



**Torrige, North
Mid and West
Devon**

PO Box 113
The Ockment Centre
Okehampton
EX20 1AR

Adviceline: 0808 2787 999

c/o Clerk to the Parish of Willand

25 September 2023

Dear Councillors,

Ref: Parish Council Donation to Citizens Advice

I am writing on behalf of Citizens Advice Torrige, North, Mid & West Devon to appeal for your support towards the running of our vital community services.

In 2022-23 we worked with 142 residents of Willand Parish, with 315 issues and generated £74,584 income gain for local households.

We are a local independent charity staffed predominantly by volunteers. Our ambition at Citizens Advice is to give people the knowledge and the confidence they need to find their way forward – whoever they are and whatever their problem. We also aim to advocate on behalf of our clients through our Research and Campaigns work to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives. Enabling us to help more people and prevent future problems.

We achieve all this by providing free, confidential, independent and impartial advice.

We cover half of Devon serving a population of over 300,000 people with a workforce of around 35 paid staff and over 80 volunteers.

Our specialist training and advice giving, is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Advice Quality Standard (AQS). We are also cybersecurity certified.

We are a trusted organisation and are regularly audited to demonstrate that our advice is accessible, effectively managed, and our advisors have the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of our clients.

The amount of funding we receive from Mid Devon District Council has been frozen for many years and does not cover our basic operating costs. Therefore, we are looking for wider support to ensure our advice services are always available to local people at any point in their lives that they may need it.

During the financial year 2022/23 we have received unprecedented levels of demand for our services as a result of the cost-of-living crisis. Across our whole region we supported

15,088 people through phone calls, webchat, letters and emails and face to face appointments particularly for our most vulnerable clients. We dealt with 34,053 new problems and generated £9,605,780 income gain for local households. This is a 13% increase in client numbers and 5.5% increase in number of problems as well as a higher degree of complexity, and 18% increase in household income generated which is then fed back into the local economy.

In 2022-2023 we worked with 3,642 Mid Devon Clients through online appointments, phone calls, webchat, letters and emails as well as face-to-face appointments particularly for our most vulnerable clients. We dealt with 8,647 new issues and generated an incredible £2,241,330 income gain for households in Mid Devon.

Your funding will directly contribute towards the local service as follows

- Providing a face-to-face service for the most vulnerable residents in your area
- Assist with volunteer recruitment, training and expenses. It costs around £1,500 to recruit and train each new volunteer and this high-quality training needs to be continually updated.
- Supervision of advice provided by a qualified, paid Team Leader.
- Telephone (AdviceLine), Webchat and email services that all local people can benefit from. This digital service is a vital part of our overall delivery of advice locally and the preferred contact method for many of the people we help and allows the charity to provide face to face appointments for the most vulnerable.
- Residents additionally benefit by being referred onto our specialist services as required. These are grant funded by partners such as Macmillan cancer care to support specific advice needs such as welfare benefits, energy, debt and money management, cancer and life limiting illness and families with disabled children.

If you can continue to support us, to save our admin costs,

Preferably donations can be paid by BACS directly to:

Account Name: Torridge, North, Mid and West Devon Citizens Advice
Sort Code: 30-90-78
Account Number: 22917160

Or by cheque to the address above (which may have changed since you last sent a cheque to us).

We would also welcome your support in our appeal for new volunteers to help with the increased demand for our services amid the deepening cost of living crisis.

Based on our 2023-4 volunteer survey, 100% of our Volunteers who completed the survey, said they would recommend us to their friends or family as a place to work or volunteer. 93% of the volunteers who completed the survey said they felt Citizens Advice cared about their mental health. As a volunteer at Citizens Advice, you don't need qualifications or experience, just good basic IT skills, to be willing to learn, and be

part of our friendly team. Information can be found on our recruitment website:
<https://ruraldevoncab.livevacancies.co.uk/>

If you are not already in receipt of our regular monthly advice columns for your parish or village magazines and would like to receive these please contact
admin@ruraldevoncab.org.uk.

If you would like any further information, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emma Morrison', written in a cursive style.

Emma Morrison
Funding Officer Citizens Advice TNMWD
emma.morrison@ruraldevoncab.org.uk