

**I feel so much better now  
I know what to do and  
have help to deal with  
everything ...**

**citizens  
advice**

**Rushmoor**

**Annual Review  
2015-16**



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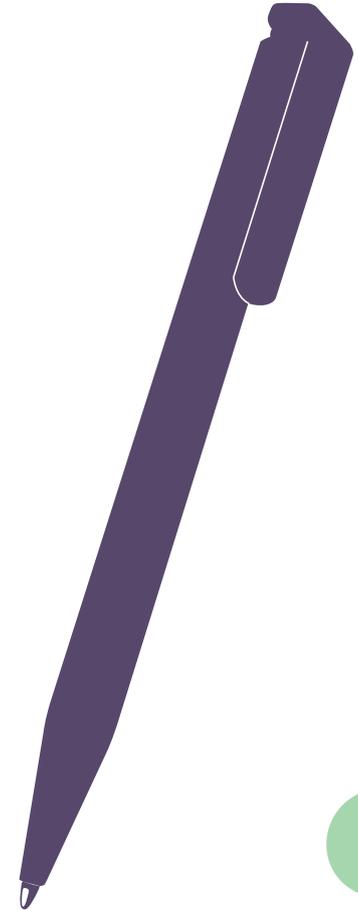


The Trustee Board remains indebted to our team of paid staff and volunteers who strive to deliver an outstanding service to our clients. Rushmoor continues to be at the forefront of implementing new service delivery channels in order to adapt to the changing needs of our community.

Strong relationships with our partners continue to enable us to innovate and widen the specialist advice services for all. Our leadership, governance and operational management have been rated as strong by national Citizens Advice.

***Clare Davies***

**Chair's foreword**



Our volunteers in Aldershot and Farnborough are delivering flexible systems to better match our service to client needs. From quick, light touch interventions through to in-depth casework, we deliver face to face, by phone and online; building in capacity for urgent help.

This responsive approach puts client needs at the centre of all we do, and has resulted in dramatic increases in advice issues across the board in 2015/16. Welfare benefits continues to be our largest area of work, but significant growth in employment and housing cases all illustrate how we are reaching more people.

Our specialist Heathlands service for clients with severe mental health conditions has been outstanding; while new outreach services developed in the past year further recognise the positive impact of our work on client outcomes.

The \*783% increase in Finance and Capability work reflects our new Pension Wise service, launched in April 2015, which delivers across Hampshire, parts of Berkshire and Surrey, expertly guiding clients around the new pension freedoms.

Our team is proud to be at the forefront of change, consistently seeking improvements where we can see a real benefit for our clients; and piloting new initiatives, with the wider Citizens Advice service, to reach more people.

2015/16 saw a continuing focus on our shared Adviceline service, with clear local benefits for Rushmoor residents.

The innovative weekly Nepali Language Drop-in responded to over 1,400 enquiries in 2015/16, fulfilling an important community need: also reducing overall waiting times and streamlining systems, to benefit all local residents.

