# Arun and Chichester

# citizens advice

# **Annual Report**

2014-2015

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### **Need advice?**



# Visit a bureau



# **Advice by phone**

Advice Line: 0344 477 1171

Mobile phone Advice Line: 03003 300650

# **Advice by email**

Website: www.arunchichestercab.org.uk



### **Chairman's message**

This has been another successful year for Arun and Chichester CAB. The annual audit from the national Citizens Advice gave us high marks in all categories and concluded by saying that *"The bureau is well run with an engaged and effective Trustee Board supported by a strong management team. The financial position is healthy and the coming year ought to be one of general stability".* We are very pleased with this assessment but are also aware that we need to continue to evolve in order to maintain high levels of service to our clients into the future.

This year has seen some notable successes. It is especially pleasing that Arun and Chichester CAB was one of only 37 bureaux in England and Wales, out of a total of 300, to be awarded a contract from central government to deliver the new "Pension Wise" service. This provides free, impartial guidance about defined-contribution pensions and we now employ four paid staff to deliver this service across a geographical area which covers most of West Sussex and parts of Hampshire.

Our financial position remains strong and we have now built up our reserves to target levels. A consequence of this prudent financial management is that we have been able to invest in further developing our services. We have staffed a new Marketing and Media position to develop our fundraising programme and we have been able to continue the Court Desk service even though the initial funding did not cover the full financial year.

I would like to offer my thanks to our funders, in particular West Sussex County Council, Arun District Council and Chichester District Council, who provide the core funding for our services and who have awarded us a new contract until 31 March 2018. In this difficult economic climate where funding for local services has seen some dramatic cuts, we are extremely grateful to the county council for maintaining our level of funding and to the district councils for increasing our funding as part of the new contract. I would also like to thank the Town and Parish Councils for the supplemental funding which they provide as this makes an important addition to the core. We place a high value on partnership working with councils and are pleased that councils value the role of Citizens Advice in supporting clients who might otherwise increase demand on council services.

I would like to thank our staff and volunteers. Our paid staff are dedicated and professional, they treat their work as more than a job, and many of them devote personal time to help raise funds for the bureau. We have more than 150 volunteers who give their time and expertise to make a difference to their local community. Talk from politicians about the "Big Society" may go in and out of fashion but the spirit of helping others truly exists in our volunteers and we are privileged to have so many fine people in our community.

Our trustees, who are also volunteers, have provided excellent support and contributions, throughout the year and are a key part of the bureau's success, whether working on the Finance Committee, Research and Campaigns, Information Assurance, or providing other types of support to the Chief Executive Officer. Finally, I would like to extend my personal thanks to Carol Groves, our CEO - the many successes of Arun and Chichester CAB are due to her outstanding leadership of the organisation.

As we go into the future, we will continue to face challenges. Life is not improving for everyone as the economy improves and problems related to areas such as benefits, debt, housing and employment will remain a fact of life for a number of people in our community. We will need to continue to evolve our offering so that we can provide cost effective, timely advice for everyone who needs it, including those who cannot access our office locations during working hours. We're confident that we can rise to

these challenges and continue to be the first port of call for free, impartial advice for the people of Arun and Chichester.



Geoff Palmer Chairman

### Like our work? Why not get involved?



See Page 13 to find out about volunteering with us



### **CEO's message**

Despite wider reports of economic improvement, many residents in Arun and Chichester continue to struggle against economic uncertainty evidenced by unemployment, changes to the benefits system and spiralling utility and fuel costs. The continued numbers of demand from clients and organisations referring service users to us is truly demonstrative of the need to have in place our 'walk in' advice centres and outreach venues across the Arun and Chichester districts.

To continue to meet the demand the bureau has had to work hard to draw in additional funding. We are grateful to all our funders for continuing to recognise and support the work that we do and we are optimistic that we can work further with them to bring about the very best outcomes for the residents of Arun and Chichester.

We are committed to improving the quality of life for our clients such as through income maximisation (following benefit take up), and money management support through our financial capability work. To this end we were able to obtain additional funding from Citizens Advice at the end of this financial year to support a Digital Money Coach project. This will enable a new volunteering role, and will support clients in how to access information digitally in order to support their money management. We have also been able to continue our court representation project thanks to additional funds from the Sussex

Community Foundation and the London Legal Support sponsored walk.

We have developed a new external training programme on benefits and debt for organisations front line workers under our new training set up 'The Training Network'. Phase 2, of this new initiative will be looking to include a telephone support line for front line workers.

Funding and recruitment of volunteers has the biggest impact on us meeting our objectives, and so increasing our unrestricted funds and future projects is a priority. We are looking at alternative funding to support the growing number of clients who find themselves in fuel poverty situations. Arun and Chichester covers a large rural area and additional project allows resources to meet this need. In October 2014 we made the decision to employ a full time Marketing and Media member of staff to support us in other funding streams and raise our presence in the community. This has enabled us to hold two recruitment and information days, and develop and introduce our new style website, as well as raising a high profile social media presence. During this last year 16 volunteers left because they had gained employment. They all fed back that their success had been attributed to skills acquired as a CAB volunteer.

Over the years a great deal of partnership working on shared projects has taken place and we have been able to build on this as a result of our successful bid to become a Pension Wise delivery centre. This has enabled partnership working not only with our neighbour bureau but other CAB in Hampshire and Surrey.

Looking ahead to next year, we will be working closely with Citizens Advice nationally on their implementation of a new Performance Quality Framework. In addition, we will be implementing a new private network to our IT system allowing us more autonomy. We are also looking at different resources and projects to support the implementation of Universal Credit, particularly around the need for in depth benefit advice.

I thank all staff and volunteers for helping to make Arun and Chichester the success it is today. I am aware that the changes at times seem constant; some are out of our control and some come from within, but the needs of our clients are always at the forefront of any planning. I would like to say a special thank you to our Operation Managers Debbie Dawe and Ray Fowler and Finance Manager Tracy Rablin. We are a relatively small management team, and their support and hard work is second to none.

Finally, I thank our Trustees for all their support. I consider Arun and Chichester CAB very fortunate in having such a positive and forward thinking Trustee Board, which is the strong foundation that underpins our bureau.



Carol Groves Chief Executive

### We all share one goal

Volunteer, employee or supporter, we all believe in the same thing – a society where everyone gets the advice they need, and every voice is heard.

Without the generous support of people up and down the Arun and Chichester district, we couldn't continue the work we do.



### **Our core service**

Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice Bureau is an independent charity and a member of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux.

We provide independent, impartial and confidential advice free of charge to all Arun & Chichester citizens. We are dealing with a wide range of matters including debt problems, benefit issues, employment, consumer, housing, immigration and relationship breakdown.

