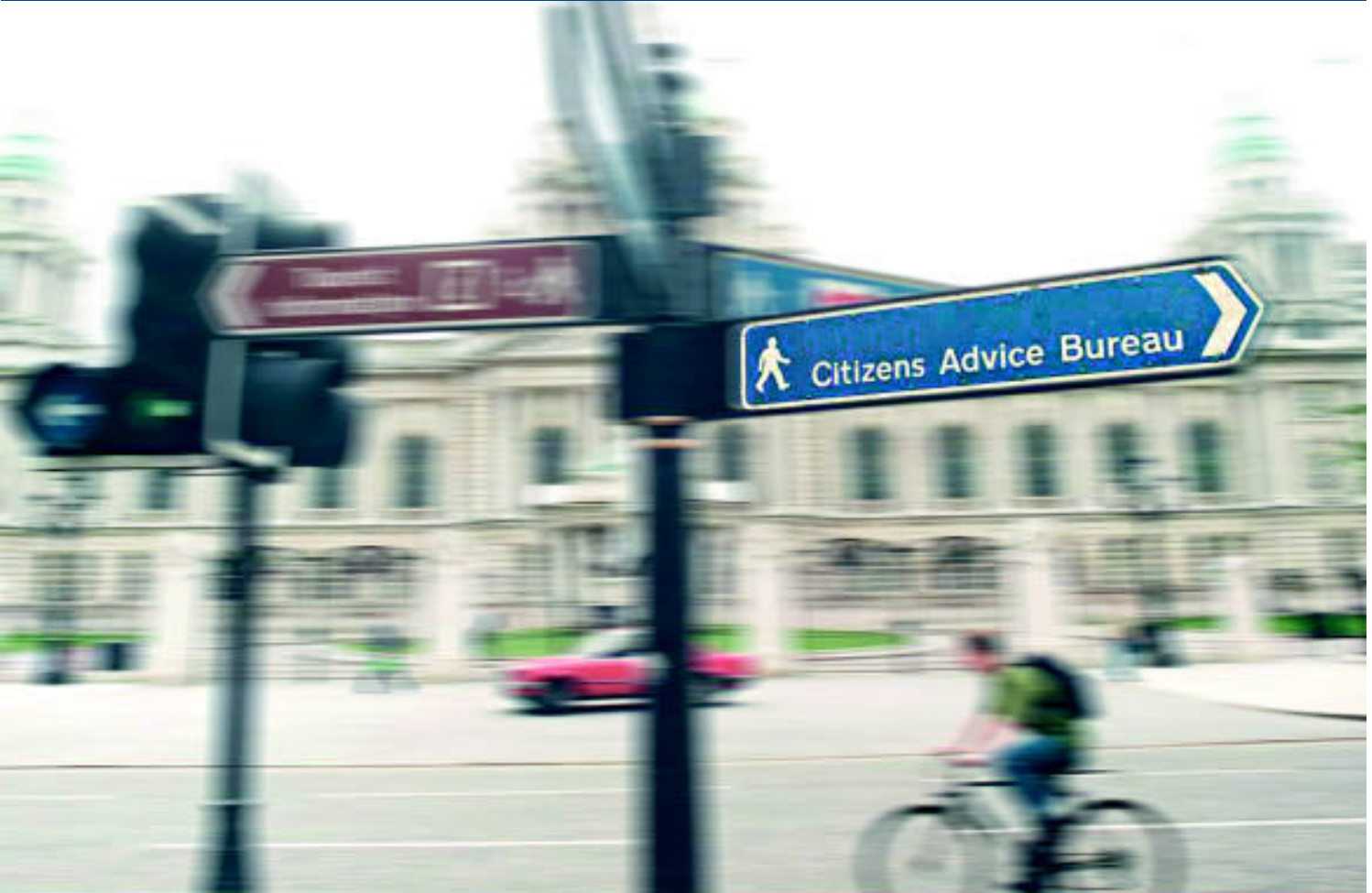




Annual Report 2002 - 2003



Changing Needs
Evolving Services



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 from the chair 

Need is aroused, not diminished, by its fulfilment. The early services provided by the first CABx "awoke a sleeping giant." Need also grows from increased complexity in daily living, and it is unquestionable that life today is considerably more complex and demanding than it was 30 years ago. Cavalier and largely unresourced government admonitions to the public to "go to your local Citizens Advice Bureau" when their employed staff fail to follow through on service delivery is another major factor in this growth in demand for CAB services.

The growth in need, and the corresponding expansion of services to meet it, is visible at local, regional and UK levels. Early bureaux were simple, they had no paid staff, volunteers were trained on the job as best as could be managed locally, with basic, second-hand furniture and equipment. I remember it well! Regional office grew from a perceived need to offer consistent training, to collate local information and to liaise with government.

The ability of Citizens Advice to respond to perceived need has been remarkable. In a few short years we have seen the emergence of Money Advice Workers, Disability Team Leaders, outreach work using laptop computers and the development of cross border advice. Regionally we have been able to attract and co-ordinate relatively large sums of European funding to put in place a robust, stable IT platform to serve all bureaux and have developed our training to a level where external providers are pleased to accredit it and accept it as a modular component of their higher education programmes. We have developed valuable partnerships with a growing number of public bodies who see us as the most reliable way of serving their clients. Health Trusts are discussing with us exciting and revolutionary new modes of service delivery. We have yet to match the significant increase in funding

made available by the DTI to Citizens Advice in England and Wales, but it is a straw in the wind with which we hope to influence funders here.

One of the most innovative examples of how our services follow need was the joint launch in Dundalk last January by

Newry CAB and Dundalk CIC of a booklet for homeless young people offering comprehensive information on resources in both jurisdictions. This is an exhilarating example both of how we respond to need and how we co-operate with others to make things happen. The National Minimum Wage helpline, which we pioneered with Inland Revenue, is another graphic example of innovation to serve perceived needs.

Unquestionably Citizens Advice will continue to adapt and innovate to ensure we serve the real needs of the public. There is a whole constituency out there for telephone advice, perhaps by text message, the favourite communications tool of today's youth. Online and e-mail advice is yet only in its infancy. Whatever the future holds, one thing is sure: new methods will be needed to meet the changes just around the corner. Citizens Advice has an excellent track record of changing to meet new challenges, and I am confident of our ability to meet the needs of the future as well as we have met those of the past.



Marcus Duignan



from the chief executive

Our report this year contains a wealth of examples which illustrate the flexibility of Citizens Advice in Northern Ireland and its ability to respond quickly to the changing needs of the public. Electronic case recording, the youth advice strategy, the production of financial literacy materials for the Northern Ireland GCSE curriculum, our advocacy on behalf of migrant workers, the adviceguide website and the move to a new quality assurance scheme all illustrate the creativity and innovation which mark our organisation at both a regional and local level. It is an added bonus and a considerable strength to CAB that these achievements have been accomplished with the very diverse range of external partners listed within the report.