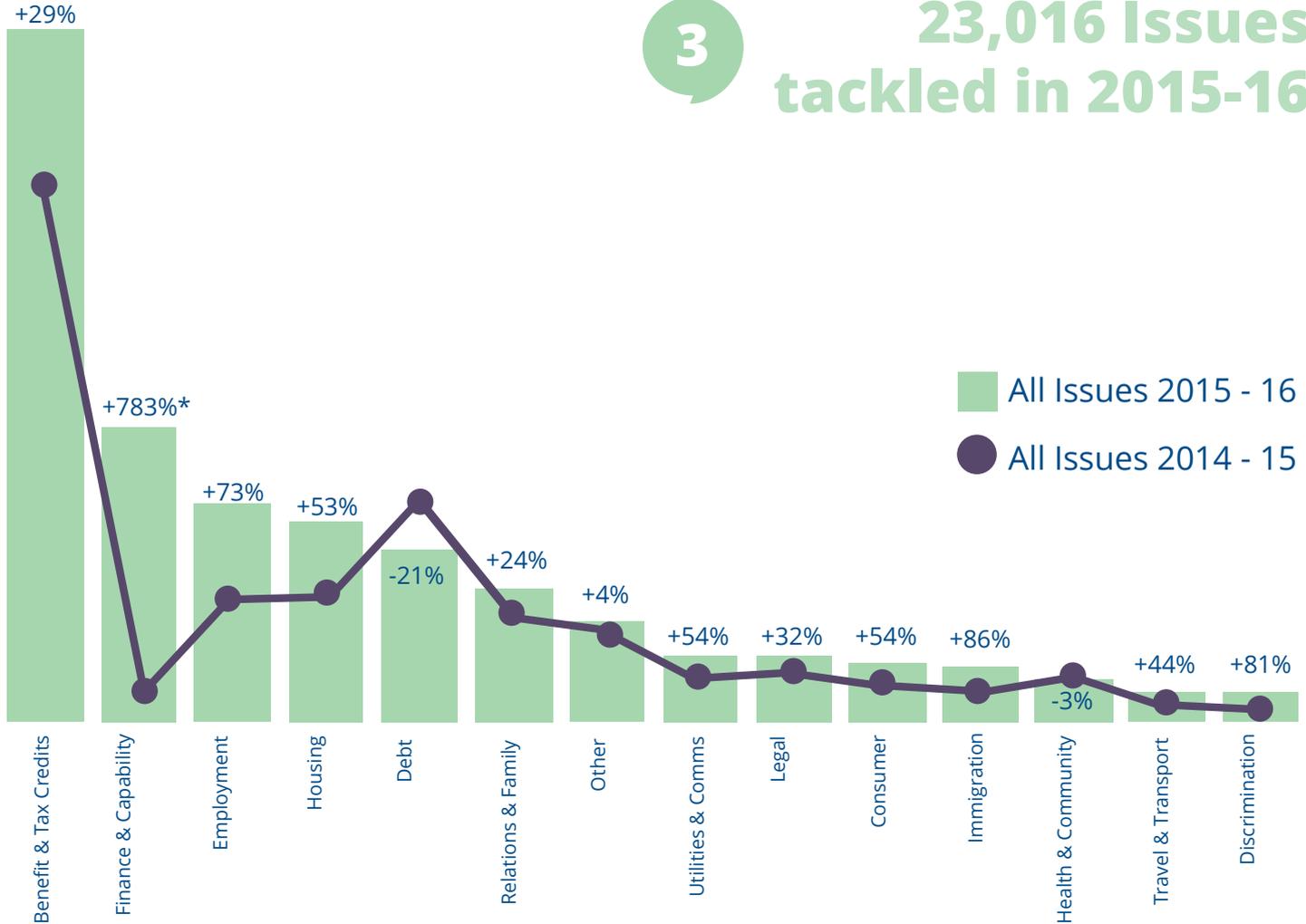
# *Alex Hughes*

**Chief Officer**

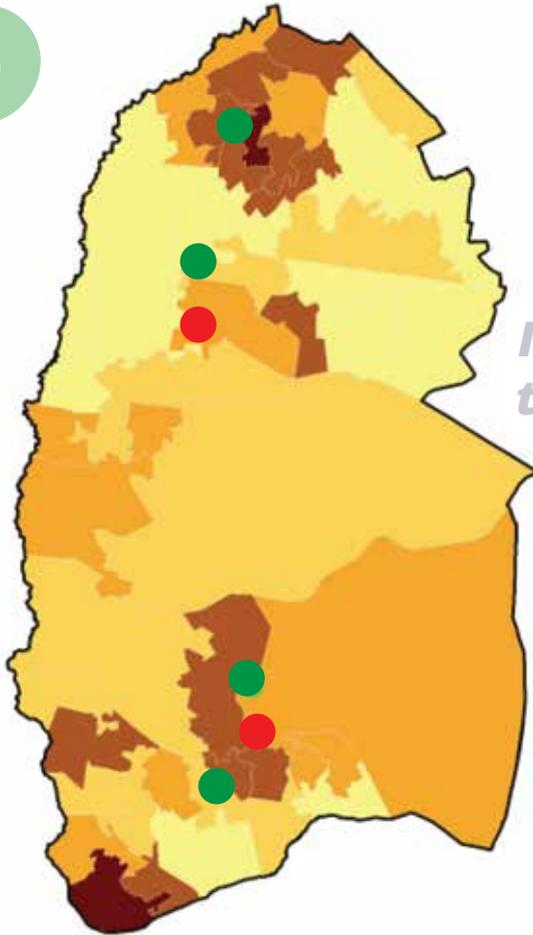
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# 23,016 Issues tackled in 2015-16

