

The aims of the Citizens' Advice Bureau 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 locally and nationally.

The Citizens' Advice Bureau therefore provides to all citizens an impartial and confidential service of information guidance and support, which is completely independent and makes responsible use of the experience so gained.

Office details:

Wokingham Town Hall
Market Place
Wokingham
Berks.
RG11 1AS
Tel: 781883

Hours: Monday 9.30 - 3.00
Tuesday 10.00 - 2.00
Wednesday 10.00 - 2.00
Thursday 10.00 - 2.00
Friday 9.30 - 3.00
Sat + Sun Saturday 10.00 - 12.00.

Legal Advice Sessions:
~~Alternate~~ Tuesday afternoons
(by appointment only)

Financial Advice Sessions:
~~Alternate Tuesday afternoons~~
(by appointment only)

Woodley Coronation Hall (rear)
Headley Road
Woodley
Reading
Berks.
Tel: 699006

Hours: Monday 10.00 - 2.00
Wednesday 10.00 - 2.00
Friday 9.30 - 1.30

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

Once again this has been a year of considerable growth and change for our Bureau. I reported at the last A.G.M. that Wendy Hughes was leaving the district and had reluctantly tendered her resignation. During her time as "part-time" manager, Wendy worked extremely hard for the Bureau, particularly in areas of publicity and public relations, resulting in realistic financial support for the Bureau from the District Council. This support has meant that, with Wendy's departure, we were able to appoint a full-time Bureau Manager and two part-time Deputies in order to cope with the expansion and improvement of the service, both in our present Bureaux at Wokingham and Woodley and throughout the District.

To achieve the standard of service required by our National Association and the general public, we are still desperately in need of financial support. Accommodation is expensive and we are very grateful to both Wokingham and Woodley Town Councils for providing our present premises, but they must continue to support us generously if an effective Bureau is to run in their particular town. I invite any Councillor to go into the Bureau during it's opening hours and see the overcrowded and difficult working conditions. Please consider our needs carefully because with so many Government agencies and publications urging the public to seek the advice of the Service, it is vital that our facilities reflect our importance to the community. Please, Town Councillors, do not adopt the attitude that, because District Council have improved their financial support you can reduce yours. If you want an adequate service in your town we must have your full support.

We appointed our first full-time manager on the 1st February and I welcome Sue Jackson to this unenviable position. Before her appointment Sue gained valuable experience as Deputy Manager at Bracknell C.A.B. and I

am extremely grateful to Sylvia Kearton (Bracknell's C.A.B. Manager) for her support and co-operation at the time of Sue's appointment. Sue has thrown herself into the job with a great deal of expertise, energy and enthusiasm, and I am confident that we will achieve our ambitious plans for a comprehensive C.A.B. service throughout the District, under her management.

We appointed Sue's two part-time Deputy Managers on the 1st April, Judy Tomlin and Gwen Dean, both previously having been the Deputy Managers under Wendy Hughes and both sharing the burden of the Manager's role between Wendy's departure and Sue's appointment, Judy running the Wokingham Bureau and Gwen the Woodley Bureau during that time. I and the other members of the Management Committee were very grateful to Judy and Gwen for carrying us through this difficult transition period, and we feel that we now have a very strong Bureau Management team.

Last but not least, I must mention our Bureau volunteers, without whom the Bureau would cease to function. Concern is often expressed that the Service is losing its volunteer origins; this is not the situation. By the nature of legislation etc. the advice given by C.A.B. must be professional in its content. To ensure adequate staffing, accommodation, working conditions, training and up-to-date information, a salaried management is essential, but volunteers still form the backbone of the Service. We are always short of volunteers and recruitment is one of the biggest headaches. Two of our longest serving volunteers have recently retired. Sheila Macklin has served untiringly for 11 years, but is now moving out of the area. We wish her all the best in her new home. Bob Boyd, who has been with us from the start and has served us exceptionally well, particularly with his weekly financial sessions, retired at the end of March. I am pleased to say that he is to continue co-ordinating our

desperate search for suitable accommodation on behalf of the Management Committee.