The continuing unmet need for advice in Northern Ireland was demonstrated during the year by the research on money advice provision commissioned by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for Northern Ireland from the University of Bristol. This research estimated that Northern Ireland has 12,500 households in multiple debt, and that in 2002, money advice services were able to assist just 1,800 of these households. In this context, the report recommended the creation of up to 50 additional money advice posts in Northern Ireland. Representation of the public at tribunals remains another area of significant unmet need, and this

report (page 14) details the fact that the public went into 9,980 tribunals last year in Northern Ireland without representation.

A more central role for the voluntary sector in the delivery of public services is increasingly being

discussed in the context of several initiatives and documents: the NI Taskforce on the Sustainability of the Voluntary Sector, the Review of Public Administration and the cross-cutting review from HM Treasury - The Role of the Voluntary & Community Sector in Service Delivery. This will lead to the development of new models for the delivery of public services, including the delivery of advice and information about those services. Significant opportunities therefore lie ahead, but at all levels of the organisation we need to maintain the flexibility and responsiveness which have contributed so much to the emergence of CAB as an important part of the social infrastructure in Northern Ireland.



Derek Alcorn

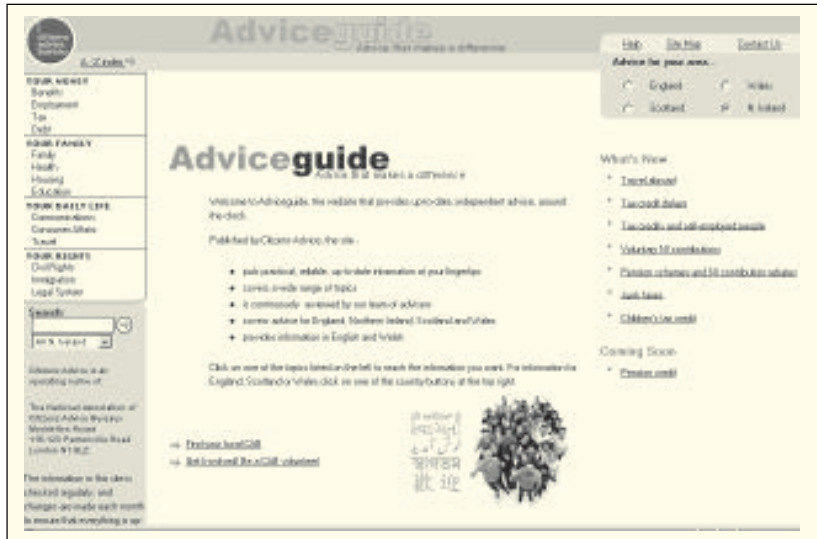
Citizens Advice has continued to use new technology to develop its increasingly important interface with Government and the public.

Web Developments

In the past year we expanded our range of services to the public and external organisations via the Internet. All local CAB offices now have a web-presence, over half have a broadband connection as well as the option to post and share information directly via a Virtual Private Network (VPN). The availability of e-mail advice for the public, together with web based advice and information have underpinned our role as one of the primary providers of e-services to the public in Northern Ireland.

www.adviceguide.org.uk

Adviceguide is a UK wide self-service website incorporating information and advice for the public. The website has been developed in partnership with Citizens Advice in the rest of the UK. It includes Northern Ireland specific information and provides up-to-date, independent advice on a 24/7 basis on a wide range of subjects. Adviceguide breaks down the barriers of office hours, putting practical and reliable information at the fingertips of the public 24 hours a day. The information is currently available in Welsh and English and translation is underway

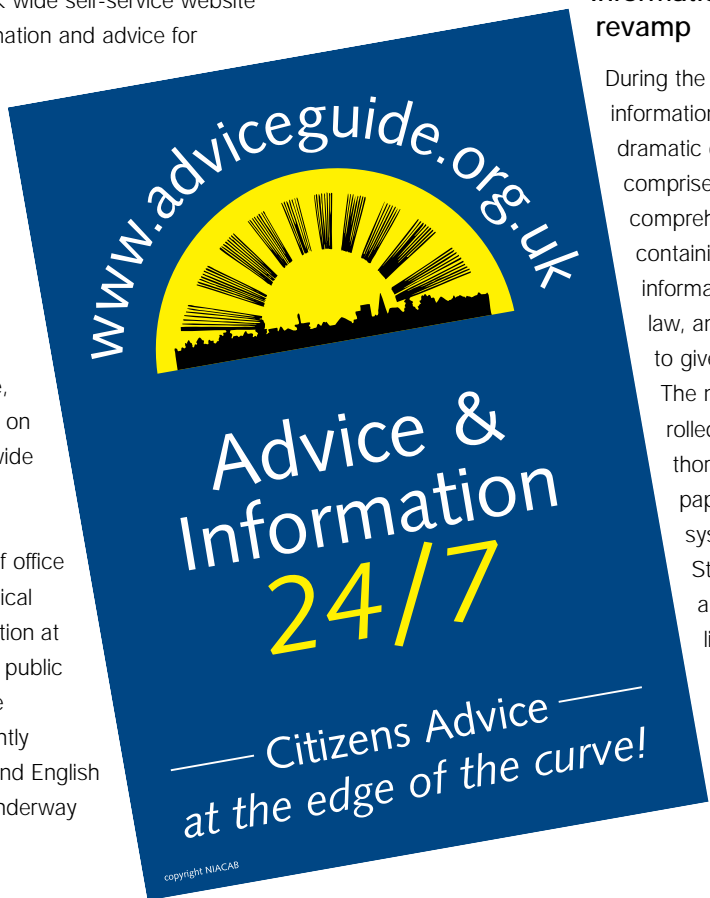


www.adviceguide.org.uk

for seven other languages. Adviceguide was launched in December 2002 and represents a model 'Bridging the Digital Divide' project as outlined by the Central Information & Technology Unit Northern Ireland (CITUNI).

Information system revamp

During the year our electronic information system had a dramatic overhaul. The system comprises a very comprehensive database containing extensive information on 14 areas of UK law, and is used by advisers to give advice to the public. The new system has been rolled out in all bureaux and thoroughly checked for paper and electronic system consistency. Standardisation of appearance, use of html links, and easier integration with the information system of Citizens Advice in the rest of the UK all contribute to greater



user-friendliness, accuracy and consistency as well as rapid updating. This is a major step towards our move to a fully electronic system by January 2004.



