

April 2021

Dear Supporter,

Welcome to our final newsletter of our financial year ended 31 March 2021. The last year has been rather eventful for us, as it has for so many, but has also resulted in many positive changes to our service. Some of our statistics are below:

2020-21 Statistics:

21

Appeals won at the First Tier Tribunal

243

People seen for the first time

582

People helped

3,689

Contacts with clients

3,907

Volunteer hours provided

£1,076,338

Financial gain secured for our clients

Client Feedback

We have recently completed our annual client satisfaction survey and we are now reviewing the results, so that we can celebrate our successes and identify areas of opportunity. We would like to share with you some of our positive feedback we have received:

"I can't thank you enough for pushing this for me, the whole thing made me feel so ill. You have made my day. Thank you so much."

"I was more than satisfied with the advice and help I received and I would definitely recommend your service to others. The follow up calls to make sure things had happened were great. Thank you."

"I cannot thank you enough for the time and effort you have afforded me regarding this matter and I shall be eternally grateful."

Covid-19 Pandemic

In our last newsletter, we wrote about our response to the Covid-19 pandemic during 2020. Since then, we have experienced a further extended period of national lockdown restriction, but we have now resumed our full face-to-face advice service from our new offices. The last year has demonstrated that the provision of face-to-face advice is still crucial, particularly for older clients or for those whose physical or mental health problems preclude them from using telephone or digital services. We do not know of any other local advice agencies or similar services which re-opened for face-to-face clients between the first and second lockdowns during 2020 and we believe that local CAB offices are still not open for a face-to-face service.

Opening Ceremony

Monday 12 April 2021 was the official opening of our brand new purpose-built offices at 94 Commercial Road in Paddock Wood, having relocated at the start of the year.

Officially opening our new building, MP for Tunbridge Wells Greg Clark said:

“The location of Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre’s new office could not be better – right in the heart of the community. It’s also much more accessible for those with physical disabilities. I have always been really impressed by the service they offer – free, confidential face-to-face bookable appointments and also drop-in clinics which are incredibly helpful for people facing emergencies. We are so lucky to have this fantastic organisation in Paddock Wood run by such a dedicated team of staff and volunteers.”

Our opening hours are Monday to Friday from 9:30am to 1:30pm. Clients can access our service by visiting the offices, or through telephone and video appointments or email advice. Outreach appointments and home visits are offered, in limited circumstances, and all advisers are DBS-checked. Advice and information is available about a wide range of matters, including; consumer issues, debt and money, employment, family matters (children or relationship breakdown including domestic abuse), housing and homelessness, mental health support and welfare benefits (including representation at tribunals).



We would like to thank all our trustees, volunteer advisers, supporters, funders, referral partners and clients, without whom the above would not have been possible.

We look forward to your continued support so that we can maintain our service to the residents of Paddock Wood and surrounding areas.

Yours faithfully

Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre

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Company Limited by Guarantee: 8006468 Charity Registration No: 1147816
Registered Office: 94 Commercial Road, Paddock Wood, Kent TN12 6DP