Finally I'd like to thank the Management Committee for their loyal support throughout the year and with a special mention to Jack Harvey, our Treasurer for the past 4 years, who is about to retire from this office. Without Jack's financial expertise we would certainly have gone under and from a personal point of view he has been a pleasure to work with and he will undoubtedly be missed (he has however offered to help in any way he can). Thanks Jack.

JOHN WATSON.



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MR. J. WATSON	-	CHAIRMAN
MR. D. LEWIS	-	VICE-CHAIRMAN
MR. C. KING	-	TREASURER
MR. A. A. HARVEY	-	SECRETARY
MRS. P. ROBINS	-	LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE
MR. D. BYRIEY	-	TRUSTEE
MRS. A. POTTS	-	
MRS. S. JACKSON	-	BUREAU MANAGER
MRS. J. TONLIN	-	DEPUTY MANAGER (WOKINGHAM)
MRS. G. DEAN	-	DEPUTY MANAGER (WOODLEY)
MR. A. CUNNINGHAM	-	BUREAU REPRESENTATIVE
MRS. S. RABBITT	-	PREMISES & JB. COMMITTEE
MR. B. BOYD	-	
MR. D. BYRIEY	-	
MR. P. HENGESEY	-	
MR. G. NEWMAN	-	
MR. J. WEST	-	FIRST MEMBER
MR. P. HENGESEY	-	WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL
MRS. J. MATERS	-	WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL
MR. J. V. PARKER	-	WOODLEY TOWN COUNCIL
MRS. V. WATERS	-	WOKINGHAM ROTARY
MR. J. DAVIDSON	-	WOKINGHAM INFER VHS
MRS. G. DAVIDSON	-	SOCIAL SERVICES
MRS. G. FLANAGAN	-	D.H.S.S.
MRS. M. CURTIS	-	COMMUNITY COUNCIL FOR BERKSHIRE
MRS. J. LE PATOUREL	-	
MR. R. CAMPBELL	-	ELECTED MEMBER
MRS. S. TONKINSON	-	ELECTED MEMBER
MR. M. KINLOCK	-	ELECTED MEMBER
MR. G. NEWMAN	-	ELECTED MEMBER

MANAGER'S REPORT

During the early part of last year Wendy Hughes (previous Bureau Manager) worked very hard to achieve funding from the District Council for a full-time Manager for the Bureau. She left the Bureau in August to move with her family to the South Coast. Judy Tomlin, Deputy Manager, was acting Manager until this position was filled in February. She was supported in this role by Gwen Dean and Judy Green. I started on February 1st as full-time Manager and am extremely grateful for all the support that I have received from both Judy, Gwen and also all the volunteer advisers working in the Bureau. The need for a full-time Manager is self-evident; there has been a 23% rise in enquiries over the past year in the Bureau. This is made up of a 17.6% rise in Wokingham and a 79% rise in Woodley. These rises are very significant and it is my opinion that Wokingham Bureau would have an even larger rise if it was not so limited by the premises.

There has been a very marked increase in the level of enquiries in the first quarter of this year from Jan-Mar (inclusive). This increase is not all to be found, as one might expect, in the Benefit enquiries. Family and Personal, Legal, Employment and Consumer have all increased. This could be attributed, not only to the fact that C.A.B. has received quite a lot of press nationally and locally, but also because most 'forms' now advise consulting the C.A.B. for help and advice.

This all proves the need for us to find new premises or increase the floor space, if possible, in our present area. With only two interview rooms and no waiting room we are severely limited by the number of people that we can see and how many others can wait to be seen. There is no doubt that there is a growing demand for the services of the Bureau, which could be better fulfilled if we had more space.

On May 1st we managed to increase our opening hours on Mondays and Fridays so that we now open from 9.30a.m. - 3.30p.m on those days. We hope that this will help to make us more available, and also believe that it is only the beginning of an improvement in our service to the community.