Tony Adams, Manager of Craigavon District CAB using the new look electronic information system

Case Recording

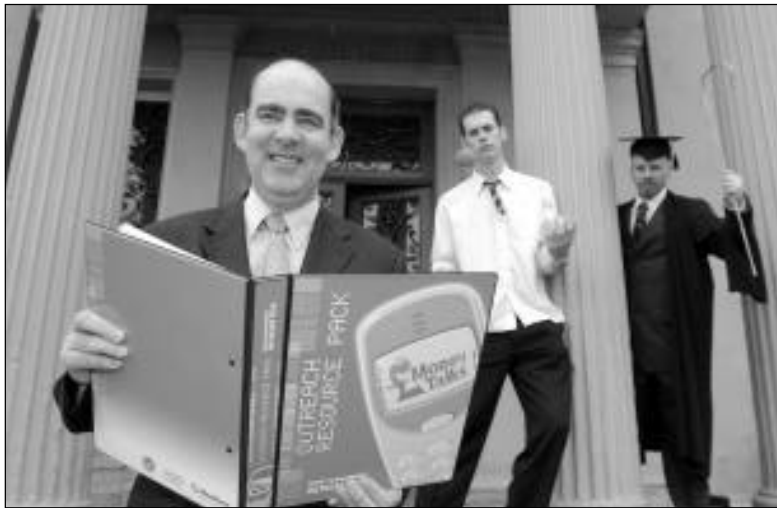
The new electronic case recording system, rolled out in April 2002, provides a common recording system incorporating Section 75 and Data Protection requirements as well as leaving local CAB offices strategically placed to avail of legal aid franchise contacts when these are introduced. The database has been reengineered so that it is 'open platform'. The system has been purchased and successfully installed across 16 sites in Argyll and Bute by Citizens Advice Scotland, and is also used in Northern Ireland by the RNIB. The system underpins the quality of our advice service and our ability to provide an excellent casework profile.



Attending the case recording training in Argyll and Bute are from left to right: Kate Dunbar - IleTec IT Consultancy, Jean Nicholson - Oban Trainee Volunteer Adviser, Kate Harvey - Campbeltown Volunteer Adviser, Helen Timbrell - ABCAB Manager, Geraldine Day - Training Support Officer, Dr Jim Shimmins - Helensburgh Volunteer Adviser, Lorraine McAllister - IT Officer, Citizens Advice

Money Talks

A Joint initiative by Citizens Advice and the Northern Bank – Money Talks - will go straight into the Northern Ireland GCSE curriculum this autumn as part of a new subject called Learning for Life and Work. The materials are the first to have been developed locally in Northern Ireland for the local curriculum, and are aimed at helping young people from the age of 14 develop financial skills.



Gerry McGinn, Permanent Secretary, Department of Education with members of the Belfast Community Circus performing a sketch on juggling your finances at the launch of the 'Money Talks' Resources at Hazelwood Integrated College.

The unique initiative in consumer education and financial literacy was devised by the Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and launched by Gerry McGinn, the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education. The materials will be distributed to every school in Northern Ireland and are available on our website www.citizensadvice.co.uk/moneytalks.

Volunteering with Citizens Advice

Volunteering with CAB has given many people the opportunity to return to work and to gain confidence, work skills and training in IT. The volunteer forum is progressing work to attract new volunteers from particular sections of the community such as young people and ethnic minorities, and the Forum is also reviewing both the volunteer handbook and volunteering policies with a view to ensuring best practice.

"Since volunteering with Citizens Advice I have gained so much confidence. I am starting to get my life and education back. I didn't realise how much my community and the local area rely on the service provided by Citizens Advice. I would encourage anyone with spare time who wants to gain confidence in themselves and the ability to go on to employment to go for it!"



Tracey Stewart

Tracey Stewart, Chair of Volunteer Forum



Youth Advice Strategy

During the year Raleigh International produced a report 'Advice for Youth' on behalf of Citizens Advice. The research from across Northern Ireland, included the views of a large sample of young people and the findings resulted in a series of recommendations to make CAB's advice services more 'youth-friendly'. As a result, Citizens Advice has undertaken a youth advice strategy committed to the greater involvement of young people, both as volunteers, management committee members and clients. Links have been established with a number of youth organisations to help develop web based information and appropriate methods of service delivery.

Borderwise

Peace 2 funding is supporting a joint initiative by Citizens Advice and Comhairle, with funding being provided by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland and Combat Poverty Agency/ADM Management Ltd. The project will support the employment of 3 cross border advice workers in Newry/Dundalk, Fermanagh/Monaghan, and Derry/Donegal, and will develop joint training, and EU policy issues, as well as looking at issues of cultural identity.



At the launch of Peace 2 funding initiatives are left to right: Josette Cuthbert, and Eileen Fitzgerald, Comhairle, Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, Dave Murphy and Derek Alcorn, Citizens Advice

Welfare Reform

Extensive changes to the social security system were introduced in 2002/2003 under the broad banner of welfare reform, with new Tax Credits extending government support and income maintenance to an estimated 90% of families. The Advice Services Alliance (ASA) pressed the Department for Social Development (DSD) and the Social Security Agency (SSA) to meet their obligations under the terms of the Voluntary Sector Compact, and some £600,000 of funding was made available to ASA members over 2 years to meet additional costs in respect of training, information and service delivery. This funding is an interesting and early indication of how Government views the Voluntary Sector Compact in practical terms.

Before the funding was released members of the public inundated CAB offices when the Inland Revenue computers crashed consistently during the first few months of the scheme, but CAB was able to cope because initial training and electronic information for advisers were already in place. The funding which provides for four new area based posts in the CAB network and central staff costs of training and development will be formally evaluated.

Membership Scheme

Quality assurance came to the fore during the year with the introduction of the new Membership Scheme which was developed by Citizens Advice in England and Wales. The scheme is based on external audit, and provides a passport to the Kitemark developed to underpin the quality standards required by the Community Legal Service in England and Wales by the Lord Chancellor's Department. Some 50% of CAB offices in England & Wales now hold legal aid franchise contracts to the value of some £20 million, and its introduction in Northern Ireland leaves CAB offices well placed for the Legal Aid reforms to be introduced in the future.

"We took the decision to put our name forward as one of the first bureaux to go through the new membership scheme. We have found it a very positive experience and this can only help both our clients and the bureau."

Oonaugh Harris,
Manager Bangor CAB



Citizens Advice continues to meet the training needs of hundreds of staff in welfare benefits, consumer, housing and employment legislation. This externally accredited training provides participants with the knowledge and skills necessary for the effective delivery of a quality advice service. Citizens Advice also offers a comprehensive specialist training programme as well as tailored training throughout Northern Ireland to interested groups and individuals.