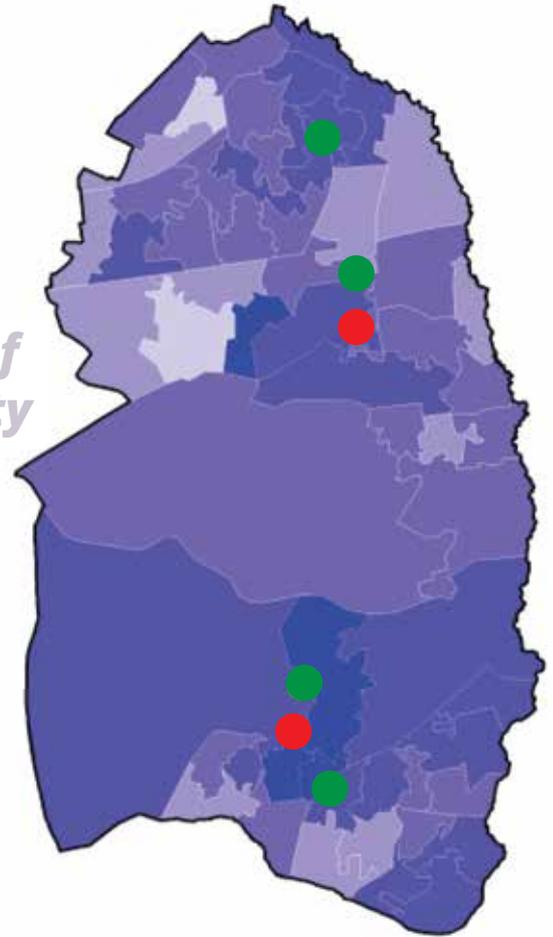


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*In the heart of the community*

- Outreach
- Main office



● Least deprived to ● most deprived\*      ● Low client to ● high client numbers

\*IMD 2015

**Partnership and outreach** is key to reaching those who need our service most. During 2015/16 we were delighted to work with The Brain Tumour Charity, to set up a benefits clinic for their beneficiaries; and with the Prospect Estate Big Local, to deliver neighbourhood help on money matters and financial inclusion. Broadhurst Trust has enabled a weekly outreach in the Wellbeing Centre, while our Heathlands team has adjusted outreach services to take account of the inpatient unit move from Ridgewood to Farnham Road in Guildford. Our Hollies outreach at Aldershot Centre for Health, is very well used.

We set up a Crisis Support Network in 2015, reflecting local trends, giving local agencies regular opportunities to come together in partnership to share best practice and better address the needs of vulnerable clients

#### **PEBL Outreach Case Study:**

Due to some previous problems John took a while to build up trust with us; but he needed help with serious rent arrears. He'd also had a job offer, but was afraid that taking it up might make him worse off. We helped John to claim Working Tax Credit and progress his employment, while reducing his energy and other utility bills to make a big difference to his budget. We are continuing to work with John to address repeated problems with arrears and bank charges. Meanwhile John's job has been made permanent; he has reduced dependence on benefits, and his landlord has agreed to repayments so he is no longer facing homelessness.

#### **Hollies Outreach Case Study:**

Aged 63, Bill had never claimed any benefits. He had to give up work due to severe arthritis which, in turn, led to acute depression, spending 2 nights in a psychiatric ward. Worry about how to meet mortgage payments, and support his wife and disabled daughter, was worsening Bill's mental health. Bill was supported with successful claims for Personal Independence Payment and Employment and Support Allowance. The extra money and support with his budget and creditors, has transformed things for the family, stabilising Bill's mental health, and preventing further hospital admissions.



On average, volunteers gave **824** hours per week to supporting local people



The estimated value of our volunteers' contribution in 2015-16 was over **£750,000**

Over 150 volunteers worked for Citizens Advice Rushmoor at different times during 2015/16 undertaking many different roles. Diversity in our volunteer team is enriched by student placements and younger volunteers who are looking to develop their skills. This complements our longer term experienced volunteer workforce, who welcome the opportunity to share their skills across the team. New roles and opportunities for volunteering are opened up by our online services in webchat and email, at the same time as enhancing access to our service for everyone.