To achieve this increase in hours we have taken on nine new volunteers during the last year, and now have 19 advisers as well as a full-time Manager and two part-time Deputies. We have lost six members of staff during the last year. This includes Wendy Hughes, who was Manager from April 1986 to August 1987. Also, Bob Boyd, who was a founder member of the Bureau and who also provided financial advice for us, has retired at the grand age of 70 years. Happily, he is still a member of the Management Committee so he has not left the Bureau completely. We were also sorry to lose Sheila Macklin and Heather Lee, both of whom moved from the area, and Jean Rhodes and Mary Aitken. However, we do still have two original members of staff who are now in their eleventh year of service, Betty Gifford and Jo Thompson. Many thanks to them all for the time and support they have given to the Bureau.

The gap in our service left by Bob's retirement is being filled by a rota of Accountants who are willing to give free financial advice on alternate Tuesdays to the legal advice already provided by many of the Town's Solicitors. We are very grateful to them all for both these valuable services.

We have been very fortunate this year in being able to buy a word processor for the Bureau. This was purchased with a donation of £500 from the Wokingham Lions and has made a great difference to the administrative work in the Bureau. We also received a generous donation from the Easthampstead Rotary Club with which we were able to buy a new telephone answering machine and additional filing equipment. Harris 3M gave us a re-conditioned photocopier for Woodley Bureau and a chair for Wokingham;

I.C.I. bought us a paper guillotine; Eli Lilly Research Centre gave us two 4-drawer filing cabinets. In addition, we have received a large number of financial donations, all of which helped us to further equip the Bureau.

The recent changes in the Social Security Act have put a great deal of pressure on the staff. Four people from Wokingham and four from Woodley attended three training days in Reading provided by Area Office to "train the trainers". The training of the remaining Bureau Staff was then successfully undertaken in two sessions; one half day in the Bureau and a further full day, when All Saints Church generously gave us the use of the Annexe and its many facilities. We were asked by Wokingham Hospital to give two talks to the staff there on the new benefits system and the implications of it. Berkshire County Council asked us to provide a two-day course in the Social Security Act for twelve social workers from Wokingham Social Services. This was given by the in-Bureau tutor, Pat Seeley, and Shirley Colwill. In addition, we have undertaken a monitoring programme of the effects of the new Act for N.A.C.A.B. during the last month and I gave an interview to Radio 210 in April. We have given several talks about the C.A.B. to various groups in the area during the year.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Bureau staff both in Wokingham and Woodley, paid and voluntary, for all their hard work and dedication to the Bureau and their loyalty and support towards me, Judy and Gwen in this past year of development and growth.