Celebration of Training Achievements

In a celebration of learning and individual achievement, December 2002 saw the presentation of the first National Vocational Qualification Certificates in Advice. Citizens Advice also paid tribute to its advice staff by presenting Northern Ireland Open College certificates to those who successfully completed the Adviser Training Programme and University of Ulster certificates for completion of the Social Security Advocacy training.

Over one hundred volunteers attended the event, confirming the central role of Citizens Advice within the voluntary sector in the provision of recognised qualifications and the development of an effective organisational culture of lifelong learning.



Receiving NVQ Certificates in Advice
Back Row - Marie Glimore (Volunteer Adviser, Cookstown CAB), Billy Graham (NIE), Derek Alcorn (Chief Executive, Citizens Advice), Dave Wall (Director Voluntary and Community Unit, Dept for Social Development), Marian Doherty (Volunteer Adviser, Antrim CAB)
Centre Front - Evelyn Madden (Volunteer Adviser, Antrim CAB)

Welfare Reform makes training demands

Welfare reform initiatives introduced by the government, particularly the new tax credits system presented a range of challenges to Citizens Advice. With over 200 advisers and volunteers giving advice in Northern Ireland, the need for comprehensive training in the new tax credits was very apparent. A series of training days were held over a number of months followed by cluster training, resulting in all advice and information staff receiving the training in advance of the introduction of the new tax credits, thus ensuring a consistently high standard of service.

One bureau manager said,

"Four of the staff have attended the training. They all feel the subject is complex and we all face a difficult time ahead. The one thing they all agree on was the high standard of the preparation and delivery of the training."

Internet access

Twenty-five bureaux managers attended the Internet training delivered by 'We Teach IT'. The training was held in three venues, two in Belfast and one in Coalisland, Co. Tyrone. The training facilitates and widens access to information and resources via the Internet, as well as providing a broader skills base throughout the network.

"The training was interesting, enlightening and very helpful to my work."

Valerie Adams, Manager Antrim CAB

Work it Out!

During the year the launch of our employment rights report **"Work it Out!"** was widely supported by MLAs and Trade Unions. The report highlights that the majority of CAB clients are unaware of their most basic statutory employment rights. The fact that the onus lies with the worker to claim these new rights in law means that knowledge of employment rights is crucial if the rights are to be exercised. The report showed that some employees are afraid to assert their basic statutory rights due to fear of their employer and some are even dismissed for demanding what they are legally entitled to. Dr Esmond Birnie MLA, Chairman, Statutory Committee for Employment and Learning and Tom Gillen, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, launched the report. Brenda Kearns, an adviser from Derry CAB also provided her experience of the complexities of advising on employment cases and a CAB client provided her own personal experience of being dismissed for trying to assert her statutory employment rights.

"Without the information and practical help that I received from Citizens Advice I would not have been able to enforce my statutory employment rights.

I would encourage other workers who are not receiving what they are legally entitled to, to contact Citizens Advice."

Client of CAB

Employment rights for Migrant Workers

The treatment of migrant workers in Northern Ireland has been highlighted in various TV documentaries and Citizens Advice continues to advocate on behalf of these vulnerable workers throughout Northern Ireland. We raised a number of issues formally with the Minister responsible for the Department for



Keith Stanyer, Manager, Dungannon CAB with Portuguese translators Jonny Bottomley and Helena Meira and volunteer adviser Fernando Arteaga.

Employment and Learning and expect an increased volume of enquiries from migrant workers across Northern Ireland with the enlargement of the EU. Dungannon CAB has found itself dealing with a high volume of cases on behalf of Portuguese workers, and Manager Keith Stanyer appeared on the BBC Spotlight programme which highlighted the issue.

Dungannon staff have established a translation service for Portuguese workers through the Police Service of Northern Ireland and a member of staff is currently learning the language. Many cases have been referred to the Equality Commission by bureau staff.



Attending the launch of "Work it Out!" from left to right: Tom Gillen, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Dr Esmond Birnie, MLA, Terry Enwright, UNISON, Derek Alcorn, Citizens Advice, Nuala Conlon, UNISON, Ann Hope, Irish Congress of Trade Unions

evolving services at local level

Information at your fingertips

Access to our Information System is now completely electronic at Ards CAB. Ards staff grasped the opportunities afforded by computerisation, ditched the paper files, and have secured funding to ensure that all staff have access to a computer. Staff also availed of a number of training events to ensure that the new technology is used to its full potential. These developments coupled with the introduction of the new case recording database means a more efficient service for clients and better management information for funders.



Linda Higginson, Manager, Ards CAB, bids farewell to the paper based Information System

"After initial trepidation, I find the new computer system very helpful."

John Scott, Volunteer Ards CAB

Quality through Accreditation

Accreditation for new advisers undertaking the Adviser Training Programme (ATP) is now being extended across the CAB network following a Board decision. Dungannon CAB had already anticipated this decision and new advisers spend at least one month in the bureau shadowing staff, finding out how the bureau operates and familiarising themselves with the Information System, before being enrolled for the ATP.

"The accreditation system has value on two fronts. It is a yardstick by which management can judge that the adviser is reasonably competent in areas frequently covered in bureau and it gives the new adviser a sense of satisfaction that their basic competence has been assessed and confirmed by management."



Joe McGlade, Volunteer Dungannon

Joe McGlade, Volunteer Dungannon

Local projects for the deaf and hard of hearing

During the year Bangor CAB set up a project which offers a weekly session to the deaf community with the aid of a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter. In addition, funding has been provided for a loop system, minicom, fax and e-mail service.

As a result of a successful joint application between Citizens Advice and the RNID for EU funding, Craigavon District CAB and Derry CAB will be deploying specialist advisers for the 2 years to 2005.



Judith Wilson, RNID signer sharing her sign language skills with Les Surgenor of Bangor CAB as part of the bureau's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Project

Domestic Violence Drop-in Centre

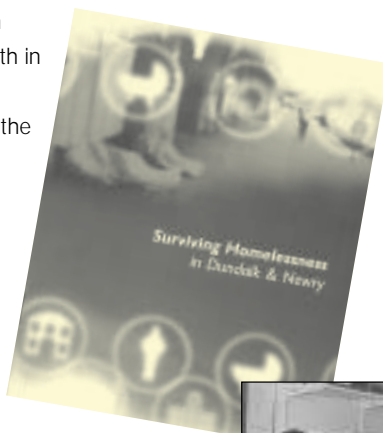
Armagh CAB has responded to a need in the local community for information and advice for those suffering from domestic violence. A Drop-in centre has been opened in the local office offering advice, information and continuing support for people in this situation. A 24 hour free helpline has also been set up on **028 3752 8706**. Bureau staff have worked in partnership with the Police Service of Northern Ireland and Women's Aid to facilitate the development of this important service.



