

Impact Report 2020 -2021

A way forward for our clients and community



**citizens
advice**

**Hammersmith
& Fulham**

We are Citizens Advice Hammersmith & Fulham

Every year thousands of people come to us for help solving their problems. This means we're an important part of the community, with a credible understanding of local needs. We use this to tailor our services and help improve local policies and practices.

We are here to help anyone that needs our help, no matter what their problem. Our services are available across a number of channels and locations across the borough. Through the full range of our services we provide access to advice, education and skills that create better life opportunities for our clients.

As well as giving support directly, we also work to fix the underlying causes of people's problems. We use our evidence and data to advocate for changes to policy, regulation and business practice.



Our advice generated **£1 million** in fiscal benefits and **£850k** in governmental savings.

What we do

People often come to us with multiple and complex range of problems including issues with housing, debt, benefits, employment, relationships and consumer rights.

Our main advice areas are:

- Benefits and Universal Credit 43%
- Housing 19%
- Debt 11%
- Employment 6%



In addition to our generalist advice service, we deliver a wide range of **specialist projects** including:

- An outreach programme working exclusively with people in Wormholt and White City, one of the areas of highest deprivation in the borough
- Energy advice to help clients overcome fuel poverty
- Digital Skills projects for the digitally excluded
- A range of initiatives for the socially isolated included telephone befriending and Zoom Sit & Stretch

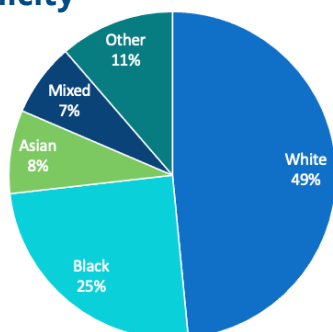
Avonmore Library

Prior to lockdown, we had recently completed the refurbishment of our library, enabling us to offer better service and more events.

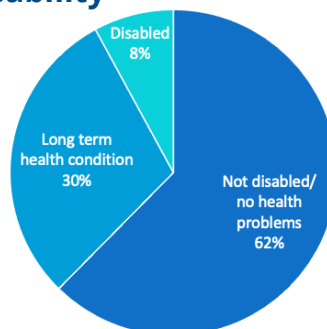


Who we help

Ethnicity



Disability



Our impact from April 2020 - March 2021

We are proud to be the leading generalist advice agency in Hammersmith & Fulham. Our dedicated team of staff and volunteers work tirelessly to support the community we serve.



We helped **7,610** people with **24,550** issues



Thanks to our funders, we **raised over £500k** of new funding enabling us to **expand our services** and help even more people in the community.



Our **Advice Line service took 6,809** calls from local residents.



We made **5000** telephone calls to over 250 people who would have been completed isolated without our befriending.



For every **£1 invested** we generate:

- **£13.97** in public value
- **£12.31** in value to the people we help
- **£2.31** in fiscal benefits



Our team of **135** volunteers provided a value of **£795,000**. **20 of our 40** paid staff were initially recruited as volunteers.



Our work creates **£10million** in public value by improving our clients' wellbeing (emotional wellbeing, family relationships & positive functioning)

Highlights of our year

Many of our achievements are more than statistics. Here are just some examples of projects and initiatives that make us proud to be Citizens Advice Hammersmith & Fulham.

When our weekly digital classes closed down, we started a telephone **befriending service** which we still continue, offering friendship, support and advice.

Thanks to funding from City Bridge, we have an adviser dedicated to vulnerable clients referred to us by **12 partner organisations** in the borough.

The wonderful work of our digital skills and befriending team was recognised by the National Citizens Advice **Team of the Year** award.

We **lobbied** local and national policy makers to ensure vulnerable **asylum seekers** in hotels were given adequate food and support throughout the pandemic.

We passed our Citizens Advice audit with **Excellent** across all 9 areas of assessment and secured our AQS Quality Assurance Certificate across all relevant categories.

It took us less than a week to move **40 staff and 80 volunteers** to **remote working**, enabling to continue our service when our clients needed us most.

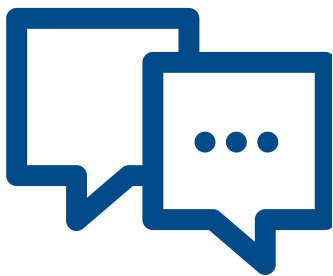
Thanks to our funders

None of our work could happen without the support of our funders. Our sincere thanks goes to the following organisations, especially our core funders the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.



Our clients in their own words

"I am extremely happy with the service I received. There is so much information out there that I had no idea about until spoke to an advisor."



"I needed help with a PIP form. The adviser was able to do the initial form and mandatory reconsideration for me to a level that it was sorted instead of the expected tribunal. I'm very happy."

"The adviser was really kind, helpful and professional! I am really impressed by her knowledge and skills."

Prior to the first lockdown, we made a **video** about our clients experience of our computer clubs. You can watch it here: <https://youtu.be/1L5cBndOiT8>



Case Study: Frederick was receiving Universal Credit. He made a short trip overseas to attend a relative's funeral and returned to find that his Universal Credit had been stopped. He was able to make a rapid reclaim, but lost a month's benefit, including his rent of £950.



After enlisting his MP's support we persuaded the DWP to formally reconsider their decision which meant that Frederick could appeal to an independent tribunal, which we supported him to do.

On 14th October 2020 the client heard back from the DWP, before an appeal hearing had been scheduled, that the original decision had been reversed and his benefit for the missing month would be reinstated. The back payment he received was over £1,000.

Contact us

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Or submit an enquiry via our website.

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