

Annual Report 2020/21



Mid-North
Yorkshire

We are Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire

We provide free, independent,
confidential and impartial advice
and campaign on big issues affecting
peoples lives.

We are an independent charity and part of the
Citizens Advice network across England and Wales.

We value diversity, promote equality and challenge
discrimination wherever we see it.



Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire

Registered office: 277 High Street, Northallerton,
North Yorkshire DL7 8DW. Charity Registration Number 1146084.
A Company limited by Guarantee in England Number 7890996.
Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN: 617621.

Our Mission

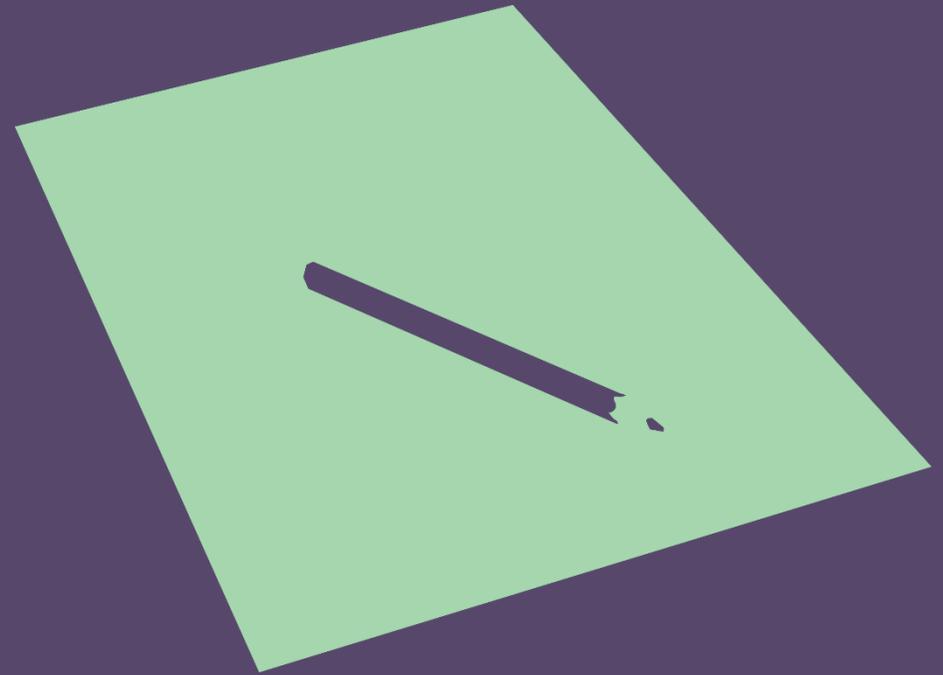
To provide advice that helps people
to overcome their problems.

Our Vision

Is for people to have the knowledge
and confidence they need to find
their way forward, whoever they are
and whatever problem they face.

Contents

- 1 **Foreword from the chair**
- 2 **Chief Executive report**
- 3 **Our impact in 2020/21**
- 4 **Our service**
- 5 **Our projects**
- 6 **Our funders and supporters**
- 7 **Working in partnership**
- 8 **Our value to society**
- 9 **What people say about us**
- 10 **Client stories: Debt, Benefits, Housing, and Employment**
- 11 **Volunteer recruitment and training 2020/21**
- 12 **Our governance**
- 13 **Contact us**



Foreword from the chair

2020/21 has been a difficult year for everyone and I can't express enough how proud I am of our organisations strong and able response to the pandemic.

As is typical of this organisation and its roots we have met difficulty face on and continued to provide a service for those most in need.

The increase in the numbers of those we have helped and the range of organisations we have partnered with shows our strength and that we have maintained our very local identities while merging to create stable and financially sound structures.

