

Reigate and Banstead District Citizens Advice Bureaux Who are we and what do we do?

Who are we?

- We are a **registered Charity** – 1104970
- Our website is - www.reigate-bansteadcabx.org.uk.
- We give **free, confidential and impartial advice and information** to all members of our local communities.
- We are an **independent** organisation and not a government department.
- We are staffed by **92** highly trained and committed **volunteers** who are supervised by a small team of **12 dedicated part time staff** and we are governed by a **voluntary Trustee Board**. Our Chairman is Peregrine Lavington.
- We have had a presence in the **Borough since 1939** and celebrated our 70 years of service to the local community in October last year.
- We are a **District Bureaux** formed by the amalgamation of Redhill and Banstead CAB and Horley CAB in October 2004.
- We have bureaux in **Banstead, Horley and Redhill**.
- We have **outreach surgeries** in Merstham, Preston, Woodhatch, Redhill Law Courts and HMP High Down.
- We are the **busiest** bureau in East Surrey. Last year 2009/10 we saw **17,520 clients**. This is a 41% increase on the numbers for 2008/9.
- Our main enquiries are:-
 - Debt
 - Benefits
 - Housing
 - Employment
 - Relationship
 - Immigration
 - Legal
- We have the **second highest suicide** rate in the county and the **lowest infant birth¹** weight in Redhill.
- 61% of our clients who tell us they are suffering from **mental ill health** such as anxiety and depression
- We receive **core funding** from Reigate and Banstead District Council and additional funding from:-
 - D.B.I.S. and HM Treasury – Financial Inclusion Fund
 - D.B.I.S. – Additional Hours of Advice Project
 - Lloyds Foundation Trust – First Steps Project for clients with mental ill health
 - HMP High Down – Prison advice service
 - Raven Housing Trust

¹ Surrey Suicide Prevention Forum 2009

What do we do?

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) service works to fulfil two aims:

- to ensure that individuals do not suffer through lack of knowledge of their rights and responsibilities or of the services available to them, or through an inability to express their needs effectively

and equally

- to exercise a responsible influence on the development of social policies and services, both locally and nationally.

The advice given by bureaux is free, independent, impartial and confidential. The service is non-judgmental, offering assistance as appropriate to all clients. It aims to be equally accessible to everyone who seeks or needs its help, regardless of age, class, race, religion, gender, disability or sexuality. All advice workers, whether paid or volunteer, are professionally trained to provide an accurate, quality service and to be supportive to clients.

The CAB service works to:

inform people about the law and how it affects them; about their rights and responsibilities; and about how they may be able to satisfy their needs

advise people on the options available to them and on the potential consequences of different courses of action

support people as they consider and decide what to do, listening to their concerns and helping them move forward

assist people in pursuing their chosen course of action by negotiation, representation and referral to other sources of help needed

influence those responsible for policies and services by bringing to their notice the problems people experience and recommending changes

Citizens Advice Bureaux nationally deals with around 5.5 million new problems a year, giving detailed information, advice and support to people on every subject imaginable. The majority of problems concern benefits, debt and other consumer issues, employment, housing and the law.