

Reigate and Banstead District Citizens Advice Bureaux

Newsletter 2 – February 2010



Who can use the service?

Anyone! All advice is free and confidential - and the CAB is independent of local and national government.

What does the CAB do apart from give advice?

- Collect evidence and campaign for change via our **social policy** work.
- Run **outreach** services at HMP High Down Prison, Merstham Library, Redhill Law Courts, Preston, Tadworth and Woodhatch.

Please see our web site for full bureaux details.

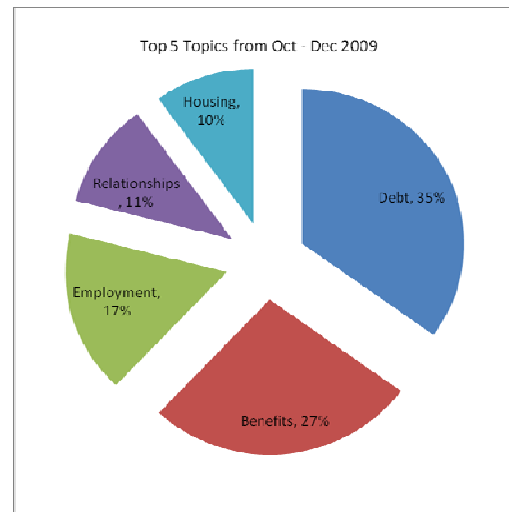
- Helps clients prepare for **court hearings** and **tribunals**

Where is my local Citizens Advice Bureau?

Redhill: 24 Cromwell Road 08444 779 394
Horley: The Help Shop 08444 779 394
Banstead: The Horseshoe 08444 775 982
Website: www.reigate-bansteadcabx.org.uk

DISTRICT UPDATES

The main topics of enquiry are shown to the right



Across the District Bureaux in Q1, Q2 and Q3 2009/10 our advisers have assisted 3014 new client contacts and 9121 repeat client contacts - a staggering **total of 12,135**



Reigate and Banstead Borough Council **Mayor Cllr Richard Mantle** and our Chairman **Peregrine Lavington** tucking into CAB birthday cake at the 70th Anniversary Celebrations in October 2009 which was combined with the District Training Day!

Recent Social Policy issues acted upon by the district bureaux include:

- Proposals to licence Debt Advice organisations due to **extortionate fees**
- Calls to ensure genuine **Disability Living Allowance** claims succeed
- Highlighting **illegal working practices** regarding carrying over annual leave

Well done to Banstead advisor **David Smith** – whose recent Social Policy evidence form was quoted in a submission to the **Department of Business, Innovation and**

Skills. The subject of David's evidence was a review of the regulation of credit and store cards, prompted by problems faced by one of our clients.

Crispin Blunt MP visited the Redhill Bureau on the 4 December 2009 to meet staff and volunteers and discuss Social Policy and other bureaux matters as our search for larger premises continues.

Some Success Stories from our files – A self employed builder who had to stop work due to severe osteoarthritis came into the Banstead Bureau for a benefits check. The adviser established that he should get **Earnings Support Allowance** and **Disability Living Allowance** and with the bureau's help he applied for and was awarded both. His DLA was awarded at the highest rate for both Care and Mobility equalling **£6,200** plus **£5,000** for ESA meaning a basic income of **£ 11,200** per year.

Another client had **£937** refunded from **Transport for London** after they had got his form muddled with another and gave the client incorrect information regarding his appeal.

In Redhill a retired teacher was assisted to reclaim over **£55,000** from a **personal pension** scheme that he was entitled to.

Our Immigration Adviser had two clients with exceptional circumstances who sought assistance with "outside immigration rules" applications. One was for **British Citizenship** and the other for **Further Leave to Remain**. Following extensive research, the bureau submitted applications which were subsequently granted by UKBA. The clients were delighted.

Fundraising – our small but dedicated fundraising team continue to raise money where they can with a very successful second Fish 'n Chip Supper and Quiz night last October which raised over **£1,500**. Next Quiz Night - Saturday 2nd October 2010. Our District Manager, Elaine Parr and Advice Services Manager, Chris Blockey raised over **£300** from a Karaoke Competition (which they "won") with First Credit and our grateful thanks to them for a great event. Waitrose have supported Banstead Bureau under their Community Scheme to the sum of **£214** and finally to Heather and Ian Baines for their car boot sales, book sales etc. which has so far raised in excess of **£400** this past year.

Our grateful thanks to all of them.

and finally special thanks

.. to the following volunteers who have left in the past 6 months: Hilary Day, Paul Questier, Debbie Northcott, Sheila James, Fiona Purcell and Roy Gordon.

We wish you the best of luck and farewell!

We are saddened to report the death of John Prevett on the 30th January 2010, who served on our Trustee Board for over 18 years and was a major supporter of all the volunteers and the work that the CAB undertook on behalf of the local community.