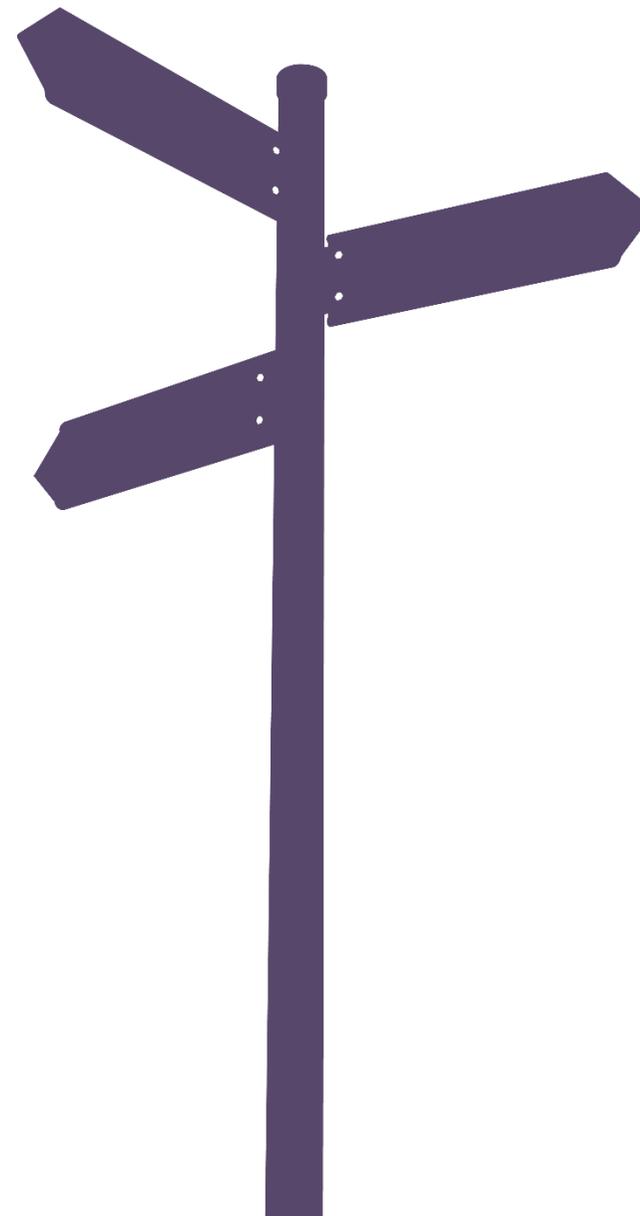
I would like to say a big thank you all volunteers, staff, partners, and funders who have made our work possible this year and welcome all those who joined our organisation during a very difficult time but have adapted so well to the strange conditions.

Our plans for providing increased specialist advice and more local partnership working mean we are confident about the future and hopefully for our communities and those services we provide.

Carl Les, Chair of Trustee Board, Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire

Statement of Internal Control

The trustee board of Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire oversee the information security of all personal information of our clients, staff, funders, and strategic partners that is processed. Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire hold joint responsibility for client data that is held in our case management system, with the national Citizens Advice Service. An information assurance management team exists to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all personal and sensitive data is maintained to a level which is compliant with the requirements the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.



Chief Executive report

I am immensely proud of how all our staff, volunteers, and trustee board came together this year to provide a service during the Pandemic. The fast reaction of the service changing to working different channels from different locations, keeping track with changing advice on an hourly basis, and protecting clients legal and civil rights has been amazing.

We have worked incredibly hard to meet the increase in demand for our service as can be seen in the statistics in this report, and have teamed up with a range of partners to make the best use of the resources that we have.

In addition, we have continued to strive to provide new services to clients to meet the gaps that exist with the development of our specialist project team and the extension of the energy advice services, again this has been an amazing achievement given the circumstances we are in.

Towards the end of this year, we launched our second mobile advice service so we can now cover more ground in isolated areas. This is vital whilst face-to-face services throughout our area remain difficult to access because of Covid-19 restrictions.

We have been part of the initial crisis response, part of the adapting and surviving and know we will help people and our communities grow stronger by providing the services they need in the ways that they need them.

Carol Shreeve, CEO Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire

This year has been challenging yet hugely rewarding.

None of this would be possible without the huge contribution made by our trustees, volunteers, staff, partners, and funders.

We simply could not operate without them.