More importantly, alongside this fantastic economic value, our volunteers bring a real wealth of experience, commitment and skills to support our local community.

The training, support and supervision provided by our Learning and Development Team, underpins the well-structured systems for volunteer progression, using the Citizens Advice national framework. Through that experience, volunteers' individual confidence and skills are developed, in turn benefiting the wider community.

The recognised benefits to individual wellbeing and social cohesion through volunteering are well demonstrated in our diverse team. Ranging across different ethnicities, ages and genders, our volunteers positively reflect the community we serve.

Our Trustees are also volunteers, ensuring independence and accountability as they undertake critical governance roles; whilst our backbone of paid specialist staff, management, and administration provides key support for this unique service to our local community.

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## Our volunteers

### **Ann has been volunteering for 16 years now.**

I was training as a nurse in the Navy many years ago and was invalided out. I brought up three children and at 50 I started volunteering.

### **Why Citizens Advice?**

I thought it was the best way to use my experience, I wanted something that was challenging.

### **Do you feel you are making a difference in your community?**

Yes I do. If I can help people that are wrongly treated then it's what I like to do and I want to carry on as long as I can. Working with the other volunteers is brilliant, they're great bunch. It's important in life to help others!



## Trustees

Ms Clare Davies (Chair)  
Mrs Donna Bone  
Mrs Anne Fillis  
Mrs Janet Field  
Mr Charlie Fraser Fleming  
Mrs Catherine Hammond  
(Company Secretary)  
Resigned July 2016  
Mr Richard Hanshaw  
Joined November 2015  
Cllr Mrs Barbara Hurst  
(Vice Chair)  
Mr John Kelly  
(Treasurer)  
Mr Rudra Khadka  
Joined July 2016  
Mr Deglan Rowe  
Resigned November 2015  
Cllr Frank Rust  
Mr Steve Smith  
Resigned November 2015  
Mr Richard Robinson  
Mr John Debenham  
(President)  
Resigned November 2015

Welfare benefits queries account for over 32% of all our work: the 7310 separate benefits issues are shown in the chart opposite, illustrating the complexity of the issues.

Welfare reform changes, coupled with labyrinthine claiming processes and administrative delays, create huge problems for people, particularly those dependent upon benefits as their sole income. Our top issues of Personal Independence Payments and Employment and Support Allowance, both relate directly to disabilities, illustrating the disproportionate impact of welfare reform on people already facing severe challenges in their daily lives.

Employment & Support Allowance

+11%

Personal Independence Payment

+45%

Tax Credits

+31%

Housing Benefit

+5%

Pension Credit

-2%

Jobseekers

-12%

Attendance Allowance

+61%

Carers Allowance

+69%

Child Benefit

+31%

Disability Living Allowance

-16%

Top 10 Benefit Issues 2015 - 16

Top 10 Benefit Issues 2014 - 15





Advice trends influence our research and campaigns activities: 2015 saw a major refresh in our approach to this important work, using clients' experience to inform and influence improvements in policies and practices, and prevent problems occurring.

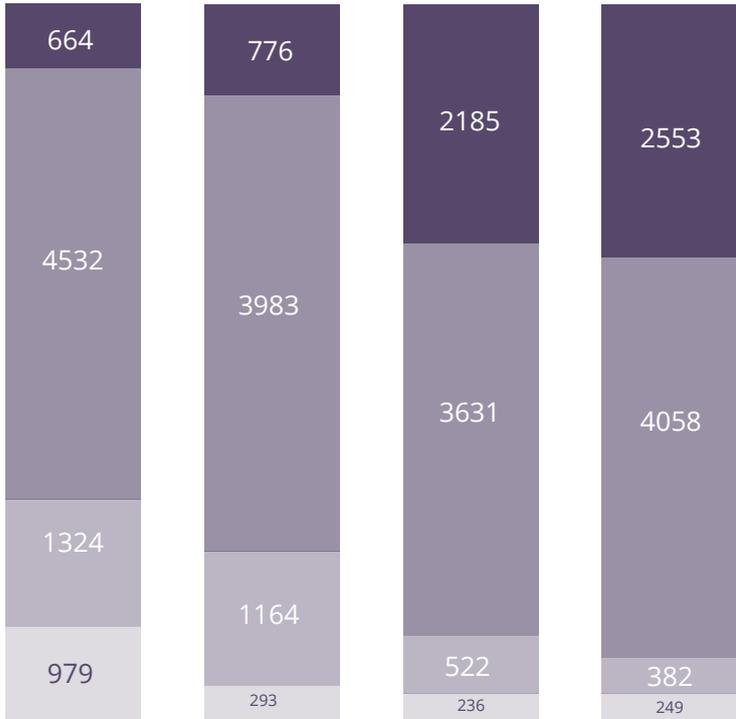
February 2016 saw our Settled and Safe launch event, spotlighting private sector housing problems. Resulting priorities and actions with partners are helping progress wider initiatives for improvements.

