

Prudhoe Town Council Update

Quarter 2 July - September 2019

Snapshot

Key Statistics

01/07/2019 - 30/09/2019



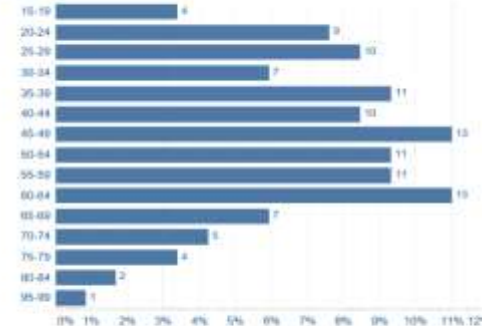
Summary

Clients	237
Quick client contacts	
Issues	549
Activities	499
Cases	121
Outcomes	
Income gain	£62,150
Repayments rescheduled	£475
Other	£405

Issues

Issue	Clients
Benefits & tax credits	51
Benefits Universal Credit	26
Consumer goods & services	6
Debt	22
Employment	4
Financial services & capability	9
Health & community care	2
Housing	11
Immigration & asylum	1
Legal	6
Other	7
Relationships & family	12
Tax	3
Travel & transport	7
Utilities & communications	7
Grand Total	549

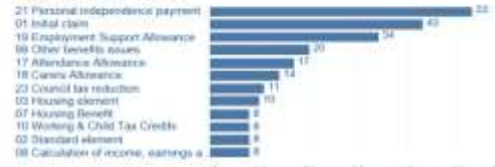
Age



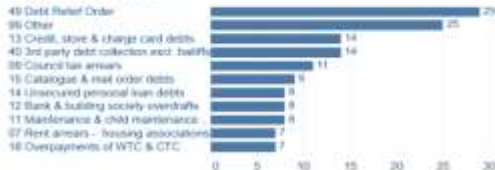
Channel



Top benefit issues



Top debt issues



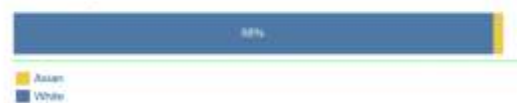
Gender



Disability / Long-term health



Ethnicity



Disability (known values only)

Disability	Clients	%
Disabled	12	11%
Long-Term Health Condition	38	35%
Not disabled/no health problems	56	51%
Prefer Not To Say	3	3%
Grand Total	109	100%

Type of disability (known values only)

Type Of Disability	Clients	%
Multiple Impairments	15	35%
Physical Impairment (non-sensory)	12	28%
Mental Health	9	21%
Other Disability or Type Not Given	5	12%
Learning Difficulty	2	5%
Grand Total	43	100%

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Issues (NB last years' figures in brackets)

In the last quarter across all the Prudhoe wards we dealt with a total of:

- 53 unique clients with 183 issues relating to Welfare Benefits
- 26 unique clients with 83 issues relating to Universal Credit.
- 22 Unique clients with 160 issues relating to Debt, which is a similar number of clients to last year but an increase in issues of 10%
- 4 unique clients with 13 issues relating to Employment
- 9 Unique Clients with 19 issues relating to financial capability
- 11 Unique Clients with 15 issues relating to Housing and Homelessness
- 7 Unique Clients with 8 issues relating to legal proceedings and capacity proceedings
- 13 Unique Clients with 17 issues relating to relationships and family
- 7 Unique clients with 10 issues relating to travel and transport
- 7 Unique Clients with 18 issues relating to Utilities and Fuel poverty
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Outcomes

Income Gained: £43,150

Repayments rescheduled: £476

Other Benefits (financial): £405

Taken through switch/tariff change process	7	£405
Money saved through challenging incorrect bills	1	£20
Other (non-financial)		
Additional Evidence for completion of claims process	1	
Client familiarised with how UC works and what it means for them	20	
Court Proceedings avoided/suspended/prevented	1	
Enforcement Action avoided/suspended/prevented	1	
Energy Efficiency Survey completed and advice given	1	
Improved health / capacity to manage	2	
Non-financial admin issue resolved	1	
Provided with small energy efficiency measures	3	
Request to be added to Priority Services Reg / Special Ass Reg	1	
UC Verify process successfully completed	1	

Service Update

In this quarter we have consolidated the face to face delivery that we have been able to deliver thanks to the Town Council. We have seen steady demand on the service and significant outcomes we have managed to achieve for residents of Prudhoe Wards.

Thanks to the generosity of the Town Council we have supported 237 residents of Prudhoe this quarter with 549 issues, undertaking 499 activities on behalf of clients and continuing casework on 121 cases.