Our impact in 2020/21



14,903

people helped



£5,674,653

income gained



51,311

issues addressed



£530,220

debts written off

Client profiles

Gender: 56% Male 44% Female

Age: 1% 0-18 85% 20-64 14% 65 and over

Disability: 6% Disabled 40% Long term health condition

Ethnicity: 88% White 4% Asian 4% Black 2% Mixed 2% Other

Main issues people wanted help with:

1 **Benefits & tax credits**
(9,050 issues)

2 **Universal Credit**
(5,727 issues)

3 **Employment**
(5,670 issues)

4 **Debt**
(5,223 issues)

5 **Housing**
(3,447 issues)

6 **Relationships & family**
(2,230 issues)

Our service

We are a vital open-door service for many people; through our 66 paid staff and 44 volunteers (10 of which are members of the Trustee Board), Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire offers a free high quality advice service on a range of issues. This is delivered through our core service, projects, and specialist advice (housing, debt, family law, and discrimination).

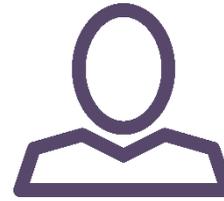
We cover 4 regions of North Yorkshire. The county as a whole has a population of over 600,000 (ONS 2019).

- **Hambleton** - Northallerton office
- **Richmondshire** - Richmond office
- **Ryedale** - Malton office
- **Selby** - Selby

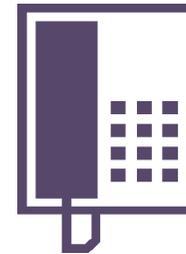
We run various outreaches (subject to current Covid restrictions) based in libraries, and in Hambleton and Richmondshire we run the Rural Advice Bus service which provides information and advice to more isolated communities.

Our communications team promote our service across various media and our website news page. They also promote the work of our partners, and keep MPs' of our areas up-to-date on our activities and campaigns.

How we delivered our service



2%
in person



64%
via telephone



17%
via email/webchat/
video call



£288,189
estimated worth
of donated hours
by our volunteers

Our projects

Money and Pension Service Debt Advice Project

Our team of Debt Advisers can offer a full debt management service to help people begin the process of getting their finances (and often their lives) back in order. Funded by the Money and Pensions Service.

Rural Reach Information and Advice Bus - Hambleton and Richmondshire

Taking our service into rural and isolated communities across all our areas. Funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, North Yorkshire County Council, and Richmondshire District Council.

The service resumed in August 2020 when the first lockdown was lifted, and then again April 2021 after the lifting of the 2nd lockdown. We now holding regular sessions at Markets across Hambleton and Richmondshire.

Mobile Advice Van - Ryedale and Selby

Towards the end of this year we launched a mobile advice service for Ryedale and Selby based on the success of the Rural Reach Information and Advice Bus. Funded by Citizens Advice.

EU Settlement Scheme Support - Hambleton

Providing support to EU citizens in Hambleton, including help to apply for settled status, and ID verification. Funded by Hambleton District Council.



Supported by



Macmillan Benefits Advice - Hambleton and Richmondshire

Service delivering free information and advice to people and their families who are affected by cancer and other life limiting illnesses. 2020/21 has been an exciting and challenging year for both the project and our clients.

The challenges came from delivering our advice and support over the telephone only, with no home visits or visits to patients in hospital; for patients it was something they had become used, but for our two advisers, an essential part of the way in which they support others was lost.

In July referrals from the Friarage and James Cook Hospitals resumed, in September South Tees NHS Trust provided funding towards adviser time, and in January a volunteer Benefits Adviser joined the team. There were 172 new referrals to the service (an increase of 44% on 2019/20), total benefits claimed £666,942, £4940 in Macmillan Grants gained for clients and £44,804 in debts were written off.

Access to Justice and Litigants in Person Litigants Support - North Yorkshire

The aim of the project is to reduce the number of people who need to go to court by giving early legal advice and guidance, as well as to support those do have to face the courts.

This project enables us to fill the gap in provision of free specialist advice for North Yorkshire. Because of Covid there has been an increase in people needing legal advice, especially as the impact of job losses and business closures begin to hit home.

