

Research & Campaigns Bulletin

December 2024

citizens
advice

Bournemouth
Christchurch
& Poole

2024: Making a Difference

In our last bulletin of 2024, we look at the work we've undertaken this year to improve lives of local residents. We share thoughts about our focus areas for 2025.



WELFARE &
BENEFITS

In 2024, we helped 4,873 people with benefits problems.* The rising cost of living means that access to a fair and just welfare system has never been more important for our clients.

This year, we have undertaken vital campaign work around benefits like Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance. We have also been gathering information to enable a deeper understanding about what vulnerabilities can lead to benefit sanctions and deductions, with more work planned on this in 2025.



HOUSING

In 2024, we helped with over 3,200 housing issues.* Rising rent costs and a lack of alternative housing options mean that vulnerable people are struggling with housing security.

Our housing campaign group have worked across BCP this year to better understand the specific issues which are causing such immense housing pressures for people. We have been working on housing affordability, eviction issues, and temporary housing problems.



DIGITAL
EXCLUSION

This year, we began closely monitoring instances of Digital Exclusion experienced by our clients in BCP.

Digitisation of services has accelerated since Covid, and many more of our clients are being detrimentally affected by digital processes. This issue goes across many of our advice areas. We strongly believe that everyone should have fair and equitable access to services, and so will be launching some targeted campaigning work within this area in 2025.

Research & Campaigns Bulletin

December 2024

citizens
advice

Bournemouth
Christchurch
& Poole

2025: What's next?

What we will be doing to improve things for people across Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole next year

This year we celebrated **85 years of Citizens Advice**. One of our main aims as a service is to **improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives**. As such, campaigning is at the forefront of everything we do so that we can help solve problems at source.

Finances are tight for all of our clients. For the most vulnerable in our society, the **combined affects of cost of living increases and wider issues**, such as age, disability etc, can lead to an inability to manage finances. Sometimes, people **disengage** from the welfare state, which can lead to **sanctions** - which in turn **negatively impact income**. Next year, we want to **work collaboratively with partners to help more clients avoid this where possible**.

We have seen a **continued upward trend in issues related to Domestic Abuse** this year. Gender Violence can lead to many wider social and economic problems for those affected, and we have a specialist adviser helping these clients. **Next year, we plan to strengthen our support offer for these clients**.

In 2025, we will be working with Citizens Advice National Policy Team on research around **health inequalities**, funded by the Health Foundation. This research will aim to understand **how social, economic, and environmental factors** - such as employment, housing, benefits, cost-of-living, and debt - impact clients' health outcomes.

Citizens Advice BCP's information and advice is available to everyone - whoever they are, whatever their problem. We can be contacted via **advice line** on 0808 2787 939, or via the 'Get Advice' page on our website, www.citizensadvicebcp.org.uk