

**Monthly update for stakeholders, funders and partners  
January 27th, 2021**

**We hope everyone is well, and welcome to our first bulletin of the year.**

At CAWS we've been working hard to support people through the continuing challenges.

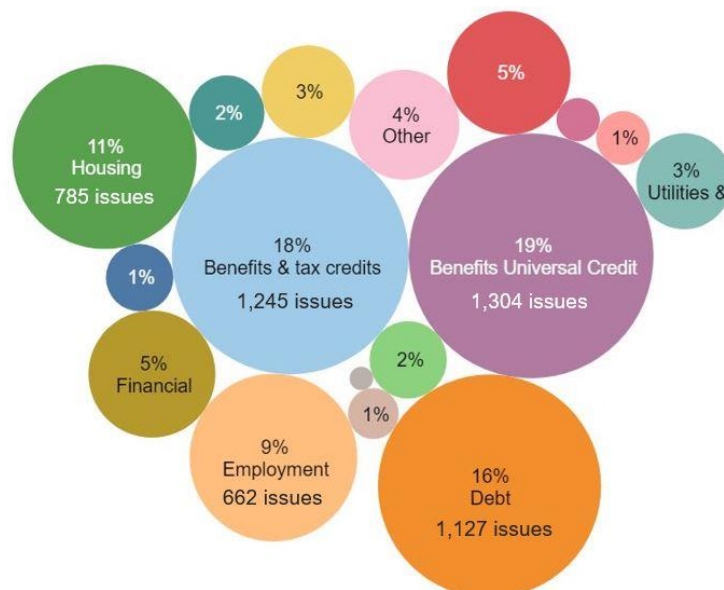
We particularly want to let you know about the help we're giving people in West Sussex to **keep their homes warm this winter**.

Are you working with families who are struggling to pay their fuel and utility bills? Please scroll down to find out how you can refer people to our service, as well as the other ways we can help with energy.

**Contents:**

- **Supporting people with fuel and energy** including Winter Fuel Hardship Support
- **Our new freephone Adviceline number** and other ways to get help from us
- **Community Engagement** in diverse communities
- **Langley Green Hospital** – working with the Crisis team to help patients with money and debt issues
- **Digital communications update**
- **Volunteer recruitment films**

**So far in 2021 we have helped 2,213 clients with 6,818 issues (January 1<sup>st</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2021).**



## Helping people to stay warm this winter - how your clients can get support

This stakeholder information is also available as a separate document, attached to this email, for you to share with your internal teams.

**Please do not share this specific information with your service users or the general public.**

In our December bulletin we introduced that we're working with **Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice** and **West Sussex County Council** to help people who live in West Sussex to keep their homes warm this winter. This is through the DWP Winter Hardship Fund.

**Please refer families or vulnerable people you are working with** who may need help. For example their heating may be broken, they are being disconnected, worried about putting the heating on, can't afford all of their bills or they are in debt.

### Who it's aimed at:

80% of the fund is aimed at households with children and the remainder can be used for vulnerable people. They need to be:

- Living in West Sussex
- Needing help with utility bills or keeping their home warm

The eligibility criteria are quite wide but clients are likely to be on a low income and in fuel poverty. Other circumstances can be considered too, including (these are examples, not a complete list):

- Families in receipt of Universal Credit or Tax Credits
- Care leavers
- Victims of domestic abuse
- Homeless
- Families with children under 19 in full time education or under 25 with an EHCP
- Cancer patients on a low income
- And more.

### What help can be provided?

Depending on the client's situation, it can range from paying gas, electric and water bills to boiler repairs, purchasing blankets, slow cookers or heaters.

Other help may also be available such as mobile phone top ups, energy advice, benefit checks and referrals for specialist debt advice.

### How to refer someone you're working with:

Complete our simple secure online referral form. Please give the person's details and how to contact them.

Please give as much detail as you can including what they need help with, and if you

have any supporting papers. The more information you give the faster we can process it.

NB. Your client must have given consent for the referral.

**Our online referral form:** [www.advicewestsussex.org.uk/referrers/](http://www.advicewestsussex.org.uk/referrers/)

**You can also email your referral** to [grants@westsussexcab.org.uk](mailto:grants@westsussexcab.org.uk)

**Important:** If your client lives in the Arun and Chichester area, please use Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice's referral form (<https://arunchichestercab.org.uk/refer>) or email address ([grants@arunchichestercab.org.uk](mailto:grants@arunchichestercab.org.uk)).

If you have any questions about the project please email [grants@westsussexcab.org.uk](mailto:grants@westsussexcab.org.uk).

### **Other help with energy and utilities**

We can also offer wider support including:

- In emergencies, we may be able to help with fuel vouchers or mobile phone top-ups, as well as internet costs.
- Assessing our client's financial situation, checking benefit entitlement and making sure clients are claiming everything they are eligible for.
- Help with budgeting.
- Suggesting ways clients can reduce the amount of energy they use in their homes.
- Checking clients are on the best tariff for them. If there is a better deal available, we can support people to make the switch.

For information please click here: <https://www.advicewestsussex.org.uk/i-need-help/reduce-your-energy-costs/>

...