#### Our open door 'drop-in' service

enables the client to get face-to-face advice on the next step they need to take. Trained volunteers provide an initial 'gateway' assessment of clients' needs and help with some basic information. We might book them an appointment if the issue is a bit more complex or arrange for the client to see a specialist adviser.

During 2014/2015 the bureau saw 13,631 clients (11,605 gateways and 2,026 enquiries).



### **Advice options**

Although face-to-face advice has always been the cornerstone of our service, Arun and Chichester CAB also offers alternative methods by which people can access advice.

Advice by telephone

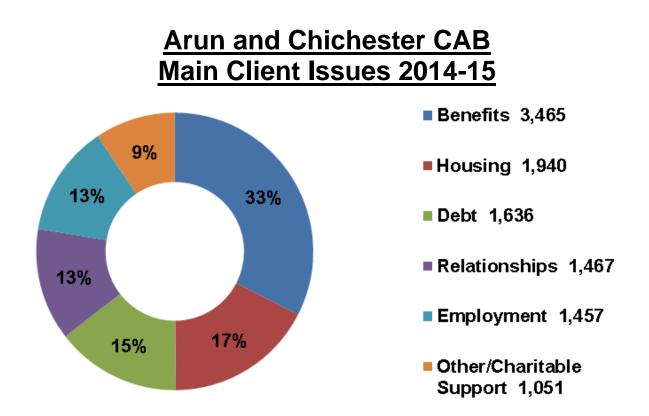
Arun and Chichester CAB Telephone Advice Line is staffed by a dedicated team of volunteers. It provides a first point of contact for callers to receive prompt information and also acts as a gateway through which clients that need more specialist advice and support can be referred to our Debt and Welfare Benefits teams.

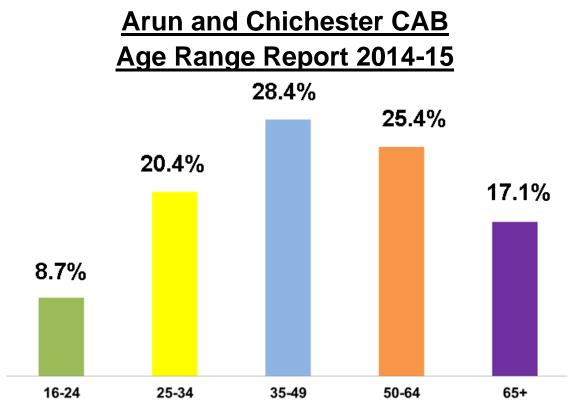
Email advice

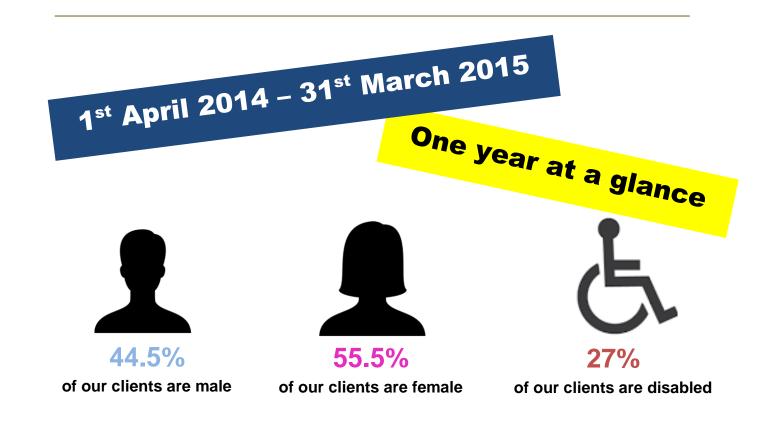
Email is another entry point for all clients to access our services and particularly convenient for people who are working or cannot visit a bureau.

Adviceguide

The Citizens Advice online guide <u>www.adviceguide.org.uk</u> is a comprehensive source of advice available to anyone at any time, offering practical and reliable information.







- 4725 annual hours open (three centres)
- 85% gateways seen
- 15% enquiries seen
- 80% of our workforce are volunteers
- 47,476 the hours of volunteering
- £755,694 the estimated value of the hours donated by our volunteers

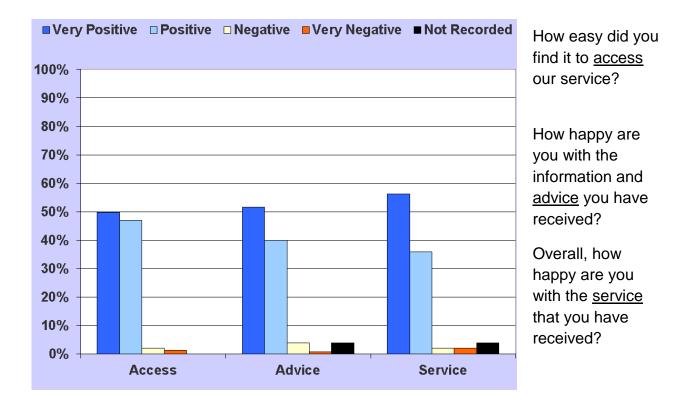
## **One independent charity**

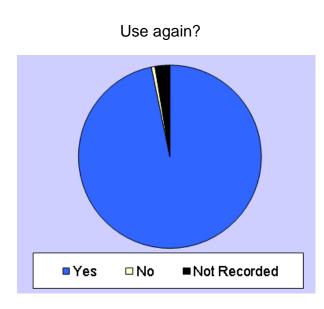
solving problems, changing lives



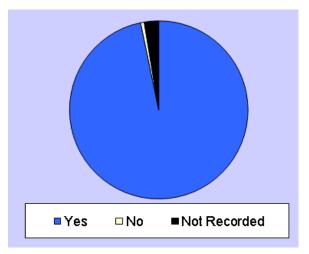
# Making the difference

Client satisfaction is part of the Arun and Chichester CAB's quality assured standards. The views of people who use our services help to shape the planning, delivery and evaluation of our services.









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# **Operations Manager's message**

There have been a lot of different changes over the past year with Arun & Chichester CAB, and our very resilient assessors and advisers have taken them all in their stride.

A major change from Citizens Advice Nationally is the implementation of a new performance quality framework. This will supersede our existing audit requirements which have, up to now, been every three years. We are one of many Citizens Advice Bureaux in the country taking part in a 'pilot' where 30 cases are audited each month. Luca Badioli has led this new procedure, with support from all of our supervisors who deserve special thanks.

