

WOKINGHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU
TOWN HALL
MARKET PLACE
WOKINGHAM RG11 1AS

TEL: 781883

OPENING HOURS: MONDAY TO FRIDAY 10.0 am to 2.0 pm

LEGAL ROTA: Tuesdays from 2.30 pm

FINANCIAL ADVICE: Fridays 10.30 am to 1.30 pm

The aims of the Citizens Advice Bureau Service are:

- to ensure that individuals do not suffer through ignorance of their rights and responsibilities or of the services available; or through an inability to express their needs effectively.

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

The Service therefore provides free to all individuals an impartial service of information, guidance and support, and makes responsible use of the experience gained.

THE STAFF

Mrs B Alder (Organiser)

Mrs C Pointer (Deputy)

Voluntary Workers

Mr R Boyd

Mrs M Chatting

Mrs G Davidson

Mrs M Dodd

Mrs J Franklin

Mrs B Gifford

Mrs E Harvey

Mrs H Lee

Mrs S Macklin

Mrs C Odds

Mrs S Rabbett

Mrs J Rhodes

Mrs J Thompson

In Training

Mrs S Colwill

Mrs S Hunt

Mrs P Seeley

Mr H Smith

THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Mr J Watson	Chairman
Mrs P Robins	Secretary
Mr A S Harvey	Treasurer
Mr D Eyeiey	Legal Representative
Mrs B Alder	Organiser
Mrs C Pointer)
Mrs S Rabbett) Volunteer Representatives
Dr H Parris)
Mrs M Mayne) First Members
Mr E West)
Mrs L Cattran	Town Council
Mrs J Mayers	District Council
Mrs C Jewell	Woodley Town Council
Mrs A Potts	Trustee
Mrs G Flanagan	Social Services
Mrs Boyle	Ladies Circle
Mr R Wells	Royal British Legion
Mr J Davidson	Rotary
Mr M Hunter	Lions
Mr M Jameson	Cliffords Dairies
Mrs Shaw	Job Centre
Mrs M Tattersall	
Mr M A Taylor	Town Clerk
Parish Clerks:	
Mrs R Thornhill	Arborfield
Mr R Jarvis	Barkham
Mrs M Harle	Finchampstead
Mrs Walker	Winnersh
Mrs N Randall	Wokingham Without

ORGANISER'S REPORT - 1st April 1984 to 31st March 1985

All through this year we have been planning for the Bureau to extend its services into Woodley. A number of people have wondered why we are doing this when we have had comparatively few known enquiries from that area - 110 last year and 163 this year. That, paradoxically, is the reason; Woodley is part of Wokingham District, and yet when the residents want to consult a CAB, they go to Reading. This is not as it should be, Wokingham should serve its own people. It is interesting to note that in the first six months of this year we had 52 enquiries from Woodley; then there was an article in the Woodley Chronicle about our scheme, followed by an item in the Town Council newsletter, and during the last part of the year we had more than twice as many enquiries as in the first half. Perhaps Woodley people are beginning to realise that our services are for them as well.

The Bureau is now operating to capacity at times in its Town Hall office, and I think we shall soon reach the limit of the number of people we can properly assist in one session. As usual the largest number of enquiries in one category was in Consumer, Trade and Business (1201), followed by Family and Personal (914), but the biggest increase was in Employment problems, which went up by 221 queries to a total of 821.

TALKS

I have given talks to Pinewood Circle, the Earley Active Retired Group, the Over-60's Clinics at Finchampstead, the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship, the Wooshill Ladies Club, and the West Forest T G Activity Group.

TREASURER'S REPORT

This year has seen expenditure exceeding income once more though with generally rising prices, and income only £190 more than in the previous year, this was not unexpected. At the same time there has been another sharp increase in the number of enquiries, with the result that the cost per enquiry has actually reduced to less than 62p.

We are most grateful to all those who have supported us with financial help during the year, particularly to the Town Council for giving us the use of the Bureau rooms at a peppercorn rent, to the District Council for allowing us 100% rate relief, and to both for their generous grants.

Details of grants and donations received are given on the following page.

During the year it was agreed by the Management Committee that honoraria paid to the Organiser and to her Deputy should be increased in recognition of the efforts and many hours given by both to the work of the Bureau. This accounts for most of the increase of bureau expenditure and my thanks are due to all the bureau staff for containing other costs so well in spite of the constantly increasing pressure upon them.

A S Harvey

Hon. Treasurer

INCOME

GRANTS

	£	
Wokingham Town Council	1500	
Wokingham District Council	1000	
Berkshire County Council	<u>260.25</u>	2760.25

DONATIONS

Arborfield/Newland PC	20	
Barkham PC	25	
British Legion	10	
Buckland & Co	5	
Haye & Reid	10	
Hewlett Packard	50	
High & Mighty	10	
Intercare	15	
Intereurope	15	
National Council of Women	20	
Plint & Partners	20	
REME Garrison	50	
Shinfield PC	20	
Strange & Son	5	
Stroud & Leuty	10	
Winnersh PC	20	
Wokingham Ladies' Circle	50	
Wokingham Without PC	35	
Anonymous	10	
CAB Collection Box	<u>207.76</u>	<u>607.76</u>

3368.01

STAFF AND TRAINING

I would like to remind all who read this that all the workers, apart from myself and my deputy, are entirely voluntary, and receive no remuneration for the many hours of hard work that they give to the bureau and the community. They receive a small travel allowance if they use their cars or public transport for bureau duties or to go on training. All volunteers work for a minimum of one session of 4 hours per week while we are open to the public, and then have to complete their paper-work before they go home. They attend one staff meeting per month, and various training sessions. Visits are made to the homes of those too elderly or infirm to come to the office. Without these trained, dedicated voluntary workers the bureau would cease to exist, and I am both proud of and grateful to them.