We have been recognised for our contribution to national work, interviewing clients about the impact of planned changes to tax credits; while our very well attended stalls in local shopping centres raised awareness about scams and energy saving.

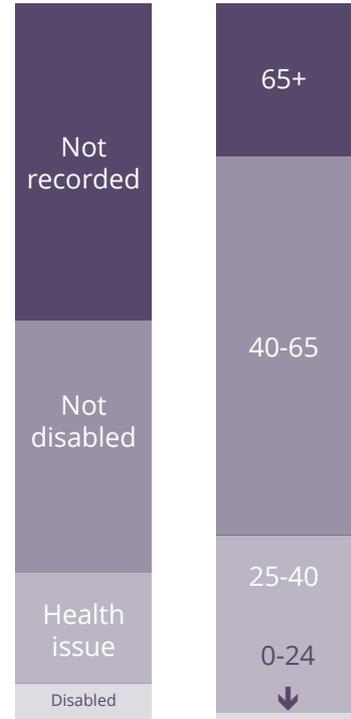
## Research & campaigns

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# 7,242 Clients helped in 2015-16



- All asian ethnic groups inc. Nepali
- All white ethnic groups
- All other ethnic groups
- Unknown or not recorded



2012 - 2013

2013 - 2014

2014 - 2015

2015 - 2016

Disability

Age Group

# Impact & outcomes



Direct income gains from Welfare Benefits awards of **£1,172,877**



Savings to the NHS are estimated at **£212,835** and improved wellbeing for at least **131** clients



The estimated value of our work for our clients is **£7,747,379**



Every **£1** invested in us created **£10.41** in value to the public last year



The estimated value of our work for society is a further **£1,455,153**



Homelessness avoided for at least **21** people & est. savings for housing providers of **£280,757**

## We would like to thank:

## Who enabled us to:

**Rushmoor Borough Council**

Deliver our core, volunteer led service available to all Rushmoor residents, face to face, by phone and email

**Pension Wise**

Deliver Pension Wise guidance sessions in Hampshire, Surrey and Berkshire

**Gurkha Settlement Fund**

Deliver services in Nepali language, in partnership with others

**Surrey Heath and NE Hants and Farnham CCGs**

Work with clients with severe and enduring mental health conditions in community and in-patient facilities

**Positive Action**

Deliver casework and drop in services to people living with HIV

**Broadhurst Trust**

Support clients with mental health conditions in Rushmoor and Hart

**Citizens Advice Hampshire**

Deliver information and advice and signposting as part of Healthwatch Hampshire

**Advice Service Transition Fund**

Develop new ways to deliver advice and support vulnerable clients through welfare reform

**Hampshire Public Health Grant**

Deliver the "Mind the Gap" project to improve health awareness within the Nepali community

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**RUSHMOOR**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



**Pension  
wise**

Your money. Your choice.



**POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER**

**healthwatch**  
Hampshire

**BROADHURST**

Your local mental health charity



Positive Action

Embracing Life with HIV

**NHS**

Surrey Heath

Clinical Commissioning Group

**NHS**

North East Hampshire and Farnham

Clinical Commissioning Group



The **BRAIN  
TUMOUR  
CHARITY**

*Thank you!*



**[citizensadvicerrushmoor.org.uk](https://citizensadvicerrushmoor.org.uk)**

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