Additional resources have been required to enable us to take part in this pilot. We are continually learning from this new system and, as a result, it is reassuring to see our strengths – as well as identifying areas that need further training. Our thanks go to our assessors and advisers, who work so hard to keep their knowledge up-to-date and provide such a good service to the community.

One service we provide to the community is being part of Healthwatch. Clients who need help and advice in respect of health and social care services, support with a complaint against an NHS funded service, or who are simply willing to share their experience of these services, can do so through the CAB.

A lot of our clients are happy to share their experience of health and social care which, once anonymised, is passed on to Healthwatch. Health and/or Social Care services affect all of us at some time in our lives and we all have a story to tell, but often don't have the opportunity. We encourage everyone to tell us their recent stories which include, for example, comments about poor food in the hospital they were in which affected their whole experience, to a client who couldn't praise his treatment in hospital and his physiotherapist enough.

Our thanks go to everyone who encourages clients to tell us their stories and in particular our Healthwatch Champions who do such a good job ringing clients back to get full details of these stories.

> "Everything changes around us, the way we operate the TV, the laws of the country, our mobile phones and so on, and the CAB is no different."

Debbie Dawe Operations Manager





A client has shared their hospital experience with the Arun and Chichester CAB in the hope that other people would have a better experience.

Our client called an ambulance which refused to attend as there was a note that the client had an ASBO. He disputed this as the information was out of date, but nevertheless his admission to A&E was delayed. He completed a Healthwatch form, and the issue was referred to ICAS who helped the client carry his case forward to SECAMB (South East Coast Ambulance Service).

In essence, SECAMB's records contained out of date information, and they should not retain or use out of date information on their records

They apologised to the client, and have taken steps to ensure that out of date records will not be discussed with paramedics or retained on their systems.

This is an example of how collecting the survey forms in our centres can impact on better healthcare facilities for everyone, and aid trusts to improve their policies and practices, which can impact any of the nearly 1MM people who use their services every year.



Staff and volunteers held 'Healthwatch Day' in the Bognor Regis advice centre

### Volunteers

Volunteers account for around 80% of the Citizens Advice service. Arun & Chichester CAB is fortunate to have the services of around **150 volunteers**, without whose energy, expertise and commitment the bureau could not operate.

In 2014/2015 our volunteers delivered around 47,476 hours of volunteering, which equates to £755,694 paid working hours.

The volunteers help our clients to understand their rights and responsibilities and empower them to take control of their own situations by giving them the advice and information they need in order to make informed choices and decisions.



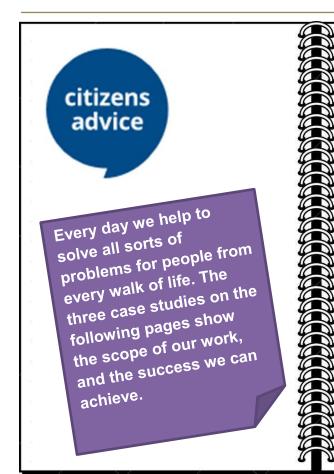
Many of our volunteers go into paid employment as a consequence of the training and support they receive as a volunteer, and some of that employment stays within Arun and Chichester CAB. Out of the 33 paid staff (as of 1 April 2015), 14 of those started as a volunteer for Arun and Chichester CAB.

If you are interested in being part of our team, or want further information, please contact us on 01243 866233.

#### VOLUNTEER STORY

I began volunteering at CAB 18 month ago after a long absence from employment due to illness. Not only had I not worked for a long time but I had spent a long time in isolation in my home. This had left me nervous about interacting with people in general, socially inhibited and really quite lonely. I wanted to return to work but I had no confidence. One of my friends was already a volunteer receptionist at CAB, who was moving on to gateway assessor training who suggested that I might want to apply to take over her commitment. She also, 'just happened' to have a volunteer pack with her. After some thought, I managed to complete the application and give it back to her. To be honest I was surprise when I was asked to attend an interview, and even more surprised when I was accepted for the position. I admit I was quite worried and concerned once I had agreed to attend induction, but everyone was so friendly and helpful that I was put at ease. I started volunteering as a receptionist for three afternoons a week over a period of six months. Once I had overcome my initial shyness I found I looked forward to my shifts. I met some really nice people and I felt better about myself. I also found that I enjoyed helping others. I decided that I would like to be able to help people more, so with some trepidation asked to be put forward for assessor training, this lasted about four months and was quite intense. Once certificated as a gateway assessor this was followed, quite quickly, by an adviser course for six months, so I was busy, but I did this as I found that I enjoyed learning. This experience gave me the confidence to apply for an access course to Higher education, which I completed and so I am starting a BA at University in September. The experience of volunteering at CAB has literally changed my life. I now work part time for a local charity helping vulnerable adults which I love, I volunteer one day a week at CAB as a trainee adviser and I am looking forward to starting my University course. My life now has purpose and direction, I now find it easy to interact with people from all walks of life and I feel personally fulfilled.

# Helping people with benefit problems



#### About the client

A disabled single client in his early sixties came to the Chichester CAB.

He was on Incapacity Benefit and his benefit was being threatened because he was not able to attend a medical to be transferred over to contributions based ESA.

The client's health and mobility has significantly deteriorated but his GP was not prepared to put it in writing to request that he is assessed at home. The client's Incapacity Benefit was therefore in danger of being stopped if he couldn't provide evidence that he couldn't attend a medical.

#### How we helped the client

Without being able to change his GP's view, the CAB assisted the client with a benefit check which showed that he was actually of age to qualify for Pension Credit Guarantee and as he had a mortgage, some of his mortgage interest payments could also be covered.

We assisted him with a claim and he was awarded Pension Credit on top of his Incapacity Benefit and he is better off now by £66.73 per week. He is also now waiting for his mortgage interest payments to be paid which could be worth a further £10 per week. As he is on a passporting benefit he would receive free NHS health costs and full Council Tax Reduction. The backdating rules have also allowed the client to have a lump sum payment of Pension Credit which has enabled him to purchase a mobility scooter outright to help him become more independent.

If the client's Incapacity Benefit was to stop now, it is likely he could fully move over to Pension Credit and would not lose out financially.



# Helping people with debt problems

#### About the client

The client had taken out an unsecured personal loan in 1999.

Due to loss of employment in 2001 he defaulted on the agreement.

He negotiated a repayment plan and the creditor agreed to freeze interest and charges.

He continued paying and the amount paid increased every year.

In July 2014 he forgot to make the monthly payment and, to make up for it, in August he paid one and a half of the amount usually paid. At the time the outstanding balance was approx. £9600.

In September 2014 he received a letter from solicitors informing that they would start court proceedings.

