

CANF Newsletter

Citizens Advice New Forest Newsletter

Spring 2018

Welcome to the new CANF newsletter

Citizens Advice New Forest (CANF) is the trading name of New Forest Citizens Advice Limited, which is a charity registered in the UK with the Charity Commissioners.

CANF works in and with the local community, to offer advice across a wide range of topics. We aim to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives. We provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We are a local charity which works in partnership with other organisations who are able to offer help and support to those in need. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

This is our first newsletter in this format. We have produced it so that our partners, our funders and our clients can all see how we do what we do. It also offers us an opportunity to celebrate and thank the volunteers, without whom our service simply could not run.

Each quarter, we will feature clients' quotes, articles on our current campaigns and topical information you may find helpful. We will also publish statistics, so that everyone who reads this newsletter can see how we are doing.

Working in partnership—MacMillan Cancer Trust

CANF works with the MacMillan Cancer Trust to help improve the lives of those living with cancer.

Marilyn, our Macmillan Support Worker was interviewed in December 2017 and January 2018 on both local radio and TV. Marilyn, and one of the clients for whom she provides support, were filmed for the BBC programme, Inside Out, talking about their experience and how the support provided has affected them and the lives of their family and friends.

What our clients say

"Thank you so much for your help. Citizens Advice made all the difference"

Client awarded over £4,000 in redundancy payments

"I am so grateful. I couldn't have done this on my own"

Client successfully defended her right to work past traditional retirement age

In This Issue ...

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healthwatch Hampshire

In each of our newsletters, we will highlight one of our key local partners. In our first newsletter, we have **Healthwatch Hampshire** in the spotlight.

Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of the public. It exists in two distinct forms – local Healthwatch & Healthwatch England, at national level. The aim of local Healthwatch is to give citizens & communities a stronger voice to influence & challenge how health & social care services are provided within their locality. Local Healthwatch also:

- Represents the views and experiences of people who use services, carers and the public on the Health and Wellbeing Boards set up by local authorities
- Provides information and signposting to people about local health and care services, how to access them and how to find their way round the system
- Reports concerns about the quality of health & social care services to Healthwatch England, which can then recommend the Care Quality Commission take action
- Provides NHS complaint advocacy services.

Planning for the Future

In 2017, staff and volunteers helped nearly 9,000 clients with over 15,000 problems. The demand for our services is increasing. We aim to enable everyone living or working in the New Forest area to have enhanced access to CANF through multiple digital channels and at locations where our service is needed on an outreach basis.

If you would like to help CANF with its Planning for the Future project, please send us your suggestions. We are particularly interested in ideas for enhancing our service through technology and on a person-to-person basis at locations throughout the New Forest.



Want to get involved?

We rely on donations and grants to cover the cost of managing the service, maintaining our premises and training and supporting over 120 volunteers. If you are interested in helping us to help the community of the New Forest, please get in touch (newforestcab.org.uk).

Energy Best Deal successes

One client wanted to find out how to obtain help with an energy comparison. He had never done this before; he was 88 and his wife's carer.

Our client received both gas & electricity from one national supplier, on a standard variable tariff. He was paying over £70 per month. CANF ran his case through the Citizens Advice energy comparison site (<https://energycompare.citizensadvice.org.uk>) and found a range of options. The client was not keen to swap to suppliers he had not heard of. CANF was able to find another national supplier, which could save the client £15 every month on his energy bills.

CANF also investigated whether the client was eligible for Warmer Homes Discount.

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Another client had been street homeless, and had then been housed with help from TwoSaints (Southampton-based homeless charity). He found dealing with life very difficult, because he struggled with mental illness and budgeting was new for him. He had experienced issues with alcohol in the past and was trying to get his life back on track.

He was supported by his local food bank and CANF worked with Local Welfare Assistance to secure £70 in energy vouchers for him to redeem. This gave our client the incentive he wanted, to engage with other agencies to help himself.



**ENERGY
BEST
DEAL**

Have you thought of joining us?

If you are interested in discussing our volunteering opportunities, please get in touch (newforestcab.org.uk). At the moment we are particularly interested in hearing from people with experience in professional fundraising, and with in-depth knowledge of networks and information computer technology.



**Volunteer
with us**

Local Campaigns

As a service we hold a huge amount of insight and data about the problems our clients and their wider communities face.

Examples of how we can use this insight and data to help our community include:

- helping us research issues further;
- Influencing decision makers to change policies & practices.

Key issues which our clients are facing at the moment are: -

Homelessness: Citizens Advice is working with other agencies to address the issues and difficulties faced by homeless people in the New Forest area.

Personal Independence Payments (PIP): PIP is replacing Disability Living Allowance (DLA). Some of our clients who are required to switch to PIP have had their applications refused, particularly for mental health issues, for which there is no provision in the new PIP forms.

Access to banks in rural areas: bank closures across the New Forest are causing clients difficulties. This has been made worse by reductions in provision of public transport.

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Citizens Advice New Forest

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newforestcab.org.uk - click on the office links for email and volunteering options

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Contact Us

Looking for advice?

You can call us on

03444 111 306

or look at our
website

citizensadvice.org.uk

We are also on
Twitter!



We don't give advice over Twitter, but we do tweet about our activity, our successes and our campaigns. Follow us for our latest news, at

@CABNewForest