While this project is about preventing people having to go to court, it is also about empowering people, giving them the support, and legal advice they need if they are either being discriminated against, are at risk of losing their home or are struggling to navigate a complex family problem; especially if they can't afford to pay for expert advice or representation.

In addition to employing three Specialist Advisers to support clients, Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire (CAMNY) have brought together, Scarborough District Citizens Advice and Kirklees Citizens Advice and Law Centre, in partnership to deliver the 'Litigants in Person' project, ensuring that residents in North Yorkshire have access to specialist legal advice. This advice covers the areas of Housing, Family Law and Discrimination – when experienced at work, in housing or in accessing benefits. Our partner, Kirklees, provide training and supervision for our Discrimination Caseworker and are also a referral partner for Legal Aid.

Advice Matters – Selby

Project aims to address the issues associated with financial hardship connected to poor mental health by providing specialist advice on income maximisation, money management and debt solutions, alongside mental health interventions to ensure solutions are achievable and sustainable. Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Housing Matters - Selby

Specialist Housing Caseworker supporting clients to prevent homelessness by providing housing-related advice, information, and support, including legal advice and court representation for those at risk of eviction. Funded by the Nationwide Community Foundation.

Fuel Poverty and Energy Advice Programmes - North Yorkshire

Through various funded projects including Warm & Well in North Yorkshire, we provide information and advice to people on energy related subjects including help and support for vulnerable people in fuel poverty. Main funders include NYCC (Warm & Well in North Yorkshire), Community First Yorkshire, Two Ridings Community Foundation, and the Energy Redress Scheme.

During the lockdowns and working from home the Warm & Well team handled 1103 referrals which was an increase of 664 from the previous year. During this time, the team also upskilled and completed several energy courses which enabled them to deal with a number of complex cases including the increasing need to support clients with pre-payment energy top up vouchers.

North Yorkshire Information and Advice Service

Dedicated phonenumber, email, and website for residents of North Yorkshire to access the services of local Citizens Advice in North Yorkshire. Working in partnership with Citizens Advice Craven and Harrogate Districts, and Citizens Advice Scarborough and District. Funded by North Yorkshire County Council.

Money and Benefits Advice Service - North Yorkshire

Project to help people with issues around Universal Credit or other welfare benefits. Support also available to help people manage their money. Funded by the NYCC Communities.

Selby Advice - Selby

We co-ordinate the Selby Advice network of advice and information agencies within Selby District. We host quarterly meetings where training and networking opportunities are offered. We maintain the selbyadvice.org.uk website and circulate news and service updates within the network via email.

Pension Wise - Nationwide

Guidance service set up to help people aged over 50 with a personal or workplace pension. Appointments are held by telephone with one of our Guidance Specialists. We are hoping to resume partial face to face appointments Autumn 2021 (subject to Covid restrictions). In 2020/21 the project exceeded its targets across the board. Funded by the Money and Pensions Service.

Help to Claim - Nationwide

The service is available for people who need support making a claim for Universal Credit. The service is delivered face-to-face, by telephone or via web chat, and will help people from opening their account to receiving their first full payment. Funded by the DWP.

Help Through Hardship helpline - Nationwide

A freephone helpline for people who cannot afford food and helps them get an e-voucher for a local food parcel. It also provides information and advice on the issues that are causing financial hardship to help move clients forward. Funded by the Trussell Trust.

Our funders and supporters

Organisations

Age UK North Yorkshire Darlington
Access to Justice Foundation
Cllr. Caroline Goodrick
Clothworkers Foundation
Community First North Yorkshire
Groundworks Tesco Bags for Help
Darlington MIND
Dishforth Nursery Gardens
IDAS
Money and Pensions Service
Nationwide Community Foundation
NYCC Fire and Rescue Service
PCC of St Peters Norton
South Tees NHS
The National Lottery Community Fund
Trussell Trust
Two Ridings Community Foundation

Regional Council

North Yorkshire CC
NYCC Stronger Communities
NYCC Living Well

District Councils

Hambleton DC
Richmonshire DC
Ryedale DC
Selby DC

Town Councils

Selby
Richmond
Helmsley
Colburn
Easingwold
Barlby and Osgodby
Stokesley
Thirsk
Tadcaster