In October 2014 he received a claim for the amount outstanding plus statutory interest for 6 years making the total claim approx. £15000.



Case study 2

#### How we helped the client

The client approached the Chichester advice centre and he was referred to the debt and civil litigation specialist. At the appointment it was agreed that the best course of action was to request documentation for us to look at and then raise a complaint in regards to the unfair treatment of starting proceedings for missing a payment.

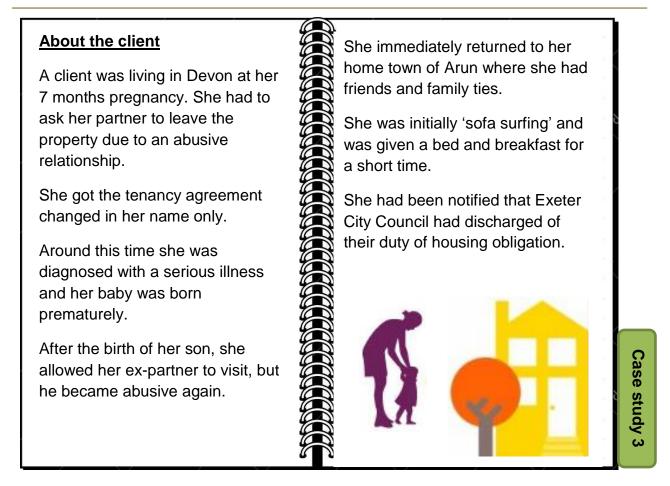
The creditor agreed not to request a judgement while investigating the complaint. However, on its own initiative the court entered a judgement against the client and the creditor threatened to apply for a charging order.

The creditor did not agree with the complaint but ultimately agreed to remove the judgement and the £6400 statutory interest added.

From the documentation provided we discovered that the client was sold two payment protection insurances on the same loan and that the contract did not comply with the consumer credit requirements and was unenforceable.

We are now in the process of requisition that the creditor to write off the whole debt or we would apply for the court for a declaration that the agreement is unenforceable.

# Safeguarding home



#### How we helped the client

Both housing departments at Exeter City Council and Arun District Council were contacted and there were difficulties in finding who had the duty of care to house her even though she lived in Arun area because she left her property due to domestic violence.

On a Friday, our three members of staff stayed in the bureau till late to assist the client to speak to the social services which enabled the client to have weekend accommodation.

On a Monday morning, Arun District Council was contacted again by a staff member from Shelter and this led to the client being temporarily housed.

After a short time, through CAB intervention, the client secured private rented accommodation with the aid of Arun District Council.

The client came back to CAB as she needed furniture and we referred her to the Local Assistance Network who provided her with the items she needed.

### **Our projects**

# Pension Wise

We are one of a very few bureaux in the South East who have been successful in obtaining funding to be a delivery centre for the Pension Wise 'face to face' service; offering guidance and options from our highly trained pensions professionals.

We are covering twelve different bureau locations and our area stretches as far as Fareham to the West and Shoreham to the East, then up as far as Haywards Heath, Horsham and Midhurst!



#### **The Service Aims**

As a reminder, the main aim of the Pension Wise service is to provide information about the new options available to people who are nearing or over age 50 and have a defined contribution pension scheme.

We can only offer guidance (NOT financial advice) and during a session with a client will cover:

- Their own plans for retirement and the issues to consider on how to fund their retirement
- The new flexible options available, the pros & cons and how they may be relevant to the client, consider the affect of tax & benefits and Inheritance tax
- Empower them to know what questions to ask their pension provider and signpost them for further help such as CAB, MAS

To make a face to face appointment please call 01243 860516.

Pension

our money. Your choice.

"I wish to express my sincere thanks for arranging a pensions interview at Citizens Advice Bureau yesterday. Your guider was first class both in her clarity and explanation of several complex issues to do with my pension with Scottish Widows. I have found decisions regarding the general issue of pensions quite difficult to make and specifically have received conflicting advice from several organisations that I have contacted regarding ' recycling rules'. I feel the pensions industry needs to greatly improve this aspect. The report which I have been sent after my interview has been meticulous. Please forward my deep appreciation and thanks to the guider in question."





#### Formerly known as Social Policy

What we call "Social Policy" is actually research and campaigning. As we are a grassroots community-based organisation we have the unique insight into clients' lives, the connections to support clients to help themselves, each other and the platform to make sure their voice is heard.

**Research and Campaigns** 

The name change to Research and Campaigns during this reporting year reflects this and how we are changing across the bureau network: coming together to work on key issues. Bureaux are able to contribute real insight to shaping national research projects and campaigns, do research well beyond just submitting bureau evidence forms, and actively promote campaigns locally. We are working on consumer policy as much as 'social'. In reality there's a cultural change within the organisation that means that what sits under 'social policy' encompasses a broad range of skills and competencies.

The name change will help strengthen our capacity in this area. When we ask people to get involved, they will know what they are signing up for. It will also reflect the fact that we want to improve at this and fulfil the second of our twin aims better from 'improving the policies and practices that affect people's lives.' to 'when people's voices need to be heard, we come together to campaign on big issues.' So as we develop a wider range of research techniques beyond bureau evidence forms and develop our own local influencing plans, and as we explore how much more we can do to give our clients a voice, we will be able to clearly define to clients and stakeholders alike that – **this is what we do!** 

To undertake this work successfully we are fortunate in our Bureau Research and Campaigns team to have the skills and resource across six core areas:

- Running a research and campaigns team
- Evidence and research
- Campaigns
- Communication
- Influencing and networking
- Involving clients and supporters

"We are well placed with our committed team to carry on with the good work and sincere thanks go in particular to our Research and Campaigns centre co-ordinators, Lucy Birkinshaw, Liz Stanton, Roger Kinrade and Tim Gillin as well as to trustee Louise Spong for her support to our team as board lead for our research and campaigns work."



