunities, we have a range of jobs at Citizens Advice. In addition to our dedicated team of advisers, we're also looking for admin workers, trustees, researchers, fundraisers and campaign volunteers. Please email volunteers@citizensadvicecornwall.org.uk for more information.



RAISING AWARENESS: The Citizens Advice Cornwall Campaigning Action Group has spent the last year raising awareness about the latest phone, e-mail and doorstep scams at events across the county. Pictured is Campaigns Officer Wailim Wong with Vicki Hattam of Barclays Bank and PCSO Phil Clatworthy at an event in Barclays Chester Road Branch, Newquay.

Why we're here...

We help people from all walks of life, whatever their income or circumstances and regardless of race, religion or gender. Here we highlight just one of the hundreds of cases we see each week:

Martin suffers from multiple sclerosis and had to transfer from his existing benefit to the government's new Personal Independence Payments.

He assumed that having a lifetime award for these benefits, filling-in the form would be a formality but at his assessment, he was granted zero points by the assessor for mobility which meant he would lose his Mobility car which he was totally reliant on for travel to medical appointments and social activities.

Martin came to see one of our advisers who helped him with all the forms for his appeal and advice on how to approach the process. As a result, he achieved a successful outcome at the hearing and has been allowed to keep his car.

Martin said: **"Thankyou so much for your amazing help with my PIP claim - I could not have done it without your knowledge and experience. I have been awarded an Enhanced score for mobility after scoring zero at my assessment. Thankyou again - you were brilliant!"** (Name changed to protect client confidentiality).