### **Our new free Adviceline number, and other ways to get help**

Please share our contact information with anyone who may need us.

We have a new **freephone Adviceline number**, making us more accessible for everyone who needs us.

**0808 278 7969**

(Monday to Friday, 9am-4.30pm)

Call us for free,  
impartial advice on  
**0808 278 7969**

 **citizens  
advice** in West Sussex  
North South East



**Email us:** we can usually reply on the same working day.

**Web chat:** available Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm.

**Video appointments:** we can offer some limited video appointments. People can [contact us](#) if they are interested in arranging an appointment.

**Face to face appointments:** we have limited appointments for people who are not able to use our phone or digital services. These are at our Crawley, Horsham, Haywards Heath and Worthing centres.

[Please visit our website](#) for the latest information.

**Live BSL video link:** People can click on the SignVideo icon on our [contact us page](#), to be connected with an adviser via a Registered British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter.

[Find out how it works here](#), and watch a short video.

## Community engagement projects

In our last bulletin we introduced our Community Engagement team and the projects they are working on. The team have been working tirelessly to make and develop community relationships and have been making huge progress.

Crawley projects:

### Crawley Communities Money Advice

We are offering specialist money advice to people from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background.

We're also doing further engagement work to investigate exactly what support is needed, and to ensure that the service we offer is meeting the needs of people and communities.

We are asking people to share their experiences with us via our survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RPZCBPJ>

Our advisor Shirley Cross joined us this week so please keep an eye on our website and social media for updates on how to get help via this service.

### Working with the NHS in Crawley

We're continuing with our research into the impact of Covid-19 on people from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background in Crawley. We're working with the

NHS and a community advisory/steering group to gather information and insight on people's experiences, and to test solutions and messaging.

We are asking people to share their experiences with us via our survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RPZCBPJ>

We're looking for people from diverse backgrounds to join our steering group. Please share this with your contacts, and people can find out more by emailing the team at [covid.impact@westsussexcab.org.uk](mailto:covid.impact@westsussexcab.org.uk).

### **We are also beginning a new project engaging with diverse communities about bereavement.**

With West Sussex County Council, we're working across West Sussex to explore experiences of bereavement for people from Minority Ethnic backgrounds and how those communities can be best supported.

This includes how bereavement and loss is impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Mid Sussex Community Champions network:**

Our Community Champions network (which we are facilitating with Mid Sussex District Council) is growing.

We've been running a successful programme of talks via video link, and we're asking our Champions to share messages with their communities and get feedback, for example on vaccinations so we can improve communications on resources and make sure solutions work for everyone.



Community Engagement Officer Parmila explains what it's all about [in our short video](#).

There's more information [on our website](#). You'll also find [a link to our anonymous survey](#) which we're asking people from diverse communities to complete, to share their experiences with us.

### **Supporting people at risk of suicide: Langley Green Hospital**

We are working with the Crisis team at Langley Green Hospital. The team covers Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex, and responds to people who attend Princess Royal Hospital or who are seen by the ambulance service who have a significant risk of suicide.

Our adviser takes referrals from any member of the Crisis team to support service users with financial issues or social issues that may be contributing to their health issues. The main focus of the project is debt, but the work is led by the needs of the service user.

The project started in mid-November 2020 and on average, the team are referring about two people a week.

Once the person is getting support from us, and they have been discharged from the Crisis Team, we aim to ensure that they continue to get support from us if they need it. This may involve referring on to our generalist service.

It is still early days for the project, which is funded until March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Some people are not ready to cope with dealing with their issues at the time so we will be sending them a postcard inviting them to contact us when ready.

...

### **What's happening in digital communications?**

#### **Date for your diary: Wednesday February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10-10.30am**

#### **Live online session: Managing money worries**

Please tune in to the upcoming live online session we're hosting with Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice. Our experts Elliott and Ross will be answering questions and sharing ways people can better manage their finances, especially in the face of a sudden drop in income.

More information here: <https://www.advicewestsussex.org.uk/live-online-session-money-worries/>

Watch the session live on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#), and please share it with your followers.

#### **We've joined Instagram!**

Find us here and please give us a follow: [www.instagram.com/cawestsussex](http://www.instagram.com/cawestsussex)

...

#### **Please share our new volunteering films**

We received some funding from the Gatwick Airport Community Trust to support the making of some short films to spread the word about volunteering for CAWS. Two of

our films are completed and our third film is currently in production. Click on the images below to watch!

We were delighted to work with Brighton Video Production on this project, and to receive brand new music from one of Crawley College's music groups to accompany our film for young people.

[General volunteering:](#)



[Volunteering for young people:](#)



...

If you would like further details on any of the above, or on any aspect of our work, please send an email to: [communications@westsussexcab.org.uk](mailto:communications@westsussexcab.org.uk)

[advicewestsussex.org.uk](http://advicewestsussex.org.uk)

Facebook: **CAWestSussex**

Twitter: **CAWestSussex**

Instagram: **cawestsussex**

YouTube: **Citizens Advice in West Sussex**

January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021