

**Doncaster
Borough**

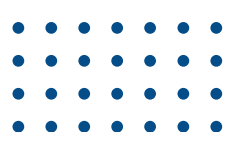
21-25

REVIEW OF SERVICE

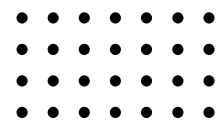
REACHING COMMUNITIES



**Funded by
UK Government**



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Reaching Communities: The community approach to Advice Delivery

Since 2021, our community outreach projects have evolved from COVID-era digital video pods into a comprehensive face-to-face advice service embedded in Doncaster's most deprived communities. With dedicated funding, we have expanded our presence, increasing the number of community locations offering advice and integrating digital access to ensure support reaches those who need it most.

Our approach prioritises accessibility, trust and collaboration. By working closely with local groups and charities, we have strengthened engagement and provided vital support on issues such as debt, welfare benefits, employment and housing. This strategy to be community based has empowered individuals to take control of their circumstances, has improved financial stability, and has positively impacted community well-being.

Impact



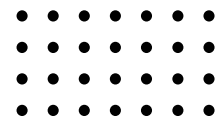
12,575
CLIENTS



27,770
ISSUES



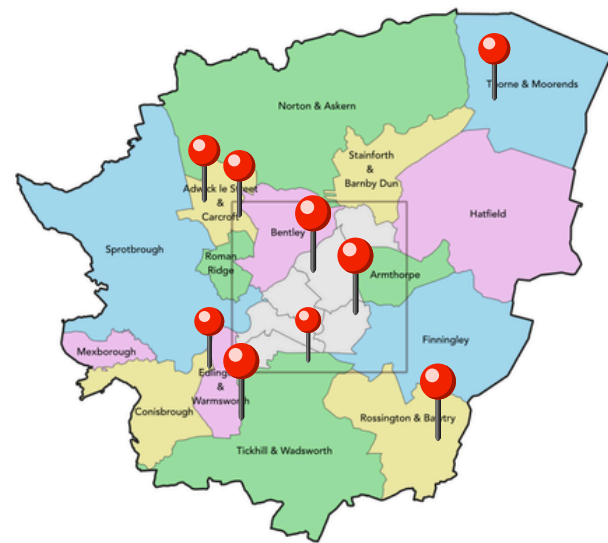
£2.95 MILLION
INCOME GAINS



Bringing Advice to Where It's Needed Most

As a result of this funding, we have successfully established eight Community Advice Outreach Locations across Doncaster in Armthorpe, Balby, Cantley, Carcroft, Edlington, Rossington, Thorne, and Warmsworth. This expansion was a deliberate and strategic decision, ensuring that our services are embedded where they are most needed—in communities facing high levels of deprivation, financial insecurity, and barriers to accessing mainstream advice services.

We recognised that traditional, centralised advice models often fail to reach those in greatest need, particularly in areas where poverty, digital exclusion, and social isolation prevent people from seeking timely support. By placing our advisers directly within these communities, we have removed physical and psychological barriers, making our services more accessible, trusted, and responsive.



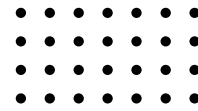
By being where the issues are, we have increased engagement with hard-to-reach groups, ensuring that those most at risk of crisis receive timely intervention and long-term support. This community-based approach is not just about providing advice—it is about empowering residents, strengthening local resilience, and creating a fairer, more connected Doncaster.

Accredited, Trusted and Client-Focused Advice



Citizens Advice Doncaster Borough proudly holds the Advice Quality Standard for casework and telephone advice, ensuring high-quality legal support in social welfare law. This accreditation guarantees our service is well-managed, independent, and delivers accurate, timely advice. We maintain robust quality procedures, ensuring accessibility and client-focused support. Through training, mentoring, and ongoing development, we equip our staff, volunteers, and trustees to uphold excellence and mitigate the risks of poor guidance

Key Project Impact



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Meeting people where the issues are – Delivering advice in familiar, trusted community spaces removes barriers to support.



Improving trust and engagement – Embedding services locally strengthens relationships with marginalized groups who may not otherwise seek help.



Building community resilience – Equipping individuals with knowledge and the tools to foster long-term sustainable change.



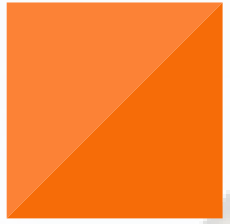
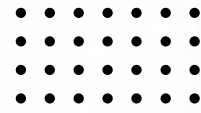
Integrated communities – Strong partnerships with grassroots organizations enhance our role as a trusted, accessible support service



Key Project

Impact

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Our interventions have facilitated £2.95 Million financial gains for clients, improving financial security and well-being for themselves and their community.

