

Citizens Advice Wakefield District

Newsletter

May 2017

Citizens Advice has 5 big asks for the next government

Our manifesto for the UK general election on 8 June

Citizens Advice has been helping people for 77 years. We're most peoples' first port of call when they have a problem to solve and we're here for everyone. Last year our staff and volunteers helped 2.7 million people with 6.2 million issues. Our online advice was visited 43 million times.

We also work to fix the underlying causes of peoples' problems. We continually look at the problems people come to us with—face to face, on the phone and online—and try and find solutions.

The snap election is an opportunity for political parties to promise to solve some of the most common problems people face. Based on our evidence this is where they should start.

1. Improve the benefits system so it works for the people who need it: One third of all issues we help people with relate to benefits. Improving medical assessments for disability benefits and Universal Credit would make sure people aren't left without the money they need to make ends meet.

2. Make peoples' jobs more secure: In the last year we've helped people with 350,000 employment issues. Many of these people are being denied their basic rights at work, like holiday pay, sick pay and parental leave. A stronger enforcement body is needed to confront employers that break the rules.

3. Help people take control of their finances: Citizens Advice helped people with 1.5 million debt issues last year. Prices are rising faster than wages, putting pressure on household budgets. A cap on interest for all high cost credit would make sure people never have to pay back more than twice what they borrow.

4. Help people get a better deal in consumer markets: Our consumer helpline tackled over half a million problems for people last year. Too often companies exploit peoples' loyalty, vulnerable people end up paying the most. Protecting people on expensive standard tariffs in energy and telecoms would put money back in the pockets of hard-pressed households.

5. Invest in advice to support people through change and uncertainty: The world is quickly changing. Whether it's what Brexit means for your family or how to apply for Universal Credit, people need independent support and advice. Fines levied against companies such as banks, energy companies and telecoms could be used to help meet the need for investment in advice.



Read more of our ideas in 'our manifesto for the next government' which can be found at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/policy/policy-research-topics/our-manifesto-for-the-next-government/>