#### **Campaigns Local and National**

The Campaign	What was the problem?	What happened?
Payday loans	Payday loan companies not	The Financial Conduct
	treating their customers fairly.	Authority introduced tough new
		rules on payday lenders
Bailiffs	People experience unacceptable	The Government published
	harassment at the hands of bailiffs.	new guidance for local
		authorities on collecting council
		tax arrears.
Legal Aid Reform	More and more people could not	We campaigned to influence
	find help when they needed it. We	two Ministry of Justice
	were concerned that further	consultations on transforming
	reforms would put access to justice	legal aid and judicial review
	for ordinary people at risk.	and secured key concessions
		on a number of important
		issues.
Make Employment	Poorly designed rules make it	Improved the ESA work
Support Allowance	difficult to determine who is fit for	capability assessment process
(ESA) fit for work	work and who isn't.	
Logbook loans	High-cost lending, that involves	The Government announced a
	consumers offering an item of their	cap on the cost of payday
	personal property as security for a	loans
	loan	

Campaign successes achieved during this reporting period included:

### Our current and future campaigns include:

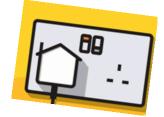
Current campaigns continuing are:	Future campaigns planned:
Issues around <u>private housing rental</u> throughout 2015 aimed at improving the private rented sector.	Sanctions and re-imagining conditionality in terms of exploring the long term impacts of <u>conditionality and</u> <u>sanctions</u> on job-seeking, work, health and finances
<u>Child care</u> costs and availability locally. Researching the experience of families on low income in organising and managing childcare and the impact this has on their decisions around work	<u>Universal credit monitoring</u> : An on-going 'barometer' of bureau confidence in the Universal Credit process, to be updated every two months as people are migrated to Universal Credit in our bureau area.
Registering with GPs as a new patient (mystery shopping)	Online market places: Looking at who uses these websites, the problems people encounter and whether the consumer protections currently in place are understood and fit for purpose.
Fairplay for Prepay National campaign, from autumn 2014 to spring 2015, to get a fairer deal for energy customers with a prepayment meter	Accessing support for <u>domestic abuse</u>















Our Management Team has given additional priority to our training team with a view to supporting our staff and volunteers in all areas of the new Welfare Reform changes, and particularly bearing in mind Universal Credit to be rolled out either this year or next.

The Training Network

It has become apparent from feedback received from several organisations that they would appreciate taking part in our training sessions, and to this end we have invited some external <u>front-line workers</u> to attend some of our <u>Welfare Benefits, Debt and</u> <u>Financial Capability courses</u>. This has proved very beneficial to these organisations, and as a result we have decided to 'roll out' our training and set up a new 'Training Network' initiative.

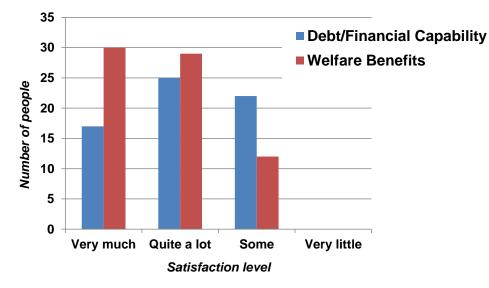
#### External training as of September 2014:

 74 individuals have attended to either a half or full day course What our attendees have said...

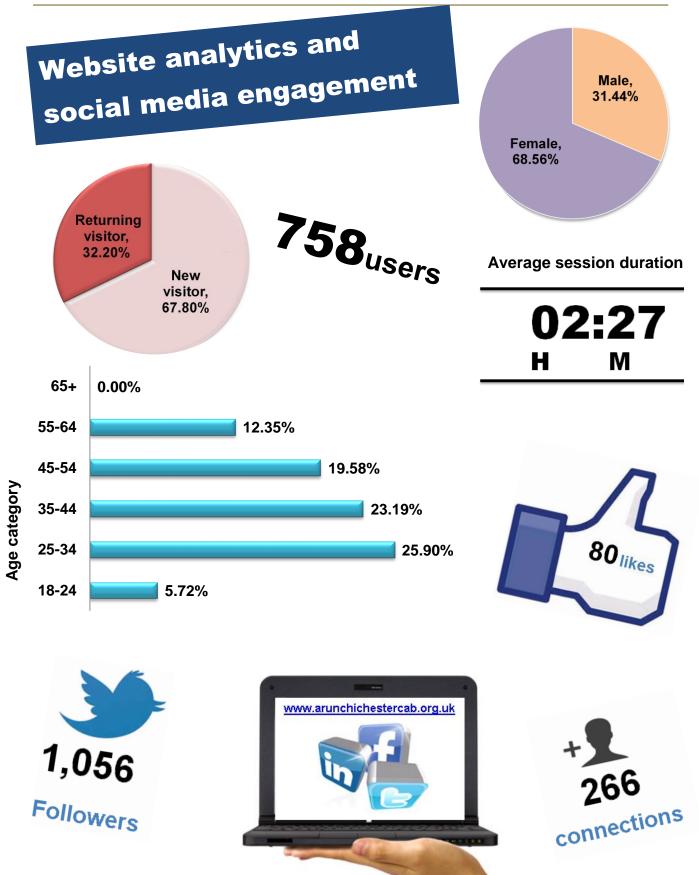
"First class content and presentation will be looking out for future courses. Very enjoyable"

"A very good update on the changes in benefits *I* helpful advice and information around supporting clients to navigate the complexities and changes of the benefit system"

> "The attendance of this course has saved me from making a costly mistake on behalf of a current client. Thank you"



### **Media**



### **Organisation Chart**

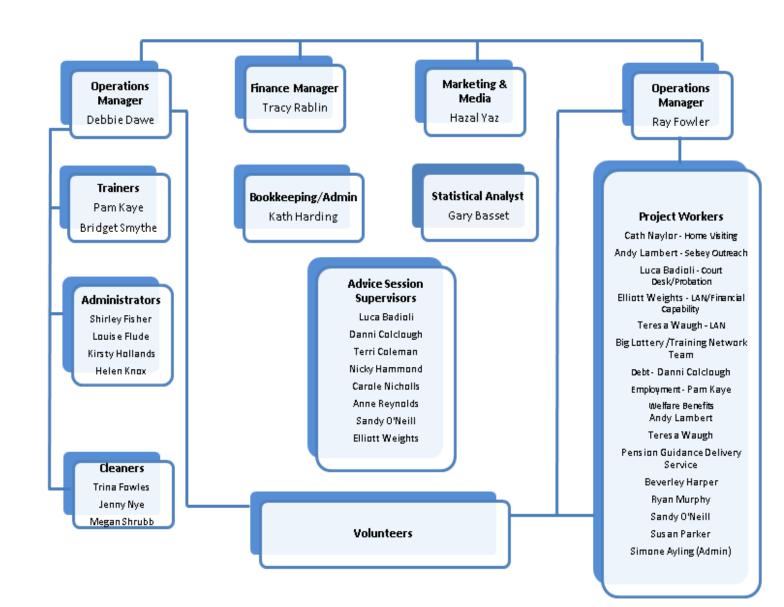


Geoff Palmer - Chair Rodney Clare - Vice Chair

Dave Willis - Treasurer Dave Bradshaw - Vice Treasurer

Claire Armstrong, John Galtrey, Alan Laybourn, Ken Poupart, Glenda Sellens, Louise Spong





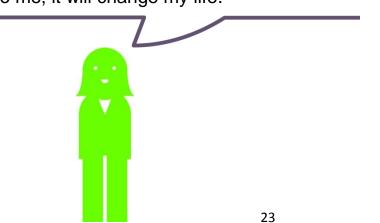
# **Trustee board**

We are grateful to the Trustees and others who have served on the Trustee **Board:** 

Chair	Geoff Palmer Elected
Vice Chair	Rodney Clare Elected
Treasurer	David Willis Elected
Company Sec.	Ken Poupart Elected
Trustees	Claire Armstrong Elected
	David Bradshaw Elected January 2015
	John Galtrey Elected
	Taff Gidi Resigned 7/10/14
	Alan Laybourn Elected
	Glenda Sellens Elected
	Louise Spong Elected

## **Client comment**

"I would like to show my appreciation for all the help, wonderful kindness, consideration and help I was given. I cannot thank you enough the difference your help will make to me, it will change my life."