Pictured at the launch of the drop-in centre are from left to right: Brian Gilbert, CAB Treasurer, Mary Curran, Senior Adviser, Armagh CAB, Mary McGinn, Manager, Armagh CAB, Superintendent Bob Moore, PSNI, Rosemary Drainey, Women's Aid and Lisa Clydesdale, Women's Aid

Information for the homeless

A partnership approach between Newry and Mourne District CAB, Dundalk Citizens Information Centre and the Youth in Partnership Project, Dundalk has led to the publication of "Surviving Homelessness in Dundalk and Newry". The booklet aims to inform young homeless people seeking support about the services available to them in the neighbouring cross border towns of Dundalk and Newry.



Advice direct to workers

Citizens Advice has provided advice directly to those workers affected by the recent announcements of closures at Desmonds factories across Northern Ireland. A number of CAB advisers have attended Desmonds factories to provide information talks on redundancy, benefits and debt.

Cookstown CAB provided an information talk to over 130 staff in Desmonds factory in



Swatragh. Advisers then saw over 70 people individually to talk about their particular circumstances. Derry CAB visited the Claudy and Springtown factories following a request from the Mayor and hosted a series of information and advice sessions. The assistance provided by the staff at Derry CAB attracted local media interest and praise from the management and staff at the factory.

Fermanagh CAB has been involved in providing information seminars and follow-up advice surgeries to clients affected by factory closures since 1999. The bureau's work on this issue was highlighted in a BBC Spotlight programme about the factory closures at Desmonds.

Joining up Government

Major overnight flooding in the Rathcoole estate during the year meant that over 70 homes were flooded. A coordinated, inter-agency approach was required to ensure that the raft of complaints from residents were resolved as quickly as possible. Newtownabbey District CAB set up an emergency clinic in its premises and invited representatives from the Social Security Agency, the Housing Executive and the Compensation Agency to ensure that complaints were dealt with effectively. Bureau staff received the personal thanks of the Social Development Minister Nigel Dodds for taking the initiative.



Nigel Dodds visits the staff of Newtownabbey District CAB to thank them for their handling of the flooding in Rathcoole

Jacqui Gallagher, Manager, Derry CAB outside Desmonds



Practical help for clients with rent arrears

The unique regional contract between Citizens Advice and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive continues to provide timely advice to those tenants who are experiencing difficulties with debt. This important partnership is an innovative, cost effective way of tackling rent arrears and can result in the suspension of possession proceedings.

NMW Project - 1st birthday

The partnership between Citizens Advice and the Inland Revenue continues to develop through the National Minimum Wage (NMW) helpline. During the year Citizens Advice and the Inland Revenue celebrated a number of major achievements.



The Right Wage Theatre Company illustrate the struggle between employees and employers for the right to be paid the minimum wage

The helpline **0845 6500207** celebrated its first birthday with an event in Derry addressed by Mary Hamilton, Deputy Mayor for Derry, Eamon McCann, Derry Trades Council and James Heaney, Deputy Director of Inland Revenue. The formal event was followed by a display of impressive street theatre performed by the Right Wage Production Company in the Guildhall Square.



Speaking at the NMW helpline birthday celebrations are from left to right: Eamon McCann, Derry Trades Council, Mary Hamilton, Deputy Mayor for Derry, Michael Coyle, East Londonderry MLA, Derek Alcorn, Chief Executive, Citizens Advice and James Heaney, Deputy Director of Inland Revenue

A caller to the National Minimum Wage helpline stated that she was a hairdresser, aged 18 and getting £2.10 per hour. Her employer stated that because she was training up for the job that was as much as she was due. The caller wanted to know if this was true. The Helpline was able to inform the caller that unless she was officially an apprentice she should be receiving £3.50 per hour. The helpline took the case on and obtained £550 in arrears of pay for the caller.

NMW a Scope Award Winner

The NMW project won the Display Advertising Category at the Scope Communication Awards ceremony at NICVA during the year. The trophy and certificate were presented to Citizens Advice for the NMW poster "Are you getting it?" which was specifically aimed at students.



From left to right: Frances McCandless, NICVA, Siobhán Harding, Citizens Advice and Julian Simmons, UTV

Access for Minority Ethnic Groups

Citizens Advice continues to improve access to its services for minority ethnic groups with the launch of NMW and employment rights leaflets in a variety of different languages. The multi-lingual material gives information on employment rights and the NMW and provides contact details for the helpline in Portuguese, Chinese and Arabic.



Launching the new multi-lingual leaflets are from left to right: Keith Stanyer, Dungannon CAB, Derek Alcorn, Chief Executive, Citizens Advice, Anne Corr, Adviser, Dungannon CAB and Tayra McKee, Portuguese Community Development Worker, STEP

£1 million arrears for Northern Ireland

In conjunction with the Inland Revenue Compliance Unit, Citizens Advice has successfully identified £1 million of arrears for low paid workers in Northern Ireland. This figure is particularly pertinent when compared with the £10 million of arrears paid out to workers in the UK as a whole – meaning that Northern Ireland has taken 10% of the UK arrears with only 3.4% of the UK population.



Fiona Crowe, Adviser, Cookstown & Magherafelt CAB, Nicola Lambert, Programme Manager, Inland Revenue, John Napier, Director of Information Services, Citizens Advice

Joint approach to tackling debt

Citizens Advice and the Social Security Agency once again joined forces to produce a leaflet to help people cope with the financial pressures of the Christmas season. Recent research from Citizens Advice illustrated a £5 million debt caseload for the service in Northern Ireland. The leaflet provides practical ways of avoiding overspending and contact details for local CAB offices.

Continuing partnership with Moore Stephens

Northern Ireland's largest independent firm of Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers continues to support the work of Citizens Advice by sponsoring **Advice** magazine, helping with training costs and the publication of the annual report.

Discussing the issues with local Politicians

During the year we attended the major Party Conferences and met with many local political representatives. These events provide an important forum for Citizens Advice to provide

From left to right: Conor McGale, Omagh Independent Advice Centre with Barry McVeigh, Citizens Advice



information on policy work undertaken, information on services such as training and areas of possible co-operation with the local political parties.

David Ford, Alliance Party with Siobhán Harding, Citizens Advice



Monica McWilliams, NI Women's Coalition with Anne Condé, Citizens Advice

Ian Paisley Junior, DUP with Jacqueline Scott, Citizens Advice



Mark Durkan, SDLP with Lorraine McAllister, Citizens Advice

Genevieve Murphy, Citizens Advice with David Trimble, UUP



A new perspective

Citizens Advice has taken the opportunity afforded by a voluntary sector secondment to the Social Security Agency (SSA) to gain a new perspective of SSA services and to help identify improvements. The secondment involves a partnership between the Advice Services Alliance (ASA) and the SSA to review customer service procedures within the SSA. The objective of the research project is to maximise the opportunity and contribution the advice sector can make to help identify good practice models and highlight areas for improvement.

