

Dear Member

**RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL - THURSDAY,
19TH SEPTEMBER, 2024**

Please find attached Presentation that was shown on the day of this meeting.

Agenda No Item

4. **Citizens Advice New Forest Update and Future Funding (Pages 3 - 24)**
 Presentation.

Yours sincerely

Democratic Services

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Our impact in 2023/24

The difference we make to the New Forest

3

**citizens
advice**

New Forest



Agenda Item 4

Our Mission

Deliver a sustainable advice and information service that is relevant and accessible to the people of the New Forest. This means making sure that Citizen Advice New Forest can adapt its services continually to ensure that it reflects the demands of the community it serves.

Our Priorities

- Building our services
- Working in partnership
- Growing our people (staff and volunteers)
- Creating a sustainable organisation

- **Review how we deliver our services**
- **Supporting the objectives of NFDC's corporate plan**
- **Develop bids to deliver new services**
- **Building the skills of our team**
- **Diversifying our funding**

model

Delivering in partnership

We work with a range of partners to deliver our advice service.

These partnerships help to ensure that our clients get the help they need from the right people.

Our advisors are able to bridge the gap between services.

- **Attend the community hubs across the New Forest**
- **Liase with the housing, benefits and Council Tax teams**
- **Work with Food Banks to ensure people access help**
- **Signpost to other support in the New Forest**
- **Work to tackle the drivers of poverty**

This is Sarah

Sarah is an example of one of the people we helped.

Last year, we saw 6,500 people with around 19,500 issues.

Sarah's story shows how we help people solve their problems, and why this is important.



What we do

We help people with a range of problems including issues with housing, debt, benefits, employment, relationships and consumer rights.

∞ The people who we help will typically have multiple problems they need our help with, it is estimated that 1 person will have 3.5 problems on average



Sarah was struggling with her debts – she was behind in paying her rent.

The threat of being evicted was making her feel very anxious.

As a single parent, she was worried about how she was going to support her children.

How we help

People access us in different ways:



41%
face-to-face



23%
by telephone



36%
by webchat and email

£

Chris, an adviser, helped Sarah with her problems. He found out she wasn't receiving all the money she was entitled to

This had put added pressure on her finances as she was struggling to pay all her bills, leading to her overall debt increasing.

How we help

People often come to us with multiple or complex problems.

We can deal with most of the issues people come to us with, tailoring our advice to their needs.



Chris helped Sarah to claim the benefits that she was entitled to, including disability benefits.

He wrote to her landlord and set up a payment plan. This stopped her landlord trying to evict her.

Together, they worked out a budget to help Sarah manage her debt and get support with her energy costs.

The difference this makes

The wider impact of advice – what we achieve as a result of solving problems and providing support – is just as important.



60% said they felt less stress, depressed or anxious as a result of the help they received from us.



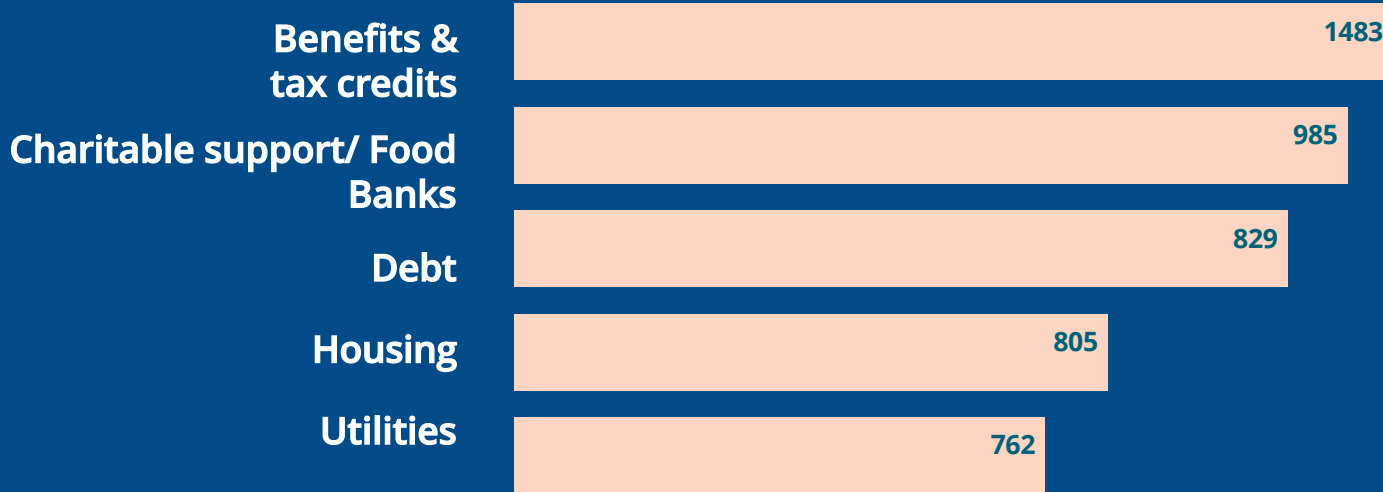
Our advice helped stabilise Sarah's financial situation.

