

Supporting the New Forest Community

Resources and
Transformation Overview
and Scrutiny Panel
21st September 2023

**citizens
advice**

New Forest

Our Purpose

Why we exist.

To provide free, confidential advice to help people overcome their problems and campaign on big issues when their voices need to be heard.



We're local and national

- We're a network of 280 local Citizens Advice with 2,588 locations across England and Wales.
- Give us access to the infrastructure to manage the New Forest case loads
- Enables us to provide the most up to date training for our volunteers



Where we work in the Forest

- Five offices in the New Forest
**Hythe, Lymington, New Milton,
Ringwood and Totton**
- Attend 5 hubs
- Support 10 Larders Hubs
- Two Trussell Trust Foodbanks



Citizens Advice New Forest Team

- We are supported by 68 Volunteers, who donate approximately 22 hours a month or 1,496 hours a year
- Staff - 8 generalist advice, 19 project based programmes



Our year at Citizens Advice New Forest

Our Impact in 2022/23

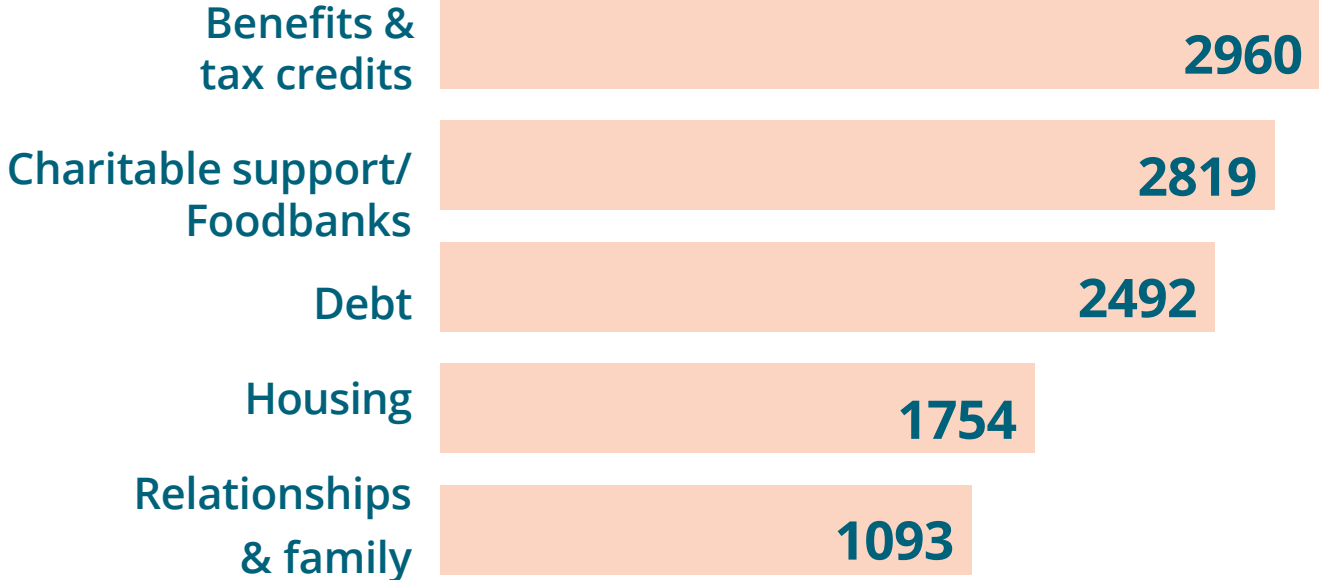


We helped **5,239** people
46% with long term health condition and 8% disabled

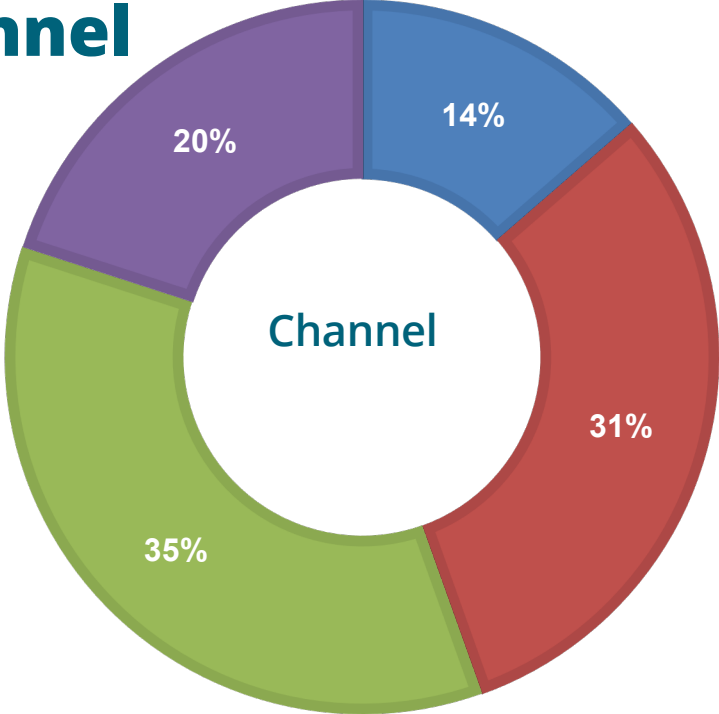
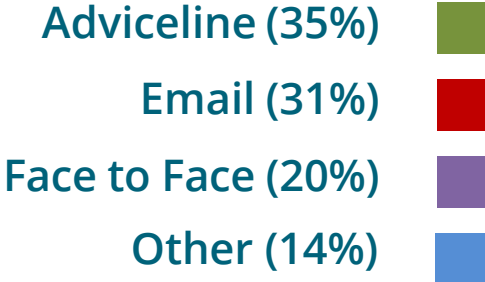


