

Anyone can have a problem



Nearly 3 in 4

of our clients said their problem affected their lives, including causing anxiety and financial difficulty



More than 1 in 3

people turn to us when they have to take urgent action on issues including money, housing and employment problems

Who we helped



2,300 people

helped face to face, by phone, or online



8,100 issues

people sought our help with



Over 1 in 3

clients are disabled or have a long term health condition

How we do this



4 locations

where we provide free and independent support



30+ advisers

are all highly-trained volunteers



17,000 hours

given by volunteers, worth an estimated £415,000

The difference we make



48

households prevented from losing their homes



£307,000

worth of direct income gained for clients



4 in 5

clients said advice improved their lives, including reducing stress and improving finances

All of this improves lives in Elmbridge

Why we're needed

We help residents and workers across Elmbridge find a way forward with the problems they face by providing free, confidential and impartial advice. Without us, some of the most vulnerable people in our community would have nowhere to turn.

People can access our service face-to-face at our main office in Esher and at our outreaches in areas of greatest need, by phone, or online. We run an 'open-door' system so there is no need to wait for an appointment to see us.

One of our greatest strengths is our flexibility to deal with most issues people come to us with – ranging from debt, housing and employment problems to consumer issues. But we are far more than a generalist agency. Responding to local demand, we have developed a number of specialist services for Elmbridge residents:

- Our **disability and sickness benefits specialists** provide expert advice and support to help local people apply for complex benefits. In 2017/18 this small team of highly-trained volunteers helped over 150 sick and disabled residents to maximise their income and get on with their lives
- Our monthly **Financial Advice Clinic** in Esher continues to be popular with Elmbridge residents seeking free generic financial advice
- We deliver **financial capability training** to local schools, providing young people with money management skills for life

Through our daily interaction with clients, we have a credible understanding of local needs. We use this insight to improve policies and practices locally. In 2017/18 we submitted evidence on disability benefit assessments and campaigned for improved standards for all rented housing and better implementation of Universal Credit.

What clients say about us:

I was so impressed with your knowledge and dedication ...I really couldn't have done it without you.

Our value to Elmbridge in 2017/18



- **A minimum saving of £100,000** to Elmbridge Borough Council through reducing cases of homelessness – this alone gives **a return of £1.20 on every £1 of local authority funding**
- **Substantial other savings** by helping local authority rent and council tax arrears to be rescheduled
- **Over £500,000** income gained for individuals to spend in the Elmbridge local community through benefits received, debts written off and consumer problems resolved

What clients say about us:

You have helped to transform my life. I feel like I'm 'living the dream' compared to where I was a year ago.

How we work

We operate through a team of over 30 dedicated, highly-trained volunteer advisers supported by a small paid team who provide expert support, training, and run the charity. In this way we provide exceptional value for money.

We are grateful that Elmbridge Borough Council provides two-thirds of the funding we need to cover our modest running costs – but we still need to raise one-third ourselves. In 2017/18 we secured funds from a number of grant-making bodies, local organisations and individual donors to enable us to continue with our vital service in Elmbridge. We thank them all for their generous support.

We are an essential local service, now and in the future.

Citizens Advice Esher & District,
Harry Fletcher House, High Street,
Esher KT10 9RN

Tel. 01372 464770
www.eshercab.org.uk