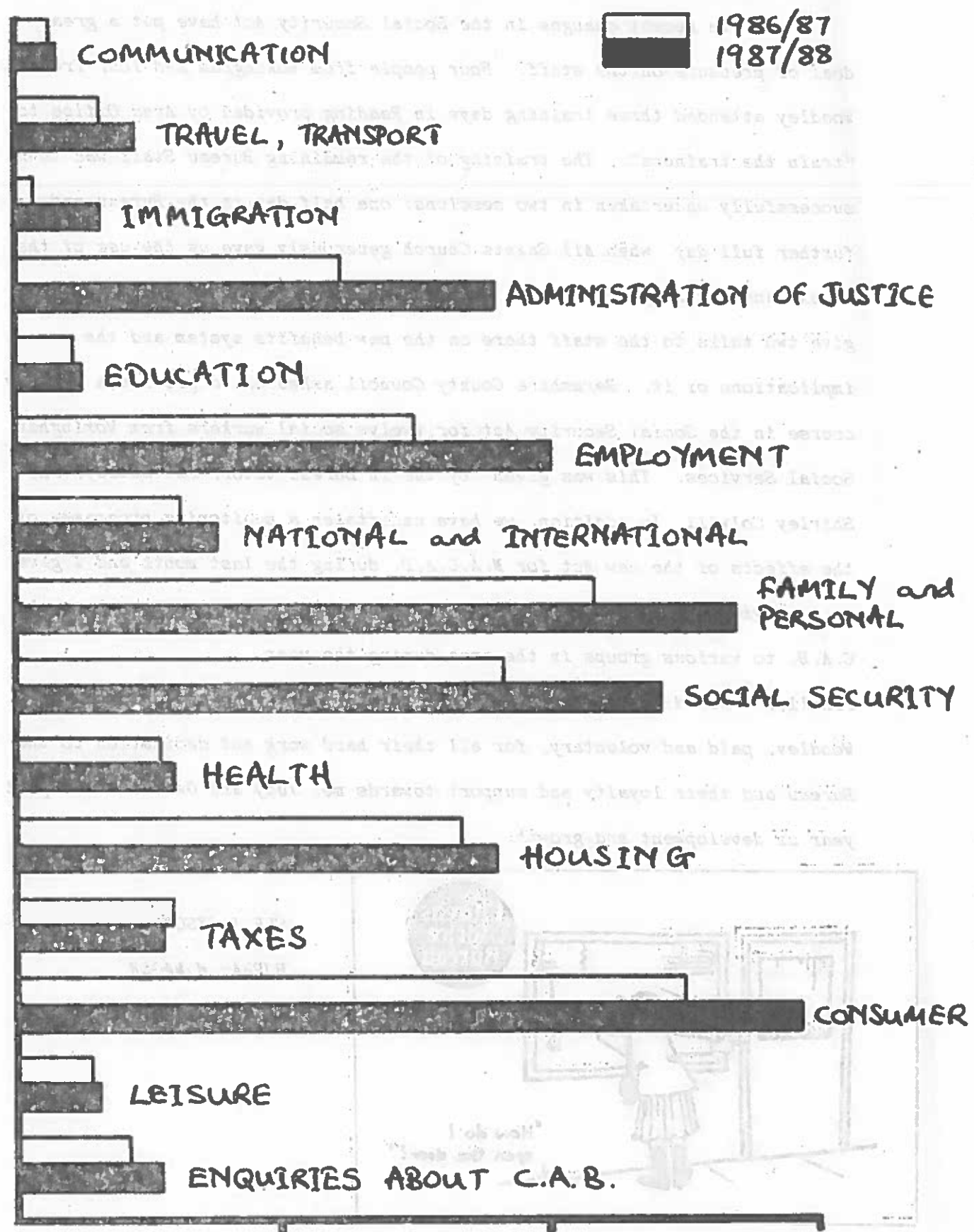


SUE JACKSON.

BUREAU MANAGER.