We helped clients with **19,539** issues. Clients are coming to us with an increasingly complex and multiple range of problems.

Top 5 Issues



Advice by channel



Our advice to clients is delivered to high standards. We work to AQS standards and achieved green rating in 2021/22. We are a local independent charity. We achieved top audit scores for the way we run our charity and manage our finances.

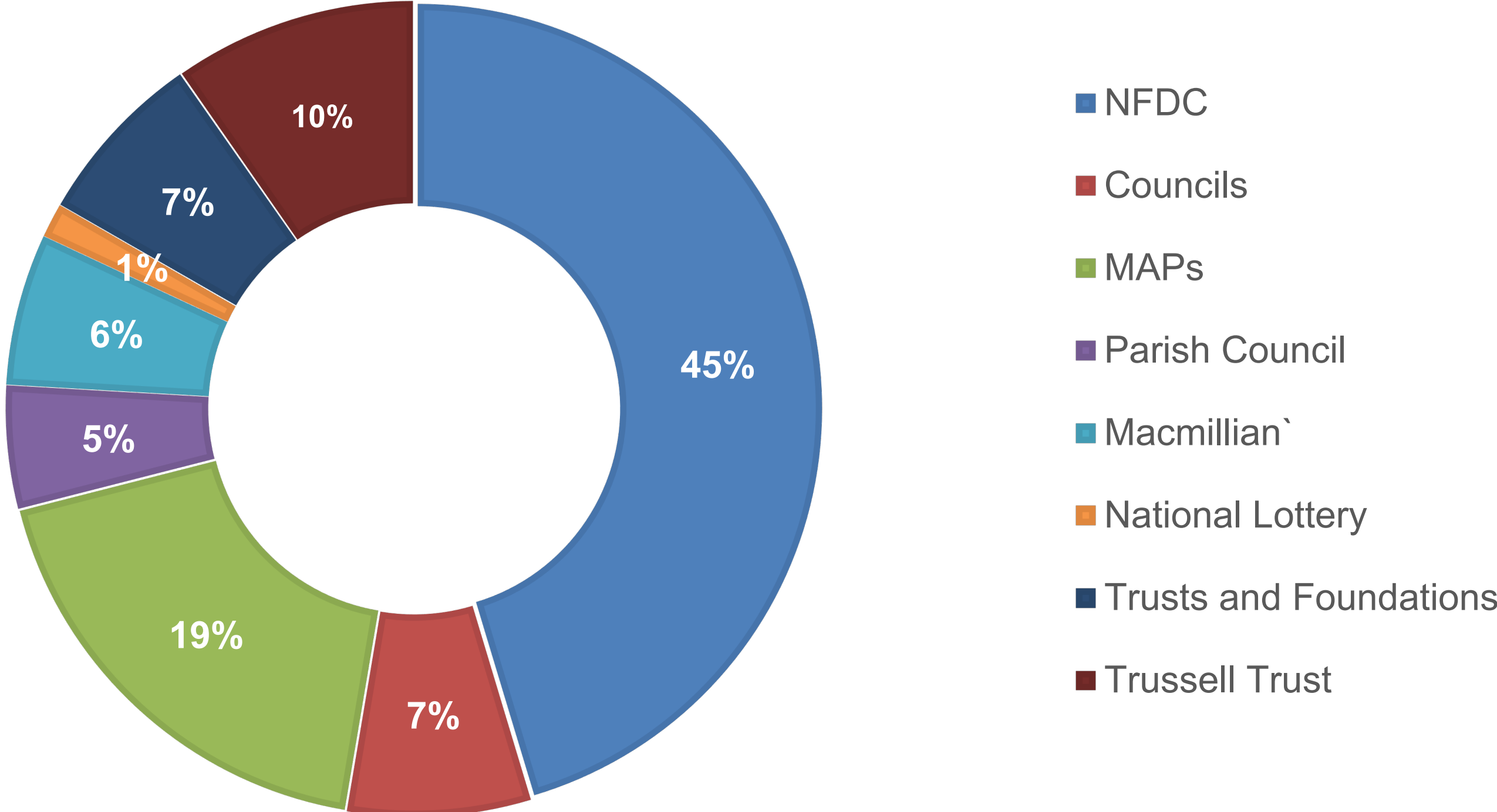
The outcomes we achieve for our clients



Through our advice we were able to deliver financial outcomes of **£1.2 million** for people living in the New Forest

