

Appendix

Citizens Advice Nottinghamshire Central and South, Broxtowe Division

Citizens Advice Nottinghamshire Central and South ("CANCAS Broxtowe", previously known as Citizens Advice Central Nottinghamshire), has provided the following information in accordance with the terms of the grant awarded by Cabinet in July 2024 and the Service Level Agreement for 2024/2027. Members will recall that CANCAS Broxtowe was formed in 2024 from three previously existing Citizens Advice Local Offices, one of which was the former Citizens Advice Broxtowe. All figures in this report relate to Broxtowe only, with the funding provided by this Council being ring-fenced for the benefit of Broxtowe residents.

1. Summary

In the last 12 months (April 2025 to March 2026), CANCAS Broxtowe has helped 7,509 clients on a wide range of enquiries. CANCAS Broxtowe has provided a summary analysis of the 19,056 enquiries that were handled during the financial year of 2025/26. Most of these contacts related to benefits and housing matters (66%), with the remaining enquiries being classified as debt, utilities, employment, signposting, legal, relationships, financial, consumer, health, tax. CANCAS Broxtowe has also assisted clients in accessing £4.99m of additional benefits, which makes a huge difference to their wellbeing as well as supporting the local economy.

Housing enquiries have now overtaken debt as CANCAS Broxtowe's second largest enquiry area, with changes to legislation and landlords selling properties leading to an increase as well as other factors such as negative budgets making private rented property unaffordable (see campaign areas). Utilities enquiries has now overtaken relationship enquiries and is now CANCAS Broxtowe's fifth largest enquiry area. Debts worth £480k have been written off for Broxtowe households.

Over the last three years, CANCAS Broxtowe has worked hard to create new partnerships. The UKSPF project for financial resilience work has resulted in a new partnership with 'Futures' coming into the offices to aid residents to get economically active once CANCAS Broxtowe has removed the barriers to work. This is coming to an end, so further funds are being sought through channels such as East Midlands Combined County Authority.

The Mediation service is being gradually closed down for other housing priority areas and loss of funding.

2. Staffing

CANCAS Broxtowe currently employs 29 paid staff in Broxtowe (across the whole Central Nottinghamshire area its 57). In the first half of this year CANCAS Broxtowe recruited 10 new volunteers to its establishment and is currently grateful to the support of 56 volunteers including eight Trustees.

3. Volunteers

The volunteers give their time freely and all work from offices in Eastwood and Beeston carrying out a mixture of face to face, telephone and email enquiries. In addition, around 60% of volunteers move onto paid work, partly as a result of the skills and confidence gained as a volunteer. Many volunteers take up paid roles within the organisation where appropriate as it is difficult to recruit staff already trained in the advice field.

Schedule A – Output Measures 2025/2026

	Outcome Measure	Total
6.1	Number of new issues (problems) dealt with	19,056
6.2	Number of clients receiving support	7,509
6.3	Average amount of debt handled per client seeking debt advice	£13,317
6.4	Estimated amount of benefits gained for clients seeking advice	£4,991,928
6.5	Please list the top five advice needs and the number of new social policy issues recorded for each: ● Benefits ● Housing ● Debt ● Employment ● Utilities	9,262 3,301 1,545 696 691
6.6	Number of staff employed as at 31 March 2026	29
6.7	Number of volunteers available as at 31 March 2026	56
6.8	Number of new volunteers recruited in 2025/26 (12 months)	10
6.9	Number of volunteer hours worked in 2025/26 (12 months)	11,853
6.10	Value of volunteer hours given 2025/26 (12 months)	£441,992
6.11	Please provide a summary analysis to indicate the extent to which the services of CANCAS have benefited clients.	See below

4. Research and Campaigns

Research and campaigns is one of the twin aims of our service – to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives. This work is led by the experiences of our clients. We gather evidence through collecting and analysing client statistics and advice issue trends through our case recording system

(Casebook). We also use evidence of client's stories recorded by our advisers and caseworkers on evidence forms.

As a service, we have a huge amount of insight and data about the problems our clients and their wider communities face. Through research and campaigns, we use this insight to:

- help us research issues further
- campaign to get decision makers to change policies and practices
- influence decision makers to change policies and practices

We focussed on three campaigns in 2025/2026:

- Cost of Living Crisis: local focus to a national campaign, looking at deficit budgets in particular
- Private Rented Sector Housing issues
- Digital Exclusion: through our pressure and FOI requests Nottinghamshire County Council have re-introduced a telephone application form for Blue Badge applications for those struggling with using digital means. The topic of Digital Exclusion will continue to be a major focus this year. It affects clients in many areas as significant numbers of organisations are becoming more digital, including only offering their best deals online.