Parish Councils

Brafferton
Brayton
Brompton
Brompton on Swale
Bryam Cum Sutton
Burton Salmon
Carthorpe
Catterick
Gilling West
Habton
Hipswell
Husthwaite
Ingelby Arncliffe
Kellington
Kirby Grindalythe
Middleton Tyas
Newton le Willows
North Duffield
Pickhill
Riccall
Sherriff Hutton
Sinnington
Skeeby
St Martins
Tanfield
Ulleskelf
Whorlton
Womersley

Working in partnership

This year has highlighted the importance of working with partners to deliver services to as many people in our areas. We have worked with over 200 partners including:

Access to Justice Foundation
Age UK North Yorkshire Darlington
IDAS (Independent Domestic Abuse Service)
Mind
North Yorkshire County Council
NYCC Stronger Communities
Hambleton District Council
Richmondshire District Council
Ryedale District Council
Selby District Council
Town and Parish Councils across our area

Warm & Well in North Yorkshire Partnership

Age UK in North Yorkshire
Citizens Advice in North Yorkshire
Community First Yorkshire
Harrogate Easier Living Project
Green Doctor
National Energy Action
Stokesley and District Community Care Association
Two Ridings Community Foundation
NYCC Living Well Team
North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service
White Rose Improvement Agency
YES Energy Solutions
Yorkshire Energy Doctor
Yorkshire Housing

Selby Advice Partnership

Age UK Selby & District
Alzheimer's Society
Brighter Futures Selby
Carers Count Selby District
Castle Communication Services
Chapter 3 Enterprise C.I.C
Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire
Community First Credit Union
Dementia Forward Selby
Everyday Enable
Foundation Legal Services
Freeman Brown Solicitors
Homestart
Horton Housing
Horton Wellbeing Cafes
Humankind
IDAS
IHL Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles
Independent Health Complaints
Advocacy Service
Kings Church Selby
Mencap Selby
MP for Selby and Ainsty, Nigel Adams
North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

Selby Advice Partnership contd.

North Yorkshire Horizons
North Yorkshire Sport
Perennial
Positive Progressions
Scope
Second Chance Ostomy Yorkshire
Selby & District Foodbank
Selby District AVS
Selby District Council
Selby District Vision
Selby U3A
Tadcrafters CIC
The Big Communi-Tea
The Salvation Army Selby
The WEA
Together Housing
Total Advocacy
Training for Employment CIC
Unforgettable Experiences
Wilberforce Trust
WLCT
Yorkshire Energy Doctor
Yorkshire Mesmac

Our value to society

Citizens Advice Mid-North helps thousands of people every year. This provides us with unique insight into the challenges our clients face, more so this year considering the pandemic.

We are not only helping people through difficult situations, but also identifying and tackling the underlying causes of their problems.

The people we help, our funders and the organisations we work with see the value we deliver and the impact we are making.

It is impossible to put a financial value on everything we do – but where we can, we have. We have used a Treasury-approved model to provide the figures detailed on the right.

From our robust management information, we have also separately considered the financial benefits to the people we help.

For every £1 invested in our service in 2020/21, we generated:

£30.38

in public value

Wider economic and social benefits. Improvements in participation and productivity for clients and volunteers.

£15.30

in value to the people we help

Income gained through benefits, debts written off, and consumer problems solved.

£4.39

in fiscal benefits

Reduction in health service demand, LA homelessness service, and out-of-work benefits for clients and volunteers.

What people say about us

In 2020/21, **92%** of people who used our service said they would recommend us to a friend, **87%** of people said our advice had helped them find a way forward, and **76%** said their problem had now been solved.

'I couldn't have done it without the help of Karolina. I had tried for two years to get the company involved to help me solve the problem. Having long term health issues it has made me a lot worse and I am less able to deal with situations like this. It has been such a relief to have someone advocate on our behalf.'

'I suffer badly from anxiety and can find it hard to explain my problems clearly. The lady who took my call put me at my ease very quickly and I had confidence in the information I was given. Thank you.'