ARUN AND CHICHESTER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

Company No. 04787378

**Registered Charity No. 1099640** 

#### ARUN AND CHICHESTER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (A Company Limited by Guarantee) ANNUAL REPORT 2014/2015

#### **Trustees' Report**

The Trustees present their report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2015.

#### **Status and Administration**

The Bureau is a registered charity (charity number 1099640) and a company limited by guarantee (company number 04787378). The maximum liability of each member is limited to £1. At 31 March 2015 the Bureau had 10 members.

The Bureau is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association as issued on incorporation on 4 June 2003 as amended by certificate of incorporation on change of name dated 24 September 2009 and 3 November 2009.

#### **Decision Making**

The Bureau is governed by its Board of Trustees who set the policy of the Bureau. The policies are implemented by the Trustees. Bureau members also take part in the policy making activity of the Bureau by passing resolutions at the Annual General Meeting. The Trustee Board consists of elected Trustees and appointed Trustees. Elected Trustees are elected at Annual General Meetings and appointed trustees are appointed at an Ordinary meeting of the Trustee Board. The Trustee Board meets at least 6 times a year.

#### **Trustee training and Induction**

Potential new trustees are sent details of the charity and a short Charity Commission brochure explaining trustees' responsibilities. New Trustees are provided with an induction pack which includes a fuller Charity Commission brochure and details of the charity. The Board looks to recruit Trustees who have particular skills helpful to the charity and offers training as required.

#### **Review of Financial Position**

At 31 March 2015, the Bureau held reserves of £224,985 (2014: £194,398) of which £210,957 (2014: £174,972) were unrestricted, representing the charities free reserves. Unrestricted funds are funds raised, or grants awarded, to the Bureau with no restriction on use other than they must be used in furtherance of the Bureau's objectives and comply with the Bureau's normal financial management requirements.

#### **Unrestricted Reserves Policy**

The trustees believe that the bureau should hold financial reserves in order to ensure that the charity can continue to operate and meet the needs of clients in the event of unforeseen and potentially financially damaging circumstances arising.

The trustees consider that it would be prudent to set aside an amount equivalent to three months' operating expenditure.

Unrestricted funds have been designated for the following purposes:

**Equipment reserve** - to ensure that there is sufficient money to replace equipment when it becomes obsolete or beyond economic repair.

**Contractual commitment reserve** - to ensure that the bureau is able to cover contracted payments to staff such as redundancy, provision of locum maternity cover, and the costs of any disciplinary and/or grievance procedures which may arise.

**Premises** - to provide for the cost of relocating to new premises either at the expiry of the current lease or if larger premises are deemed necessary, and for the cost of major repairs and maintenance of the bureau for the next 5 years.

**Development reserve** – to allow the bureau to undertake the development of new projects and areas of work and to conduct full feasibility studies on the advisability of such proposals.

#### **Restricted reserves**

The restricted funds are restricted by the donor or funder and cannot be used for the general purposes of the bureau. Their existence, and the sums of money therein, do not imply that there has been an underspend but may result from a variety of circumstances including timing differences between the bureau's financial year and the funding year of the project concerned. This reserves policy is monitored and reviewed by the trustees annually.

#### **Risk Management**

The Trustees assess the major risks to which the Bureau may be exposed. This involves identifying the types of risk and putting systems in place to ensure that significant risks are recorded for subsequent monitoring. In the meantime, the trustees remain satisfied that all insurable risks have been identified and adequately dealt with and that the Bureau's exposure to other risks is kept at a minimum by good working practice by the management team, paid staff and volunteers.

#### **Public Benefit**

The current activities of the charity are detailed in the annual report. The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives in planning future activities.

#### **Trustees' Responsibilities**

The Trustees, who are also the directors of Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice Bureau for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

#### Disclosure of information to the auditor

Each of the Trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditors are aware of such information.

The report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and was approved by the board on

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015

signed on its behalf by:

**Geoff Palmer - Chairman** 

#### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ARUN AND CHICHESTER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

We have audited the financial statements of Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice Bureau for the year ended 31 March 2015 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008) (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities).

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

#### Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditor

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement set out on the previous page, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

The trustees have elected for the financial statements to be audited in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 rather than the Companies Act 2006. Accordingly we have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with regulations made under section 154 of that Act.

Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's (APB's) Ethical Standards for Auditors.

#### Scope of the audit of the financial statements

A description of the scope of an audit of financial statements is provided on the FRC's website at www.frc.org.uk/apb/scope/private.cfm

#### Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

• the information given in the Directors' and Trustees' Report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or

- the charitable company has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

#### **Opinion on financial statements**

In our opinion the financial statements:

• give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2015, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended; and

• have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (applicable to smaller entities); and

• have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

#### Spofforths LLP Statutory Auditor A2 Yeoman Gate Yeoman Way Worthing West Sussex BN13 3QZ

#### Date: 18<sup>th</sup> September 2015

Spofforths LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

#### ARUN AND CHICHESTER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (A Company Limited by Guarantee) STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (including income and expenditure account)