5. Case Studies (note that all names in the following case studies are fictitious)

Housing

Sarah came to the drop in at Eastwood as recommended by a friend. Sarah is a single woman, unemployed due to long-term illness and an assured tenant in a Housing Association property. Sarah is under-occupying by one bedroom and is threatened homeless due to rent arrears with court action commenced.

Our Housing Advisers funded by Broxtowe Borough Council assisted with completion of defence paperwork with a proposal of payment and an explanation of how the arrears accrued. We referred Sarah to Nottingham Law Centre for representation and assisted in claiming additional benefits due to Sarah's ill health.

A discretionary Housing payment was awarded and backdated under exceptional circumstances clearing the arrears in full as requested. Update sent to Nottingham Law Centre for the next hearing.

In total we were able to claim additional household income for Sarah of £18,499. No outstanding debt and the threat of homelessness is alleviated. Sarah was relieved that she isn't going to lose her home.

She told the adviser ' you are an angel and I can't thank you enough'.

Financial Resilience

Jodie initially attended for support regarding a benefits appeal, but has also agreed for us to run through a benefit check. This identified several benefit entitlements she has not been claiming. She has recently separated from her partner, but remains in the marital home with her two children.

Jodie is named not on the mortgage and has not contributed financially to the home. She has long term health conditions; we discussed Personal Independent Payments with her, as she has never made a claim. We also identified Disability Living Allowance for her youngest, who has had physical health conditions since birth.

Our benefit check has also identified a partial Council Tax Reduction for her portion of the bill. We discussed Child Benefit as Jodie never received this due to her partners income being too high. Now they are separated we discussed making this application now.

She also queried whether there was any support with moving, as she is now wanting to leave the property. Discussed Homechoice and she was willing to make this application.

Over £15,000 estimated annual additional income for a mum and her children as they go through a time of transition into a single parent household.

Mediation

The following case study illustrates how mediation can help residents address neighbour disputes constructively and reach practical agreements that work for both parties.

The case involved a dispute between neighbouring households relating to the use of a shared driveway and concerns about trees affecting light to a property. One neighbour wished to use part of the shared driveway area as a turning space for their vehicle, while the neighbouring household had concerns about trees on the property boundary which they felt were blocking light from entering their home.

Due to personal circumstances, one of the parties was unable to travel to attend an in-person mediation session. In response to this, the mediation was conducted via telephone, allowing both parties to participate in a way that was accessible and comfortable for them.

Through the support of a trained volunteer mediator, both parties were able to discuss their concerns and explore possible solutions. During the mediation, an agreement was reached allowing part of the shared driveway to be used as a turning circle. At the same time, both parties agreed that the trees would not be removed entirely but would instead be reduced to a manageable height by a qualified tree surgeon.

To prevent future concerns, the parties also agreed that the trees would be maintained regularly to ensure that light into the neighbouring property would not be affected. Both residents expressed satisfaction with the outcome and appreciation for the mediator's support.

Impact: This case demonstrates how mediation can support neighbours to find practical and mutually beneficial solutions, helping to prevent disputes from escalating further while maintaining positive neighbour relationships.

6. Financial Monitoring Information

In accordance with the Service Level Agreement, CANCAS Broxtowe accounts ringfence their core funding to ensure it is used for the benefit of Broxtowe residents. CANCAS Broxtowe has provided the Council with financial monitoring information. The outturn for the year ended 31 March 2026 is as follows:

	Actual £	Budget £	Variance £
Income			
Benefit in Kind	10,000	10,000	-
Grant (Broxtowe BC)	63,750	63,750	-
Other Income and Donations	21,519	18,000	3,519
Total Income	95,269	91,750	3,519
Expenditure			
Salaries etc.	102,496	105,194	(2,698)
Staff and Volunteer Costs	3,999	4,820	(821)
Office Costs	3,577	-	3,577
Premises	365	-	365
Other Overheads (inc. cross charges)	38,935	54,710	(15,775)
Total Expenditure	149,372	164,724	(15,352)

Note: Figures above are from our Management Accounts. Full audited accounts for 2025/26 are still to be completed. Our audit with the accountants commences in August 2026.