'I found the service very helpful. I was called back at exactly the time that I requested, and the lady was very helpful and direct and certainly knew her stuff - thank you.'

'Everyone at the Malton office was very kind and helpful. We were most directly helped by Jeff FCIPD Employment Adviser who was very knowledgeable, helpful, and compassionate.'

'The online chat and further phone calls have helped me and the people I spoke to were very friendly and put me at ease!'



'I was very happy with the service I received and the follow up. Simon took his time going through my options and was very knowledgeable. He reassured me a great deal about my problem and spent a lot of time helping me. I was pleased with the way he helped but will have to wait for a reply from DWP.'

Client story - Debt

Background and issue

Tracey is single, unemployed and suffers from long term mental health issues preventing her returning to work. Her only source of income is from Universal Credit and disability benefits. She also has mental health challenges that cause her great anxiety when dealing with her day-to-day financial matters which had led to a significant amount of debt with multiple priority and non-priority creditors.

Because of her low income she has been unable to settle these debts. Her mounting debts were causing her mental health to deteriorate

Advice and outcome

The adviser carried out a full benefit assessment and it became apparent that Tracey had significant rent arrears with her private landlord. and was not claiming housing costs. She was in danger of potential repossession of her tenancy.

Following on from full benefit assessment the adviser supported Tracey in migrating from legacy benefits to Universal credit which resulted in an uplift in her benefits as her full rent liability was fully awarded.

An appointment was made with a Debt Adviser for a full debt assessment and the appropriate debt options for Tracey's circumstances were explained. Tracey decided with the option of Bankruptcy. Full support was given by the adviser to complete the Bankruptcy application which should result all her debt liabilities being written off.

Client story - Benefits

Background and issue

Sally is single and lives with her two children. She was reliant on income from Universal Credit and Council Tax Reduction and had been turned down for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) following a medical assessment, despite living with a debilitating long-term health condition.

Sally contacted us through our Adviceline for help to challenge this and she was referred to one of our specialist caseworkers.

Advice and outcome

We advised Sally on how to apply for a Mandatory Reconsideration (MR) and helped her to evidence the difficulties she had in relation to her illness. We gave her the confidence to talk to the DWP and the original decision was overturned, resulting in increased income of over £150 per week.

Our caseworker also ensured that Sally was supported in making Universal Credit aware of her condition, gaining her an additional component in her UC payments, enhancing her income by a further £342 per month.

Sally was also referred to North Yorkshire County Council for a care needs assessment so she could get some equipment to help her to manage her disabilities.

Sally was better off financially, emotionally, and practically because of the support we provided.

Client story - Housing

Background and issue

John is 58, in extremely poor health and jointly owns a property subject to mortgage. Bail conditions prevented him from living at his property. He applied as homeless, but the local authority decision was that John was eligible and vulnerable due to his health conditions but not homeless or threatened with homelessness within the next 28 days because he had accommodation which he was entitled to occupy, and which was available to him.

John had exhausted his financial resources staying in hotel accommodation and intended to sleep in his car on one of the coldest nights of the year.

Advice and outcome

John contacted Citizens Advice and following negotiations by the Housing Caseworker with the local authority, he was accommodated under the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol. A request for a review of the local authority decision was submitted by the caseworker on the basis that a person will be homeless if they have accommodation but are prevented from living in it.

Although the decision maker was not prepared to overturn the original decision, the local authority used their discretion to provide John with a one bedroomed furnished flat together with payment of the rent and council tax on the flat until his bail conditions are lifted.

John was very happy with this outcome.

Client story - Employment

Background and issue

Andrew had been discriminated against whilst at work and had consequently lost all his hours.

Advice and outcome

We supported Andrew by listening to his issue, supporting him to complete a 'chronological timeline' of events to spot any time limit issues, and advising him on what their potential discrimination claims were.

We talked Andrew through the process of taking an employment claim to a tribunal from start to finish, to enable him to envisage his potential journey through the legal system.

When Andrew decided that he would like to proceed to litigation, we were able to check his eligibility for legal aid and to refer him to a legal aid provider who had capacity to take on Andrew's case.