We have significantly increased the number of people accessing our services. To date, we have supported 12,575 clients with 27,770 issues, undertaking 26,676 activities including calls, letters and negotiations spanning welfare benefits, debt, housing and employment.

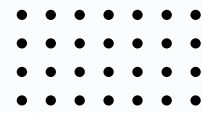
Established dedicated outreach services in the heart of communities in eight key community locations makes advice more accessible, empowering people to make informed decisions about their lives and giving them improved access and knowledge on how to exercise their rights and responsibilities.

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Key Project Impact

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Trust & Engagement with Marginalized Communities

Our approach of embedding services within already trusted and established services has built trust with hard-to-reach groups, leading to higher engagement from these groups and earlier intervention. More clients are seeking advice proactively, reducing the severity of crises.

21-25

Increased Community Presence

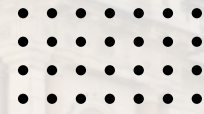
Established dedicated outreach services in the heart of communities in eight key community locations, made advice more accessible, empowering people to make informed decisions about their lives and given them improved access and knowledge on how to exercise their rights and responsibilities.

Preventative not reactive
By establishing ourselves at the heart of communities we are in tune with the challenges people face and our service is very much driven by the voice of the user. We are able to plan and promote areas of advice such as Pension Credit or energy advice in a preventative fashion so people are dealing with issues as they arise, alleviating crisis measures.

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What the data tells us about Doncaster:



High Impact on Financial Well-being

- **£2.7 million** in income gains for clients, improving financial stability and reducing hardship.
- **£191,718** secured in reimbursements, services and loans, directly benefiting those in need.

Strong Client Reach & Demand

- **15,246** cases handled, demonstrating the ongoing high demand for our services.
- **27,770** issues addressed, covering a wide range of topics including benefits, debt, housing and employment.

Addressing the Most Pressing Financial Issues

- Over **11,380** benefit entitlement cases, helping people access essential financial support.
- **3460** housing cases, tackling homelessness prevention and insecure accommodation.
- **2365** Personal Independence Payment (PIP) cases, securing vital disability benefits.



What the data tells us:

Wide-Ranging Support Across Key Issues

- **1,446** cases related to debt, highlighting the essential role of our financial advice.
- **3460** housing-related cases, ensuring clients avoid homelessness and insecure living conditions.
- **11,380** benefits and tax credits cases, supporting people in securing the income they are entitled to.

Tackling Digital & In-Person Accessibility

- **8,496** cases handled via in-person support, proving the success of our community-based outreach.
- **3,880** email interactions, showing our digital service is reaching those unable to attend in person.
- Multiple access channels including web chat, email, phone and face-to-face appointments, ensuring inclusivity.

Targeting Vulnerable Groups

- **52%** of clients have a disability or long-term health condition, showing our focus on supporting those most in need.
- Significant outreach to older clients, with over **5,346** cases for those aged 50+, demonstrating our role in supporting later-life welfare and income security.
- **41%** of clients are female, ensuring gender-balanced support.



52%

51% OF OUR CLIENTS
HAVE A DISABILITY OR
LONG-TERM HEALTH
CONDITION

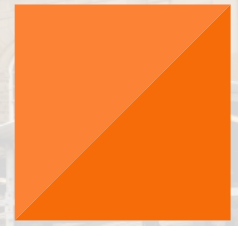
Challenges

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Meeting Rising Demand

Demand for our services has outstripped expectations, stretching staff and resources. Complex cases often require longer, more intensive support, limiting capacity for new clients.



Staffing & Workforce Capacity

Staff sickness and maternity leave have impacted service continuity over the last 12 months, and with no funding for backup advisers, this leads to gaps in staffing directly affecting our service delivery. Many staff are on less-than-full-time contracts, making scheduling/coverage challenging.



Digital Barriers

Many clients still face significant digital exclusion, lacking skills, devices, or access to data. Some vulnerable groups require in-person support before they can transition to digital services.

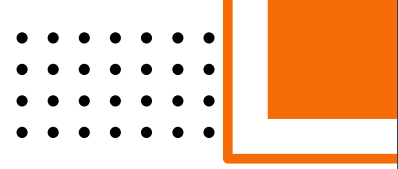


Demonstrating Holistic Impact

While financial outcomes are well-documented, we need stronger evidence on well-being, health improvements and long-term impact. Capturing the preventative effects of early intervention remains a challenge.