ENQUIRIES BY CATEGORY

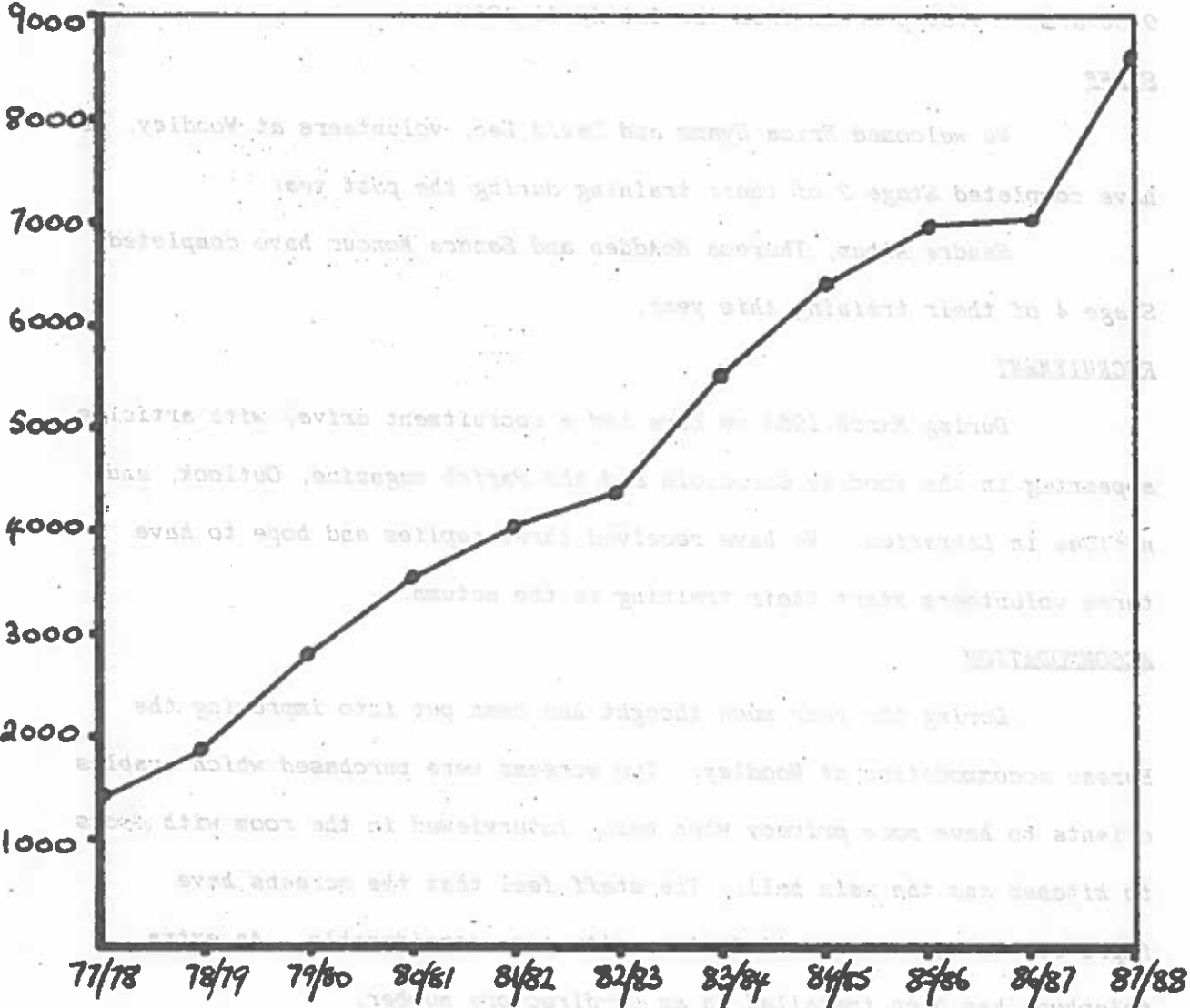
Showing a 23.2% increase over previous year.



WOKINGHAM AND DISTRICT

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS

1977/78 : 1423 enquiries . 1987/88 : 8661 enquiries .



WOODLEY BUREAU

The Woodley Bureau has been stretched to the limits many times in the past year because of working with a minimum of voluntary workers. This problem has become less because of an increase in volunteers.

During the year we have been recruiting with a view to opening on Friday mornings. By the end of March we were able to advertise opening times to be : Mondays and Wednesdays 10.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m. and Fridays 9.30 a.m. - 1.30 p.m. as from the 1st April 1988.

STAFF

We welcomed Erica Hyams and David Lee, volunteers at Woodley, who have completed Stage 2 of their training during the past year.

Sandra Album, Theresa McAdden and Sandra Moncur have completed Stage 4 of their training this year.

RECRUITMENT

During March 1988 we have had a recruitment drive, with articles appearing in the Woodley Chronicle and the Parish magazine, Outlook, and notices in Libraries. We have received three replies and hope to have three volunteers start their training in the autumn.

ACCOMMODATION

During the year much thought has been put into improving the Bureau accommodation at Woodley. Two screens were purchased which enables clients to have more privacy when being interviewed in the room with doors to kitchen and the main hall. The staff feel that the screens have improved what was an unsatisfactory situation considerably. An extra telephone has been installed on an ex-directory number.

We have received gifts of a metal cupboard which we use for stationery, leaflets, advertising material, etc., and a four drawer filing cabinet which we were in need of because of keeping case sheets in a secure place.