The deputy Organiser, who receives £850 per year, does at least 10 hours duty each week, and some of the administration and in-bureau training, as well as the normal attendance at meetings and training for all workers. I receive £1500 per year, and spend an average of 15 hours per week on bureau work, which includes interviewing, administration, training, attendance at local and area meetings, giving talks, and making outside visits. I mention this simply in order to show what a cost-effective service is given in Wokingham.

We were all shocked and saddened by the loss of Mr Gordon Robins last September. He was a valued member of staff and is much missed.

Mrs Clare Odds has been appointed Organiser of Yateley CAB. She will be sorely missed, but we wish her well in her new duties. We now number two Organisers and a Deputy among our ex-workers!

Training has been given on Debt, Consumer Problems, Marital Breakdown, and Multiple problems. Five workers have attended the Basic Training Part II, and the Deputy went to the residential course on In-Bureau Training. Four trainees have completed three months training in the Bureau and the 9-week Basic Training Part I.

All workers have attended the required minimum of six staff meetings, and most have been to far more. Two members of the Management went on the Course "The Management Committee as Employers".

SPECIALIST ADVICE

54 people were advised at the Solicitors' Rota sessions. We are again most grateful to the solicitors who give their time and advice free of charge. Mr Boyd has given financial advice to 91 clients by appointment, and to many others who came in without prior notice. This is also an entirely voluntary service.

THANKS

Our most grateful thanks are due to all who have helped us, in cash or in kind.

I would also like to thank the Management Committee, and especially the officers, for their help and support during the year.

CAR PARKING

We are most grateful to Mr H R Wells for the use of his drive for parking, but it is by no means the ideal answer to the problem which must still be considered open.

ENQUIRIES

	1984/85	1983/84	Change
Consumer, Trade & Business	1201	1041	+160
Family & Personal	914	790	+124
Employment	821	600	+221
Housing	768	700	+ 68
Social Security	705	520	+185
Administration of Justice	478	457	+ 21
National and International	254	241	+ 13
Health	246	238	+ 8
Taxes & Duties	223	248	- 25
Travel, Transport & Holidays	208	201	+ 7
Leisure Activities	195	181	+ 14
Education	131	108	+ 23
Enquiries about CAB	123	134	- 11
Communications	37	34	+ 3
Immigration and Nationality	36	36	0
Total	6340	5529	+811

HOME OF ENQUIRER

1984/85 1983/84

Wokingham	3956	3479
Wokingham Without	201	188
Woodley	163	110
Winnersh	154	170
Crowthorne	152	135
Finchampstead	145	96
Arborfield	98	78
Other or Unknown	1446	1289

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held on
Wednesday June 27th 1984.

PRESENT: Mr J Watson (Chair)
The Town Mayor (Mrs A Davies)
Coun. Southgate (for Coun. Cole)
Coun. Jewell (Woodley)
Members of the Management Committee
Members of Bureau Staff
and many others.

APOLOGIES: The Secretary has a list on file.

MINUTES of the last AGM were accepted as a correct
record.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: In presenting his report, the Chairman pointed out that enquiries dealt with were increasing in complexity as well as in number. The prospects of opening an extension in Woodley were good, and it should relieve pressure on the Reading bureau. Woodley Town Council had promised financial support. Turning to the financial position generally, it had to be kept in mind that NACAB policy was to pay Organisers and Deputies on local government scales. Resources were by no means adequate to reach that level, so there was no room for complacency. He expressed his gratitude to the retiring Secretary, and to the Treasurer, who announced his intention of resigning as soon as a replacement could be found.

In reply to a questioner from the floor, who doubted the wisdom of NACAB'S salary policy, the Chairman stated that the cost of implementing it would be approximately £6,900 p.a. plus National Insurance.

TREASURER'S REPORT: In presenting his report, the Treasurer drew attention to the very welcome increase in the volume of donations. Our gratitude was especially due to the local authorities which gave their financial support. Although the balance was slightly down on last year, he thought that the accounts showed that the bureau provided excellent value for money.

Mr H R Wells offered parking for the cars of two volunteers in his drive, which was located conveniently close to the bureau, as a means of keeping down one item of costs.

ORGANISER'S REPORT: In presenting her report, the Organiser referred to the Lovelock report which had appeared during the course of the year and which had vindicated the work of the bureau nationally in a resounding way.

Volunteers were being taken on to train for the Woodley branch, which would open one day a week to begin with.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE:

Chairman: Mr J Watson, nom Mrs Alder
sec Mr Davidson, and carried.

Secretary: Mrs P Robins, nom Dr J Alder
sec Mrs M Mayne, and carried.

Treasurer: Mr J Davidson, nom Mr J Watson
sec Mrs J Mayers, and carried.

Auditors: Messrs Owen, West & McGregor,
nom Mr J Davidson
sec Mr R F Board-Jones,
and carried.

Committee: re-elected en bloc, with the addition of
Counc Mrs C Jewell, Chairman of Woodley
Town Council.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at
1.50 pm.