The primary issues we have seen this year (in order) are: Debt, Welfare Benefits, Universal Credit, Financial Capability, Utilities and Fuel poverty, Relationships and Family and Housing.

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Client Stories

Description of client and their situation

Mrs E is an Elderly client with hearing issues whose husband died just over 2 years ago. The husband had managed all the household finances and had switched to E.ON and had smart meters fitted. Mrs E has sensitive family issues which cause them a lot of added stress and tries to manage independently day to day. Mrs E had come into to Citizens Advice to look at help in switching tariff as E.ON had wanted to up the monthly direct debit by £24 per month.

Action taken by Citizens Advice

Discussed general property information and energy efficiency rating with client.

Mrs E brought all bills in to us, and it was immediately obvious that all the electric readings were estimated for the whole year. After making a call to E.ON they asked for the client to submit a meter read and to get information from the tag on the electric meter which is in the client's garage and is up too high for the client to see. Our Caseworker attended the clients home to check this information and submit it to E.ON. After lots of negotiation with E.ON they agreed to fit new smart meters and an appointment was made.

The E.on engineer didn't turn up for the appointment and when chased E.ON claimed that the client had turned the engineer away. We made a formal complaint to E.ON and asked for compensation for the missed appointment and stress caused, especially after E.ON confirmed that the electric meter had not been taking readings for 2 years.

We explained Switching options to Mrs E and looked at possible potential savings. We discussed the Energy Best Deal Booklet and explained how these could be used but suggested that the smart meter issue be resolved before switching. We also discussed Heat and Illness in the home and important temperatures for good health.

Outcome of that action

Direct Debit payments was reduced in accordance with the actual usage to £100 per month instead of £124 which was about to go up to £148. Mrs E was very relieved that the payments are more manageable as she had concerns about putting the heating on. Mrs E received £436.93 (including compensation of £65) back into their bank and told me it was "like winning the pools". Client very happy in the knowledge that Citizens Advice is there if they need further help and told Caseworker that this had a great impact positively on their health and Wellbeing.

Mrs E is now empowered and understands the switching process and the checklist to use and OFGEM accredited sites/telephone number they can use. She has a firm understanding of Warm Homes Discount and how to apply next winter.

The impact of our intervention (on the individual, their family and other relationships, and the wider social and environmental aspects)

General better understanding and empowerment to act. Client has less worry about the day to day usage of heating which allows them to deal with other family sensitives a lot easier.

Description of client and their situation

Mr B is a 17 year old, who is homeless. His mother attended Prudhoe office with him.

Although still in contact with his mum, Mr B cannot live at home. The reasons are:

1. Mr Bs dad is an addict, and is in and out of rehab. When he is at home, Mr B and his father get into violent fights - the police and social services have been involved
2. Mr B has two younger brothers, aged 9 and 4, both of whom are autistic. Because of this, sharing a bedroom either with each other, or with Mr B, does not work and there are only 3 bedrooms in the house.

Mr B has been sofa-surfing with mates since February and is therefore homeless.

The family have spoken to social services about the worsening situation between him and his father, over a year ago.

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However, because Mr B was then only just 16, social services said that he would be taken into care, which the family and Mr B did not want. However, as he is now over 17, they are hoping that he can now get help to live independently, as the situation is more urgent. His mother is also worried about his mental state, and his safety when he is sleeping all over the place.

Mr B is in full-time education (he finishes in May 2020), when he will have gained a level 3 Diploma in music. He is looking for part-time work around his college course, but is not free for full-time work.

Action taken by Citizens Advice

We provided Mr B and his mother with details of the Northumberland Council young person's accommodation team who offer a Service to young people aged between 16 and 24 years of age, who are at risk of or have previously been homeless and made a referral.

We explained in detail the criteria for accessing help as a homeless young person so that he could make a successful homeless application, as he is aged 17 and his welfare would be seriously prejudiced if the local authority did not provide accommodation.

We also provided advice and support for Mr B to make a claim for Universal credit as a young person estranged from family support who would suffer physical and mental harm if he lived at home to help him with his living costs and rent when he secures accommodation.

Outcome of that action

CI receiving help from Northumberland Young persons accommodation team to find somewhere to live and has received help from us to claim Universal credit to provide money for his living costs as he cannot live with his parents which is pending currently.

The impact of our intervention (on the individual, their family and other relationships, and the wider social and environmental aspects)

Mr B will be living in a safe environment and able to retain his relationship with his mother and be able to complete his studies.