Our Vision



With continued investment we want to build on the success of our current outreach model and ensure long-term sustainability. We propose a refined, dedicated locality-based approach that embeds high-quality advice and digital inclusion into the heart of Doncaster's communities. It will also address the challenges faced during the project, improving our offer to communities with a cost effective but impactful approach.



Locality-based advice model



Four dedicated full time advisers assigned to key localities, ensuring consistent and accessible advice for residents



Flexible delivery model offering in-person appointments, workshops, and community-based events tailored to local needs



Attendance at Well Doncaster events, embedding our services within community wellbeing initiatives



Targeted support such as Pension Credit sign-up drives to tackle pensioner poverty



Community events & engagement



Debt and budgeting workshops empowering individuals with financial literacy skills



Wellbeing improvements implementing WEMWBS (Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) to measure wellbeing improvements for clients accessing our services



Strengthening our early intervention tracking, evidencing how timely advice prevents crises, reduces demand on emergency services and improves long-term outcomes



Expanding our advice & support service. Improving our offer to localities creating better referrals into specialist services



Cost-of-living support sessions helping residents manage rising expenses



Collecting and analysing qualitative case studies to showcase real-life transformations



Aligned Goals

ACHIEVED TOGETHER

This project's aims and outcomes align with The Doncaster Council Doncaster Delivering Together (DDT) Strategy.

Fair and Inclusive

We tackle inequalities by improving financial resilience, reducing poverty and supporting marginalized groups. Our services help residents access the welfare benefits and financial support they are entitled to, which in most cases they would miss out on without our intervention.

Healthy and Compassionate

Our financial wellbeing support reduces the impact of debt-related stress and anxiety.

By integrating mental health awareness and financial resilience, we contribute to better health outcomes.

Prosperous & Connected

Our digital inclusion project directly supports Doncaster's commitment to improve digital access and broadband infrastructure, through community digital inclusion grants, distribution of recycled tech and via the data bank. Financial advice and digital skills training enables economic participation and reduces financial exclusion.

Greener and Cleaner

Our energy efficiency and fuel poverty work supports Doncaster's housing retrofit strategy and carbon-neutral goals.

We offer practical energy advice and support schemes to help residents reduce costs and improve sustainability.

Safe and Resilient

Our work in debt prevention, housing support and financial advice strengthens community resilience.

Partnerships with food banks, GP surgeries and community organizations enhance stability and reduce crises.

Skilled and Creative

Our digital skills courses and financial capability training provide residents with essential tools to navigate modern life.

We empower marginalized communities to engage with services, education and employment.



Conclusion

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Through our **community-based** advice model, Citizens Advice Doncaster Borough (CADB) has made a tangible and lasting impact on individuals and families across Doncaster. We have supported thousands of residents, securing in excess of **£2.95 MILLION in financial gains** for clients, helping people stay in their homes, reducing people's debt, supporting with access to vital benefits and building financial stability.

Our service has **empowered** individuals to take control of their circumstances, to make **informed choices** in their lives and to improve their overall **wellbeing, resilience and quality of life**.

Beyond financial outcomes, our advice has had a profound **social impact**. By embedding ourselves within communities, we have built **trust** with marginalised groups, ensuring that those who may otherwise struggle to **access** support receive timely, **life-changing** interventions. Our digital inclusion work has broken down barriers, equipping people with **skills** and resources that increase economic opportunities and reduce long-term hardship.

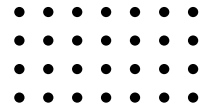
However, challenges remain. Rising demand, workforce stability, digital exclusion and the need for stronger evidence of wellbeing outcomes all require ongoing focus. Staff sickness, turnover and a lack of contingency funding have stretched capacity, and while our outreach model has been effective, optimizing locations and securing funding for full-time roles will be essential in ensuring long-term sustainability.

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Phase 2

2025 and Beyond



Looking ahead, we are committed to evolving and strengthening our service to meet these challenges. We will:

Embed

Embed WEMWBS scoring to demonstrate improvements in mental well-being and early intervention effectiveness.

Expand

Expand our digital inclusion offer, ensuring that residents have the skills and resources to access services independently.

Resources

Look to secure sustainable funding to transition staff to full-time contracts, improving continuity and resilience.

Refine

Refine our outreach locations, ensuring resources are directed where they have the most impact.

Strengthen

Strengthen collaboration with Doncaster Council and local partners, ensuring our work continues to align with Doncasters long-term strategic goals.



The impact of our work is clear and measurable - we are improving financial security, enhancing well-being, and helping to build stronger, more resilient communities across the city. With continued investment, CADB will remain a cornerstone of support in Doncaster, ensuring that everyone—regardless of background—can access the advice, resources, and opportunities they need to thrive.