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

	Note	Unrestricted Accumulated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	2014/15 Total £	2013/14 Total £
Incoming Resources Incoming resources from gen Voluntary Income Investment Income	2 erated fur	n <b>ds</b> 3,610		3,610	6,533
Interest receivable		112	-	112	80
Incoming Resources from: Charitable activities Legal Services Commission		352,656 -	402,416	755,072	700,133 28,728
Other Incoming Resources Other income		7,280		7,280	9,201
Total Incoming Resources		363,658	402,416	766,074	744,675
<b>Resources Expended</b> Charitable activities Legal Services Commission Governance costs	3 3 4	336,258 - 7,661	391,568 - -	727,826 - 7,661	659,119 17,446 4,476
Total Resources Expended		343,919	391,568	735,487	<u>681,041</u>
Net incoming resources before transfers	9	19,739	10,848	30,587	63,634
Transfers between Funds	11	(11,252)	11,252	-	-
Transfers between funds in re Volunteer time allocated.	elation to 11	27,498	(27,498)	-	-
Net movement in funds	9	35,985	(5,398)	30,587	63,634
Fund Balances brought forwa At 1 April 2014	1 <b>rd</b> 9	<u>174,972</u>	19,426	194,398	130,764
Fund Balances carried forwar At 31 March 2015	r <b>d</b> 9	210,957 	14,028	224,985	<u>    194,398</u> 

#### ARUN AND CHICHESTER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

#### (A Company Limited by Guarantee) BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2015

	Notes	2015 £	2014 £
<b>Current assets</b> Debtors and prepayments Cash at bank and in hand	7	29,265 321,129	31,654 235,862
Creditore, emerate felling due		350,394	267,516
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	125,409	73,118
Net current assets		224,985	194,398
Net assets		224,985	194,398
Funds			
Unrestricted accumulated fund	9	210,957	174,972
Restricted funds	9	14,028	19,426
		224,985	194,398

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

For the year ending 31 March 2015 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies but as this company is a charity, a voluntary audit has been requested under the Charities Act 2011.

Directors' responsibilities:

• The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476;

• The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements were approved by the board and authorised for issue on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015 and signed on behalf of the board by:

**Geoff Palmer – Trustee** 

**Dave Willis - Trustee** 

#### ARUN AND CHICHESTER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

#### (A Company Limited by Guarantee) NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

#### 1 Accounting Policies

#### Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (SORP 2005) issued in March 2005, the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008) and the Companies Act 2006.

#### Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the Charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Legal Services cases in progress at the year-end are included in incoming resources in proportion to the extent that the case is complete.

Grants are recognised in the year in which they are receivable. Voluntary income and donations are accounted for as received by the charity.

An amount is included in the financial statements to allow for the provision of office accommodation at a reduced rent.

#### **Resources expended**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to a category. All costs have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the resource.

#### Expenditure on equipment

Expenditure of £2,500 or less on any individual equipment is charged as an expense in the Statement of Financial Activities. Computer upgrades and furniture/equipment replacements are written off in the year of purchase.

#### Apportionment of expenses

Expenditure has been apportioned between charitable expenditure and governance costs on the basis of direct apportionment.

#### Pension contributions

Contributions in respect of the Bureau's defined contribution pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities for the year in which they are payable to the scheme. Differences between contributions payable and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments at the year end.

#### Taxation

The Bureau is a registered charity and is exempt from taxation (except for Value Added Tax) on its income and capital gains applied for charitable purposes.

#### Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Bureau. Restricted funds are used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donors. The purpose of each restricted fund is set out in note 11.

Where allowed under the terms of the grant, volunteer costs are included as a transfer between funds using the relevant hourly rate, based on the hours worked on each project

#### Leasing

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and the risks of ownership remain with the lessor are reflected in the Statement of Financial Activities.

#### Irrecoverable VAT

The irrecoverable VAT is included in expenditure.

#### **Deferred Income**

Deferred income represents the amounts receivable for future periods, as specified by the donors or grants makers, and is released to incoming resources in the period for which it has been received.

2	Incoming Resources	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2014/15 Total	2013/14 Total £
	Charitable activities	-	-		-
	Grants and other funding:				
	Grants:-				
	Local Authorities and Councils:	110 011		110.011	100.004
	West Sussex County Council (WSCC) WSCC - Warm Home Healthy People	119,041	-	119,041	108,084 2,972
	WSCC LAN Project	-	71,000	71,000	71,000
	WSCC LAN 2 Financial Capability	-	16,271	16,271	32,542
	Arun District Council	110,400	-	110,400	110,400
	Chichester District Council	59,900	-	59,900	59,900
	Chichester District Council - Outreach	6,900	-	6,900	6,900
	Chichester District Council - Court Desk	- 16,330	-	- 16,330	5,000 20,130
	City, Town and Parish Notional Rents - Benefit in Kind	26,000	-	26,000	26,000
		338,571	87,271	425,842	442,928
	Grants:-				
	Other Grants	14,085	-	14,085	27,535
	Restricted Funds and Grants:-				
	Healthwatch	-	53,707	53,707	51,150
	Royal British Legion	-	-	-	34,387
	Court Desk (including Lloyds TSB Found	dation grant) -	17,713	17,713	6,700
	Surrey and Sussex Probation Trust	-	28,000	28,000	25,581
	Big Lottery Fund	-	168,876	168,876	103,352
	Home visiting Pension Delivery Service	-	17,000 29,849	17,000 29,849	8,500
	Fension Delivery Service	-	29,049	29,049	-
		352,656	402,416	755,072	700,133
	Legal Services Commission				
	Consortium Contract Closure LSC	-	-	-	7,003
	Legal Services Commission	-	-	-	21,725
					28,728
	_	252.050	400.440	755.070	700.004
		352,656	402,416	755,072	728,861
	Other Incoming Resources:				
	Misc. income	750		750	-
	Rent and room hire	4,119	-	4,119	3,996
	Salary Secondment	2,411	-	2,411	5,205
		7,280	-	7,280	9,201

Where appropriate, the rent and grant income figures include the value of free or subsidised accommodation.

3	Resources Expended	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2014/15 £	2013/14 £
	Charitable activities				
	Salaries, NI and Employer's Pension contribution	on 219,190	185,381	404,571	358,442
	Staff and volunteer costs	21,125	13,342	34,467	42,577
	Office plus premises expenses	69,885	12,324	82,209	35,392
	Other direct payments CASCAB, Shelter etc	58	143,555	143,613	118,398
	Nominal Rent	26,000	-	26,000	26,000
	Allocation of central overheads apportioned	-	36,966	36,966	50,526
	Volunteer in kind costs	-	-	-	27,784
		336,258	391,568	727,826	659,119
	Legal Services Commission				
	Salaries, NI and Employer's Pension contribut	ion -	-	-	17,348
	Staff and volunteer costs	-	-	-	98
					17,446

4	Governance costs	2014/15 £	2013/14 £
	Audit fees	3,270	2,625
	Other to include marketing	3,287	848
	Bank Charges	301	282
	Legal and Professional fees	453	167
	Trustee Expenses detailed below:-	350	554
	Total	7,661	4,476