Volunteer recruitment and training 2020/21

2020/21 has been a sometimes challenging, but also interesting year when it comes to the volunteering side of our service.

Prior to lockdown there were 105 volunteer advisers/assessors, and 10 Trustee Board members) at Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire. After the first lockdown in March 2020, for various reasons, this dropped to 15 volunteer advisers/assessors who, along with our paid staff, were able to quickly adapt to remote working and delivering our service via telephone, webchat, or email.

During the year, our volunteer numbers increased to 44 advisers/assessors, 4 of whom moved into paid employment within the organisation.

Despite the challenges faced we were still able to promote volunteering, recruit, and train volunteers remotely. We provided IT equipment as well as introducing new technology to provide support and supervision for all our volunteers.

The overall plus side of our new way of recruiting is that we have had a more diverse range of people enquiring and applying for volunteering roles, including those who have been furloughed, and university students. Location of volunteers has been varied too from very local to all the way to London!

Volunteering at Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire

Our volunteers receive 100% support and full training. Any expenses incurred as a volunteer are reimbursed, e.g. travel and childcare costs. Volunteers cover various roles including assessors, advisers, receptionists, administration, and trustee board members.

We are committed to equal opportunities for all our volunteers, staff and clients, and welcome volunteers regardless of race, gender, sexuality, or disabilities.

It is not just our clients who benefit from our service, our volunteers do too. Volunteering can give vital skills for the future and is good experience for paid employment.

Interested in volunteering for us?

For more information please visit our volunteering page on our website at www.citizensadvicehrs.org.uk/about

Our governance

Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire is governed by a Board of Trustees, who are all volunteers for the charity.

The trustees have ultimate responsibility for the charity's vision, values ethos, and strategy as well as for the overall performance. They ensure CAMNY complies with all legal requirements and has the highest possible standards of governance. Four formal Trustee Board Meetings are held each year.

The Chief Executive is responsible for leading the management team which includes a Deputy CEO, Head of Quality, and Financial Officer, who are responsible for the quality of advice and operational activities for the charity.

Trustee Board Members

Cllr. Carl Les, *Chair*

Robert Pringle, *Deputy Chair*

Mark Hoggard, *Finance*

Martin Collins, *Director*

Melanie Davies, *Director*

Cllr. Caroline Goodrick, *Director*

Cllr. Lawrence Grose, *Director*

Kevin McGready, *Director*

Janet Sharp, *Director*

Laura Tunney, *Director*

Our Strategic Priorities 2021/24



Making sure our service is accessible to all who need it



Opening a Law Centre specialising in the areas of law covering Housing, Family, and Discrimination.



Looking after the wellbeing of all our staff and volunteers



Standing up for equality, diversity, and inclusion.



Sustainability and resilience of the organisation through diverse funding streams and working in partnership with other organisations, both locally and regionally.

Contact us

Hambleton

277 High Street,
Northallerton, DL7 8DW.

Telephone: 01609 776551
admin@northyorkslca.org.uk

Ryedale

Harrison House, Norton Road,
Norton, Malton, YO17 9RD.

Telephone: 01653 695542
ryedale@northyorkslca.org.uk

Outreach locations*

Bedale Library
Colburn Library
Community House, Selby
Easingwold Library
Leyburn Medical Practice
Phoenix House, Catterick Garrison

Rural Reach Information and Advice Bus

Richmondshire

23 Newbiggin,
Richmond, DL10 4DX.

Telephone: 01748 823862
admin@northyorkslca.org.uk

Selby

38 Ousegate,
Selby, YO8 4NH.

Telephone: 01757 701320
selby@northyorkslca.org.uk

Pickering Library
Sherburn Girls School
Stokesley Library (The Globe)
Tadcaster (MP's Office)
The Clock, Thirsk

*Due to current Covid-19 restrictions, apart from the Rural Information and Advice Bus service all our Outreaches are currently suspended.



Telephone Adviceline

0808 278 7900

Mon-Fri 9.00am - 5.00pm



Email Advice

advice@northyorkslca.org.uk



Self-help advice

www.citizensadvice.org.uk



Website

www.citizensadvicehrs.org.uk