Citizens Advice continues to be the largest single source of help for appellants in Northern Ireland, representing on behalf of clients at some 1,600 tribunals a year. As illustrated by the table below, in the 12 months to December 2002, a total of 15,572 Social Security and Disability Appeal Tribunals were heard in Northern Ireland. Of the 9,980 cases that presented without representation, 1,454 or 15% were successful and 8,526 or 85% were unsuccessful. Of the 5,592 cases that presented with representation 2,377 or 43% were successful and 3,215 or 57% were unsuccessful.

Never before has the need for and importance of independent representation for the public been more relevant, broadly lifting the chances of a successful appeal by a member of the public from 1 in 7 to 1 in 2. The level of unmet need remains high, with the public attending two thirds of all tribunals without representation. CAB's advocacy across Northern Ireland is supported by a specialist regional post, the Social Security Advocacy Forum and specialist Social Security Advocacy training which is accredited through the University of Ulster and open to members of external organisations.

Social Security Advocacy Training

The Social Security Advocacy training module provides a package of training in the field of social security tribunal representation and advocacy. It is aimed at those involved in the field of advice or with an interest in understanding the structure of social security decision making and enhances knowledge and understanding in this area of Social Welfare Law. Students are provided with an overview of the process of social security decision making as well as an understanding of the jurisdiction and procedure of tribunals in social security. Students are encouraged to develop practical advocacy skills by observation of tribunals and supervised representation. Approximately one hundred students have undertaken the module to date, many of these successfully achieving the accreditation and as a result, 20 Credit Accumulation Transfer System (CATS) points towards further qualifications.

Appeal Tribunals

12 months to December 2002

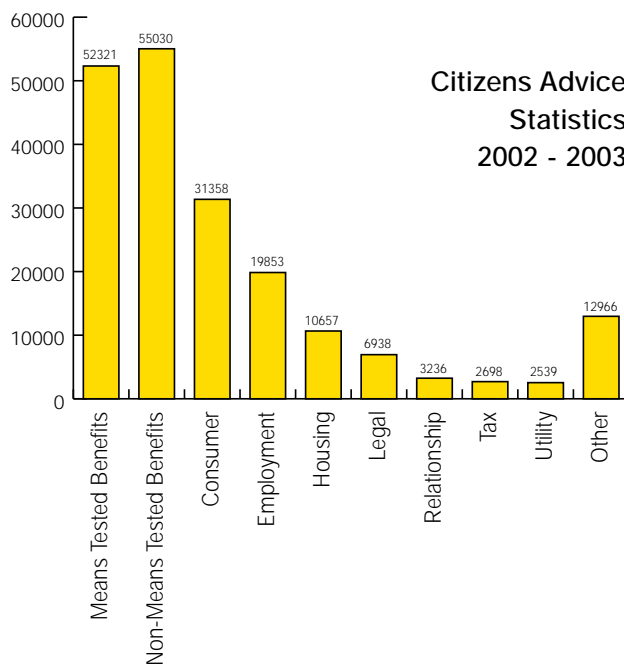
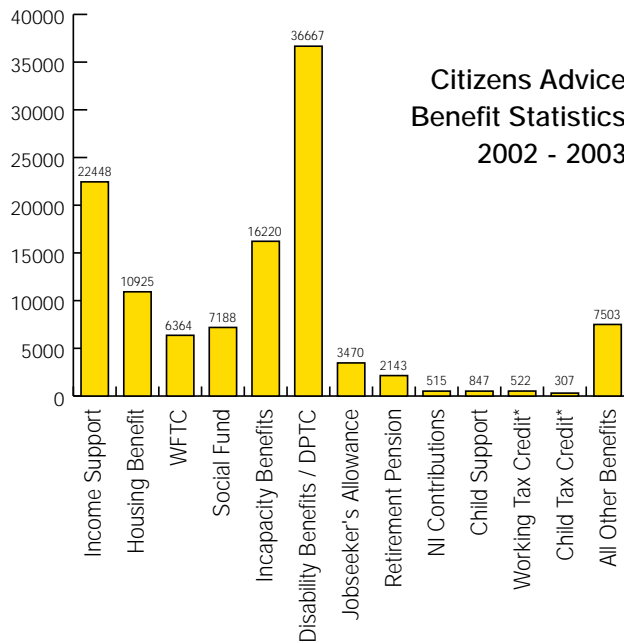
	Successful	Unsuccessful	Sub Total
Presented with Representation	2,377 (43%)	3,215 (57%)	5,592
Presented without Representation	1,454 (15%)	8,526 (85%)	9,980
		Grand Total	15,572

Source: The Appeals Service (Northern Ireland)

During the last year Citizens Advice dealt with 205,531 enquiries from 148,250 people in Northern Ireland. The largest area of enquiry remains social security which accounted for 56% of all enquiries. 15% of enquiries related to consumer issues and this is an area which continues to grow in particular in the area of debt and money advice work. 10% of enquiries were employment related and in addition to these a further 2,189 queries were handled by the

National Minimum Wage Helpline Officer based in Citizens Advice Regional Office.

A public advice and information website adviceguide.org.uk is now available for Northern Ireland either directly or through the Citizens Advice website www.citizensadvice.co.uk. During the year CAB advice has thus been extended to the public on a 24/7 basis and an e-mail facility for direct forwarding of enquiries has also been developed.



Statement of financial activities

Year Ended 31 March 2003

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2003 £	Total Funds 2002 £
Incoming resources				
Donations	-	12,200	12,200	25,971
Activities in furtherance of the charity's objects:				
Grants receivable and income from charitable trading activities	439,258	162,869	602,127	771,586
Activities for generating funds:				
Fundraising income	4,817	-	4,817	-
Interest receivable	12,516	-	12,516	19,986
Other income	-	-	-	4,034
Total incoming resources	456,591	175,069	631,660	821,577
Resources expended				
Costs of generating funds:				
Fundraising and publicity	2,015	-	2,015	-
Charitable expenditure				
Costs in furtherance of charitable objects	298,074	162,721	460,795	485,758
Management and administration	135,793	24,204	159,997	174,643
Total resources expended	435,882	186,925	622,807	660,401
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers	20,709	(11,856)	8,853	161,176
Transfer between funds	136,592	(136,592)	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year	157,301	(148,448)	8,853	161,176
Balances brought forward	178,285	213,223	391,508	230,332
Balances carried forward	335,586	64,775	400,361	391,508

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the results for the year as set out above.

All of the activities of the charity are classed as continuing.

