

Citizens Advice Wakefield District

Newsletter

February 2019

For everyone, for 80 years

A message from our Chief Executive Officer

Life can be tough for everyone at times and the need for free, confidential, independent advice in the year ahead will be more important than ever. 2019 is set to be a year of uncertainty, complexity and change. Managing money, family and health worries and understanding consumer and legal rights are just some of the issues that many people will face on a daily basis over the next 12 months. And it's likely that these will be made even more complicated by the challenging political and economic times we're experiencing. As well as a year of uncertainty, 2019 is also going to be a year of celebration for Citizens Advice as it marks our 80th anniversary of service. Since the beginning, on the 4th September 1939, the day after WW2 started, Citizens Advice has been at the forefront of providing free, confidential and independent advice, opening 200 outlets across the county at that time, Citizens Advice Wakefield being one of those, offering advice on evacuation, ration books and housing. We're still reaching people 80 years on, offering face to face advice for anyone who needs it but today increasingly reaching people in new ways too, whether through our website, through web chat or over the phone. Our service continues to grow, being the UK's largest charity with 29,000 people working for us across the county, 22,000 of whom are volunteers.

We are here to give people the knowledge and the confidence they need to find their way forward, whoever they are, whatever their problem.

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Advocating for clients and consumers

The **Tenant Fee Bill**, the bill ending tenants fees has now been passed and is expected to become law on **1st June 2019**. We have been calling for a ban, which will save tenants in the region of £160 million a year in unfair and uncompetitive fees, for over a decade, working with Parliamentarians across the political spectrum to make sure the Bill was as watertight as possible. This included closing a 'default fee' loophole that could have led to landlords and agents charging fees through the backdoor by adding unfair terms to tenancy agreements.

From the 1st June the only money renters should have to pay when they move into a new home will be their deposit and advance rent.

There are now 4.7 million households in the private rented sector.

Top 5 presented issues

Citizens Advice Wakefield District

(from 1st April 2018)

Debt 33%

Benefits 28%

Financial Services & Capability 11%

Legal 6%

Employment 5%

Debt: Top 3

Council Tax Arrears

Credit Card Debt

Unsecured Personal Loan Arrears

Benefit: Top 3

Personal Independence Payment

Employment Support Allowance

Misc. Benefit Queries

Employment: Top 3

Pay & Entitlement

Dismissal

Terms & Conditions of Employment