She got the support of a social prescriber to get help with her mental health.

Through our support Sarah has been able to increase her income by £127 a week.

The top advice areas we were asked for in 2023/24

12



How we calculate our financial value

It's impossible to put a financial value on everything we do – but where we can, we have.

We've used a Treasury-approved model to do this.

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

- **Keeping people in employment or helping them back to work**
- **Preventing housing evictions and statutory homelessness**
- **Reducing demand for mental health and GP services**
- **Improving mental wellbeing and positive functioning**
- **Improved family relationships**

Our value to society

For every £1 invested in the New Forest advice service in 2023/24, we generated:

£2.98

in savings to
government and
public services
(fiscal benefits)

Total:

£2,075,355

£20.36

in wider economic
and social benefits
(public value)

Total:

£14,193,276

£9.86

in financial value to
the people we help
(specific outcomes
to individuals)

Total:

£6,870,149

Our team

We are lucky that our **65** volunteers give their time, an estimated 17,000 hours, enabling us to reach as many people as we do.

There are also considerable benefits for them too, such as improved employability, sense of purpose and better wellbeing.

Our trained volunteers save us **£444,000** each year.

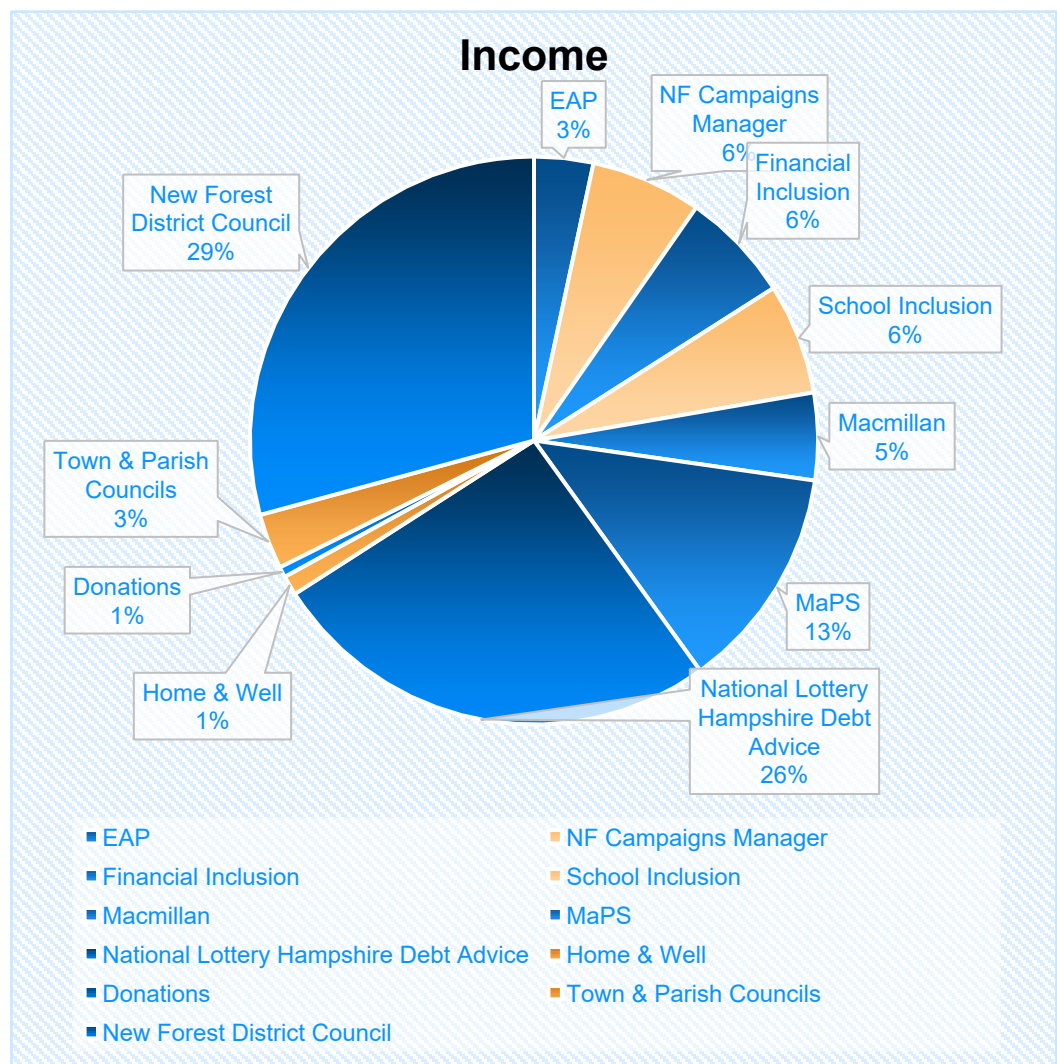
We employ 30 staff, the majority working on our projects.