Balance Sheet

Year Ended 31 March 2003		2003	2002
		£	£
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets		290,296	55,572
Current Assets			
Debtors	40,474		47,448
Cash at bank	322,666		427,936
	<u>363,140</u>		<u>475,384</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	<u>(253,075)</u>		<u>(139,448)</u>
Net current assets		110,065	335,936
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>400,361</u>	<u>391,508</u>
Net assets		<u>400,361</u>	<u>391,508</u>
Funds			
Unrestricted:			
Designated funds		-	49,879
Other charitable funds	335,586		128,406
Restricted	64,775		213,223
		<u>400,361</u>	<u>391,508</u>

Notes to the financial statements

Year Ended 31 March 2003

Grants receivable and income from charitable trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2003 £	Total Funds 2002 £
Department of Social Development	384,216	-	384,216	375,211
Making Belfast Work	-	-	-	13,717
Community Fund	-	29,276	29,276	111,070
European Grant	-	3,091	3,091	3,776
Department of Social Development IT Grant	-	46,382	46,382	20,999
Department of Social Development Other Grants	-	13,654	13,654	46,371
NIVT Cross Border Grant	-	(342)	(342)	16,903
Capital Grants	-	-	-	15,932
NIE	-	28,000	28,000	35,000
Proteus Income	-	-	-	41,945
Tudor Trust/Viridian	-	-	-	44,244
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	-	-	-	6,586
TSB Foundation	-	-	-	5,000
Equality Commission	-	-	-	2,000
ESME Mitchell Trust	-	-	-	1,000
Income from charitable trading activities	55,042		55,042	31,832
Northern Bank Financial Literacy	-	14,000	14,000	-
Comhairle	-	4,574	4,574	-
Community Fund (SDS)	-	24,234	24,234	-
	<u>439,258</u>	<u>162,869</u>	<u>602,127</u>	<u>771,586</u>

Charitable Trading activities

Included in charitable trading income are the following amounts	2003	2002
	£	£
Electronic information	13,539	292
Sponsorship	3,700	-
Other Income	1,317	-
Associate membership	2,120	2,215
Publications sales	782	2,075
Annual general meeting	1,445	815
Consultancy	32,139	26,176
Training	-	259
	55,042	31,832

Costs in furtherance of charitable objects

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2003 £	Total Funds 2002 £
Provision of charitable services:				
Northern Bank Financial Literacy	-	13,736	13,736	-
Northern Ireland Electricity	-	28,000	28,000	26,500
Tudor Trust/Viridian	-	15,640	15,640	15,170
Proteus (training)	-	1,587	1,587	19,062
NIVT Cross Border Project	-	-	-	12,524
IT Costs	-	48,645	48,645	13,646
Community Fund	-	34,066	34,066	69,695
Other Projects	288,923	12,606	301,529	274,342
	288,923	154,280	443,203	430,939
Support costs:				
Travel and Subsistence	-	1,322	1,322	10,206
Training Expenses	6,102	1,994	8,096	27,893
Consultancy	-	(2,720)	(2,720)	12,138
Computer Support Costs	-	-	-	1,524
Other Support Costs	3,049	4,880	7,929	3,058
Repayment of grant	-	2,965	2,965	-
	298,074	162,721	460,795	485,758

Management and administration

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2003 £	Total Funds 2002 £
Salaries	28,461	7,954	36,415	37,351
Office costs	87,738	9,097	96,835	113,296
Audit fees	3,819	-	3,819	3,819
Recruitment costs	(681)	(190)	(871)	4,336
Legal and professional	1,469	3,669	5,138	1,823
Costs of trustees' meeting	1,402	492	1,894	2,859
Interest payable	6,485	-	6,485	317
Travel & subsistence	5,866	1,639	7,505	7,251
Conferences and training	1,155	1,543	2,698	2,740
Entertaining	79	-	79	851
	135,793	24,204	159,997	174,643



(31 March 2003)

Derek Alcorn	Chief Executive
Anne Coleman	PA to the Chief Executive
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Una Buchanan	Director of Finance & Administration
Donna Clarke	Secretary
Jacqueline Scott	Secretary
Mary McGlade	Secretary
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John Napier	Director of Information Services
Siobhán Harding	Information & Policy Officer
Natalie Strain	Information & Policy Officer
Lorraine McAllister	Information Technology Officer
Adrian McLean	Information Technology Officer
Tony Gillespie	Information Technology Volunteer
Anne Condé	National Minimum Wage Helpline
Joan Davis	National Minimum Wage Helpline
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David Murphy	Director of Development
Genevieve Murphy	Training Officer
Barry McVeigh	Specialist Support Officer (Advocacy)
Liz Pollock	Community Advice Trainer
Kelly Collins	Volunteer Development Officer
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Honorary Officers	
Marcus Duignan	Chair
Mary McPartland	Vice-Chair
Billy Snoddy	Vice-Chair
John Devine	Vice-Chair
Brian Compston	Treasurer
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Co-opted Managers	
Oonaugh Harris	Bangor
Jacque Richardson	Down District
Keith Stanyer	Dungannon
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Chairs of Sub Committees	
Angela Welch	Social Policy
Vacant	Training
Vacant	Equal Opportunities

Board Members

(31 March 2003)

Paul Sullivan	Antrim
Lynd Roper	Armagh
Cllr Hubert Nicholl	Ballymena
Edwin Parks	Banbridge
Vacant	Bangor
Joe Law	Belfast Group
Brian Smyth	Carrickfergus
David Martin	Coleraine
Sharon Crooks	Cookstown
Adrian McPartland	Craigavon
John Ritchie	Down District
Harry Martin	Dungannon
Pauline Flannigan	Fermanagh
Dennis Ogborn	Holywood
Michael Lynch	Larne
John Lyttle	Lisburn
Sam McPherson	Londonderry
Matt Durkin	Newry
David Hollis	Newtownabbey
George Mawhinney	Newtownards
James Thompson	Strabane
Frank MacElhatton	Suffolk and Andersonstown