Income gained	£709,183.00
Reimbursements	£23,107.00
Debts Written off	£284,605.00
Repayments rescheduled	£79,094.00
Other	£112,659.00

How we were funded in 2022/23



David's story

The Issue

David was a young man who found himself homeless after an abusive relationship. He was placed in temporary accommodation and his mental health was declining

Our Support

- Benefits check
- Contacted both his GP and Mental Health Team
- Liaised with NFDC's housing team
- Worked with partners to furnish his new home

Outcomes

- Increased his income
- Found a new home, so his son could live with him
- Improved his mental health



Financial Inclusion :

Where we work:

- Two Foodbanks (Ringwood and Waterside)
- 10 Larders
- Eight Schools (across Ringwood and Fordingbridge)

What we deliver:

- Benefits checks and income maximisation
- Budgeting support
- Referrals on other support



Gethin's story

The Issue

Gethin had a history of alcoholism and getting into trouble with the police. His partner died unexpectedly leaving him homeless, in debt, with a young son and no job.

Our Support

- Financial Assessment
- Benefits Check
- Food and Fuel Vouchers
- Referred him to the Food Larders
- Apply for Debt Relief Order

Outcomes

- Worked to having his debts written off
- Son is now living with father
- Able to manage his money better
- Getting help for his drinking



Supporting people in Debt:

MAPS

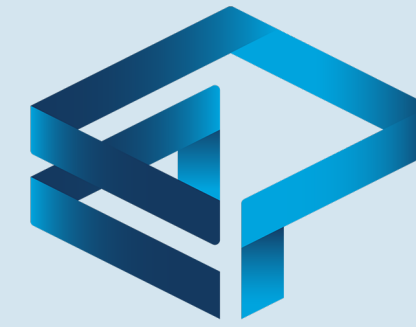
We help people to improve their financial wellbeing and build a better, more confident future by providing a specialised debt advice service

Support available in all our New Forest offices

Hampshire Debt Project

A three year project to support the most vulnerable people who have considerable debt across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Advocate for them with debtors to reorganise their debt and supporting the person to manage their money.



**Money &
Pensions
Service**



**COMMUNITY
FUND**

Debbie's story

The Issue

Following the breakdown in relationship Debbie found herself in debt. She owed money to both her energy company and NFDC for Council Tax

Our Support

- Review of all debts
- Benefits Check
- Supported her to get an accurate meter reading
- Negotiated a repayment plan with NFDC

Outcomes

- Got a refund on her energy bill
- Reduced her outgoings so she could afford to pay her debt
- Encouraged her to seek employment



Energy advice

Energy Advice Project

One to one energy advice clients who are in or at risk of fuel poverty and struggling to pay their bills. Energy advice includes advice on fuel options, tariffs, energy grants, as well as energy efficiency advice, with the aim of reducing their bills.

Household Support Fund

Hampshire residents, who would otherwise struggle with energy, food and water bills, can qualify for a grant from the Household Support Fund. This fund is specifically to help with energy bills. CANF administers the fund for residents living in the New Forest.



Rita and Sam

The Issue

A retired couple living in a council owned flat were on a prepaid meter and hadn't received their Warm Home discount and they were facing hardship

Our Support

- Food and Fuel Voucher
- Contacted their energy supplier
- Checked whether they were entitled to other financial support

Outcomes

- Got them the warm home discount they were entitled to



Health and Wellbeing

Macmillian

Supporting people who have been affected with Cancer with financial management and supporting with accessing the benefits they are entitled to

Home and Well

Working with residents who are returning after a stay in hospital to ensure they have a comfortable home environment that will help them continue to recover and try alleviate any risks that might lead them to relapse and return to hospital.



Research and Campaigns

- Research and Campaign Manager funded through Trussell Trust
- Chair the New Forest Cost of Living Steering group
- Research to hear the views of people with lived experience



Trends we are seeing

- Increase in demand for Food and Fuel vouchers
- Profile of people with sizeable debt is changing
- Cost of Living will continue add pressure to our service
- More people with mental health issues needing our support



Any Questions?

Neil Young

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A blue circular logo with a white speech bubble tail pointing downwards and to the left. The text "citizens advice" is written in white, lowercase, sans-serif font inside the circle.

**citizens
advice**

New Forest