Trustees:-			
Alan Laybourn	Travel	£200.70	Healthwatch and General
Dave Willis	Travel	£37.65	SORP training
Glenda Sellens	Travel	£25.75	CASCAB meetings
Rodney Clare	Travel	£86.16	General

Staff Costs	2014/15 £	2013/14 £
Wages and salaries	377,220	351,484
Social security costs	25,166	22,121
Pension costs	2,185	2,185
	404,571	375,790
	Wages and salaries Social security costs	Wages and salaries377,220Social security costs25,166Pension costs2,185

Staff costs include Salaries, Employers National Insurance Contributions and Employers Pension Contributions. The average monthly number of employees during the year; calculated on a full-time equivalent basis: -

	2014/15 Number	2013/14 Number
General /Admin Staff	9.14	11.41
Legal Services Commission staff	0.00	0.21
Court Desk	0.11	0.50
Probation	0.00	0.29
Big Lottery	3.21	2.00
Home Visiting	0.67	0.49
LAN 1 & 2	0.74	1.10
Healthwatch	1.18	0.00
Pensions Delivery	5.95	0.00
Totals	21.00	16.00

There were no employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000. No remuneration was paid, or other benefits received by any trustee or any person connected with any trustee.

#### 6 Pension Scheme

The Bureau makes pension contributions to one employee on a defined contribution basis, and at the year-end nil was due to the scheme.

7	Debtors and prepayments	2014/15	2013/14
		£	£
	Debtors	11,075	13,134
	Prepayments	18,190	18,520
		29,265	31,654

8	Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	2014/15 £	2013/14 £
	Trade creditors Taxation and social security costs Accruals and deferred income	19,937 10,732 94,740	20,463 9,847 42,808
		125,409	73,118

#### 9 Funds

	Unrestricted Accumulated	Restricted	
	Funds	Funds	
	£	£	
As at 1 April 2014 Net movement in funds	174,972 35,985	19,426 (5,398)	
At 31 March 2015	210,957	14,028	

#### 10 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Current assets	241,912	108,482	350,394
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(30,955)	(94,454)	(125,409)
	210,957	14,028	224,985

Restricted fund assets are held in an appropriate form to enable each fund to be applied in accordance with the restrictions imposed. (See note 11)

### ARUN AND CHICHESTER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

#### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

#### 11 Restricted funds

The income funds of the Bureau include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations held, to be applied for specific purposes:

Movement in Funds	<u>Balances</u> 01.04.14	<u>Incoming</u> Funds	Expended Costs	<u>Apportioned</u>	<u>Volunteer</u> in kind	<u>Transfers</u> <u>between</u> <u>funds</u>	<u>Balances</u> <u>31.3.15</u>
Home Visiting	343	17,000	(12,275)	(6,275)	(402)	1,609	-
Court Desk (including Lloyds TSB Foundation grant)	-	17,713	(11,315)	(5,281)	(4,062)	2,945	-
Sussex & Surrey Probation Trust	-	28,000	(23,097)	(3,621)	(1,220)	-	62
Big Lottery	1,544	168,876	(150,201)	(14,655)	-	-	5,564
Healthwatch	(10)	53,707	(32,482)	(5,975)	(15,240)	-	-
LAN Project 1	1,697	71,000	(55,919)	(6,711)	(6,574)	-	3,493
LAN Project 2	15,852	16,271	(31,031)	(7,790)	-	6,698	-
Pension Delivery Service	-	29,849	(24,940)	-	-	-	4,909
TOTALS	19,426	402,416	(341,260)	(50,308)	(27,498)	11,252	14,028

#### **Expended Costs**

Costs where monies are paid out by or to other organisations or clients. These include direct salaries and direct expenses against the projects.

#### **Apportioned costs**

Costs are based on allocating expenses for salaries, office/IT and premises costs on the ratio of employees directly managing each project compared to the total number of full-time employees.

#### Volunteer in Kind

Volunteer costs were apportioned to each project and the" cost in kind" taken based on Administrators - £10 per hour Advisers - £16 per hour

#### Transfers between funds

These represent amounts transferred from unrestricted accumulated funds to finance a deficit on a restricted fund.

# ARUN AND CHICHESTER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

#### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

#### 11(a) Restricted funds

The purpose of the restricted funds is as follows:

Home Visiting

•

For the vulnerable and elderly in our rural areas who cannot access one of our centres.

Court Desk (Lloyds TSB Foundation & Sussex Community Foundation)

Court representation for small claims and charging orders for vulnerable clients who do not have representation.

Surrey & Sussex Probation Trust

Countywide Outreach advice at probation offices for debt advice.

• Big Lottery

To provide paid staff to train and "upskill" volunteers.

- Healthwatch
  - First port of call for all clients with health and social care enquiries.
  - The Local Assistance network (LAN) Project 1

Working with other organisations to support clients since the cessation of the Crisis Loan.

- The Local Assistance network (LAN) Project 2
  - To support clients with budgeting skills and money awareness support with the additional resource of a financial capability worker.
- Pension Delivery Service

To provide guidance to clients over 55 years of age on the options available when taking a pension.

## ARUN AND CHICHESTER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

#### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

#### 12 Constitution

The Bureau is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Every member of the Bureau undertakes to contribute to the assets of the Bureau in the event of it being wound up while he is a member or within one year after he ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required not exceeding £1.

#### 13 Capital commitments

At the year end, there was no capital expenditure contracted for but not provided in the financial statements.

#### 14 Commitments under operating leases

At 31 March 2015 the company had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Land and buildings 2015	Other 2015
Expiry date:- Within one year Between two and five years	<b>£</b> 3,900 -	<b>£</b> 450 12,661
	3,900	13,111

#### 15 Related party transactions

Of the grants received from local authorities detailed in note 2, £296,241 (2014: £285,284) was received from the West Sussex Consortium, an entity with two Trustees in common at the beginning of the comparative financial period.

# **Our Aims and Principles**

- To provide the advice people need for the problems they face.
- When people's voices need to be heard, we come together to campaign on big issues

The Citizens Advice service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. It values diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

# **Our Vision Statement**

To be the first port of call: support and empowerment for a positive future

## We seek to:

- Continue to develop a high quality advice service, which meets the needs of the communities we serve.
- Develop and maintain a workforce that is engaged and motivated, through training and support.
- Raise awareness of our social policy work internally and externally, and contribute to researching and campaigning in respect of local and national issues.
- Build a strong foundation for the future by continuing to stabilise our financial position.
- Sustain a vision for the future which demonstrates honesty, integrity and a team spirit.

### Keep up to date with us

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Accounts audited by – Spofforths Chartered Accountants, A2 Yeoman Gate, Yeoman Way, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 3QZ