Our funding

| Fund | Income |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|
| Energy Advice Project | £22,500.00 |
| NF Campaigns Manager | £42,172.00 |
| Financial Inclusion | £42,148.00 |
| School Inclusion | £42,148.00 |
| Macmillan | £33,215.00 |
| MaPS | £85,466.00 |
| National Lottery Hampshire Debt Advice | £172,898.00 |
| Home & Well | £7,500.00 |
| Donations | £4,000.00 |
| Town & Parish Councils | £21,000.00 |
| New Forest District Council | £195,306.00 |

16



Our Financial Position

Inflation will continue to impact on the cost of delivery our advice service

17

2024/25

Deficit budget

Challenges

- IT Upgrade
- Review of services

2025/26

Balance budget

Challenges

- Project funding
- Future of offices
- Investment in income generation

2026/27

Balance Budget

Challenges

- Identifying new funding
- New technology to deliver advice

Our Projects

18

Macmillan

Consistent, targeted and holistic advice service to people affected by cancer.



Energy Advice

Helping people struggling with the cost of energy.



Financial Inclusion

Working with foodbanks and schools to support people out of poverty.



This is Jessica

Jessica is a single parent, struggling to support her family.

She was receiving benefits, but after meeting our advisors we were able to help her apply for Personal Independence Payment.

The support we gave Jessica improved her mental health and increased her income.



Our Projects

20

Money and Debt

Two debt projects to help people manage their money.



Home & Well

Supporting people as they return home from hospital.



General Advice

Giving advice on a range of issues including welfare, housing and consumer issues.



This is Steve

Steve's benefits stopped when he became a pensioner. His mental health had hit rock bottom and he was having suicidal thoughts.

We got him a food parcel and helped him apply for a state pension.

Through our support Steve no longer needs to use the Food Bank and is getting the state pension, along with housing benefits.



Building for the future

Adapt our Advice service to support more residents of the New Forest.

Grow our specialised services to meet the needs of our community.

Work in partnership to ease the pressure on those struggling with the cost of living.

- **Deliver advice in the community.**
- **Bid for funding to grow our services:**
 - **Early Intervention**
 - **Money and Debt Management**
 - **Health and Wellbeing**
- **Reach new people who need our help.**

Citizens Advice New Forest

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New Forest

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