associate members

Action Cancer	LJ Mallon and Co Solicitors
Age Concern*	Law Centre (NI)
Alzheimers Society	Link Community Association*
Antrim Credit Unions	Lisburn Credit Union
Ark Housing	Lurgan Council for Voluntary Action
Assembly Library*	Manor Street Community Group*
Belfast Carers Centre*	McCambridge Duffy & Co
BiH Housing Association	Mencap NI
British Deaf Association	Multiple Sclerosis Society
Bryson House	Neighbourhood Development Association
Bytes Project	Newry Welfare Rights Centre
Challenge for Youth	Nexus Institute
Child Care NI	NI Childminding Association
Children's Law Centre*	NI Council for Ethnic Minorities
Chinese Welfare Association	NI Federation of Housing Associations
Choice Housing Association	North Belfast Employment Centre
Colin Glen Trust	Northern Ireland Housing Executive*
Community Development & Health Network	Nucleus
Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid	NUS-USI
Council for the Homeless	Ormeau Credit Union
Crudden Dolan & Co Accountants	Parents Advice Centre
Derry Credit Union Ltd	Royal National Institute for the Blind*
DETI Library*	SDLP Headquarters
Dry Arch Centre (for families)	Seafarer's Benefits Advice Line*
Ely Centre	SELB – Information Service*
Employers for Childcare	SHAC Housing Association
Falls Women's Centre	South West Belfast Community Forum
Fold Housing Association	Tar Isteach*
Gingerbread NI*	Thompsons Solicitors*
Glenluce Quality Caring Centre	TPM Credit Union
Greater West Belfast Community Association	University for Industry/Learndirect
Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd	Upper Andersonstown Welfare & Advice Centre
Habitat for Humanity	Voluntary Services Belfast
Help the Aged*	Volunteer Development Agency
Housing Rights Service	Wave Trauma Centre*
ICAS	Womens Aid Helpline
Keady Credit Union	

* Subscriber to the Citizens Advice Information System


**bureaux and
outreach details**


Bureau	Outreach Services
Antrim	Toome, Crumlin, Randalstown
Antrim Road	Old Sea House
Ards	Community Hospital, Comber, Kircubbin, Portaferry, Ballygowan, Towerview Resource Centre, Mental Health Day Hospital, Bowtown Youth and Community Centre
Armagh	Tandragee, Keady, Markethill, Richill, Middletown, Loughgall
Ballymena	
Banbridge	Rathfriland, Dromore Town Hall, Gilford Library,
Bangor	Conlig, Skipperstone, Kilcooley, Rathgill, George Green Community Centre
Carrickfergus	Oakfield, Whitehead
Central Belfast	Donegall Road, Lisburn Road
Coleraine	Ballymoney Town Hall, Bushmills, Ballycastle, Cushendall
Cookstown	Magherafelt
Down District	Ballynahinch, Newcastle, Castlewellsan, Saintfield Health Centre, Killyleagh Clinic, Ballymote Community Centre
Dungannon	Clogher Valley, Aughnacloy, Coalisland, Beacon Centre
East Belfast	Mount Oriel, Tullycarnet, Cregagh, Dungoyne, Belvoir, Island Day Centre, Hollywood Arches Health Centre
Falls	Springfield Resource Centre, Royal Victoria Hospital, Whiterock
Fermanagh	Lisnaskea, Irvinestown, Roslea, Belleek
Glengormley*	Ballyduff, Ballyclare
Holywood	Holywood Health & Care Centre, Redburn Community Centre
Larne	
Lisburn	Dunmurry Development Partnership, Seymour Hill, Dromara, Hillsborough Health Centre, Knockmore Community Association, Tonagh Community Centre, Stewartstown Health Centre
L'Derry	Hazelbank & Ballymagroarty, Newbuildings Community Centre, Park Resource Centre, Eglinton Community Centre, Lettershandoney, Glenview Community Centre, Guildhall Street
Lurgan**	Magheralin Parish Centre, Aghalee Village Hall, Aghagallon Parish Centre, Manor Centre
Newry & Mourne	Crossmaglen, Burren, Mullaghbawn, Newtownhamilton, Killeel, Daisy Hill Hospital
Portadown**	Ashgrove Centre, Watson Centre, Corcrain Centre, Meadows Centre, Annaghmore, Birches
Rathcoole*	Bawnmore, Monkstown
Shankill	The Cabin, Twaddell Avenue
Strabane	
Suffolk/A'town	Wilton House, Poleglass Community House

* Newtownabbey District

** Craigavon District



Citizens Advice in Northern Ireland works with a wide range of agencies whose help and co-operation greatly enhance the services which we deliver.

Our thanks are due to the following:

Advice Services Alliance	Comhairle
Age Concern	Community Foundation (NI)
Antrim Borough Council	Community Fund
Ards Borough Council	Cookstown District Council
Armagh Borough Council	Co-Operation Ireland
Assembly Library	Council for the Homeless (NI)
Association of Independent Advice Centres	Craigavon Borough Council
Ballymena Borough Council	Department of Education
Ballymoney Borough Council	Department for Employment and Learning
Banbridge District Council	Department for Enterprise Trade and Investment for Northern Ireland
BDO Stoy Hayward	Department for Health Social Services and Public Safety
Belfast Carers Centre	Department for Social Development
Belfast City Council	Derry City Council
Belfast Regeneration Office	Disability Action
Careers Advisory Service (QUB)	Down District Council
Carers NI	Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council
Carrickfergus Borough Council	Elliott, Duffy & Garrett Solicitors
Castlereagh Borough Council	Enkalon Foundation
CCEA	Equality Coalition
Children's Law Centre	Equality Commission
Child Support Agency	Fermanagh District Council
Chinese Welfare Association	General Consumer Council
Citizens Advice England and Wales	Gingerbread NI
Citizens Advice Scotland	Grant Thornton Chartered Accountants
Citizens Information Centres	Health & Social Services Councils
CITUNI	Health & Social Services Trusts
City of Belfast YMCA	
Coleraine Borough Council	

Help the Aged	North South Ministerial Council
Housing Rights Service	OCR
Human Rights Commission	Office of the Social Fund Commissioner
ICAS	Office of the Social Security Commissioners
Impact Training	Open College Network
Inland Revenue	Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland
Insolvency Service	Police Service of Northern Ireland
Institute of Professional Legal Studies (QUB)	Queen's University
Irish Congress of Trade Unions	Raleigh International
Labour Relations Agency	RNIB
Larne Borough Council	RNID
Law Centre (NI)	Rural Support
Lisburn City Council	SDLP
Local Strategic Partnerships	Seafarer's Benefits Advice Line
Magherafelt District Council	SELB – Craigavon Division
McFadden and Perry Solicitors	Social Security Agency
Ministry of Defence	South and East Belfast Health and Social Services Trust
Moore Stephens Chartered Accountants	Strabane District Council
Moyle District Council	Tar Isteach
Newry and Mourne District Council	The Appeals Service (NI)
Newtownabbey Borough Council	The Office of the President of Appeals Service (NI)
NI Association for Mental Health	Ulster Farmers Union
NI-CO	Unison
NICVA	University of Ulster – Coleraine
NI Court Service	University of Ulster - Jordanstown
NIE	Victim Support
NIHE	Viridian
NI Ombudsman	Volunteer Development Agency
NI Open College Network	Wave Trauma Centre
NIPSA	Women's Aid
NI Youth Forum	Worknet Connections
North Down Borough Council	Youth Council NI
Northern Bank	