Reading C.A.B. kindly donated an unwanted electric typewriter which is greatly appreciated.

I attended a meeting called by the Youth and Community Neighbourhood Worker. He is hoping to find accommodation for a Community House in Woodley. Representatives from Social Services, Further Education, local Doctors' Surgery, Bob Prantice, the Youth and Community Worker, and myself attended the meeting. All representatives are interested in such accommodation. The old Woodley library and Nursery School have been put forward as accommodation which might be suitable for a community house. Bob Prantice and Social Services were to investigate further and will be reporting back to the attending representatives when something definite to report.

STATISTICS

You will see from the following statistics that there was an increase of 79.2% on last year's figures.

CATEGORIES

Communication

Travel, etc.

Immigration

Administration of Justice

Education

Employment

National and International

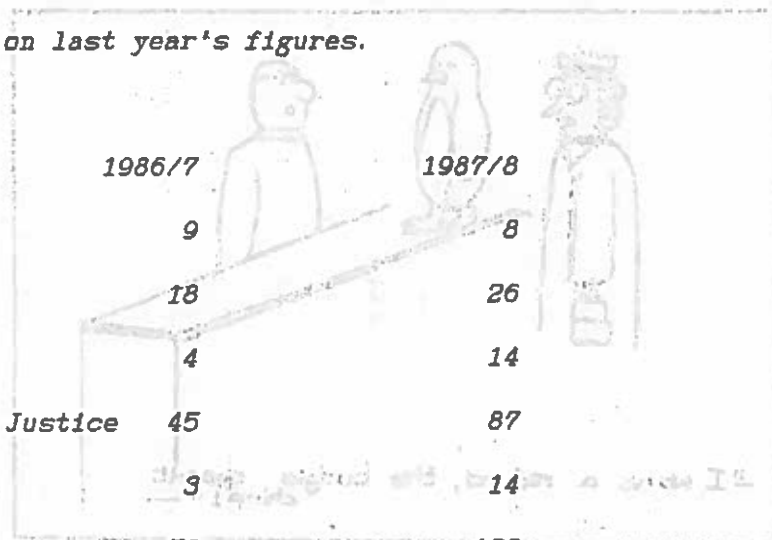
Local Information

Family and Personal

Social Security

Health

Housing

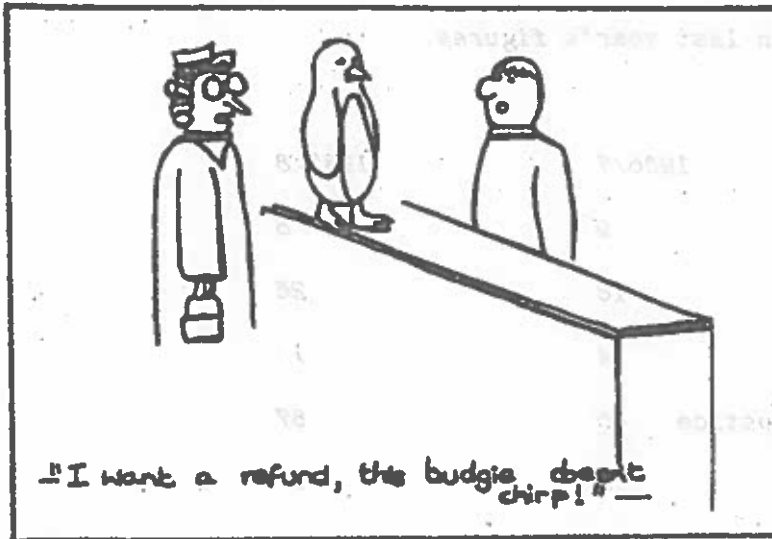


Tax	20	20
Consumer	105	212
Leisure	6	7
C.A.B. Enquiries	11	37
TOTAL	635	1138

GWEN DEAN

DEPUTY MANAGER

WOODLEY



TREASURER'S REPORT

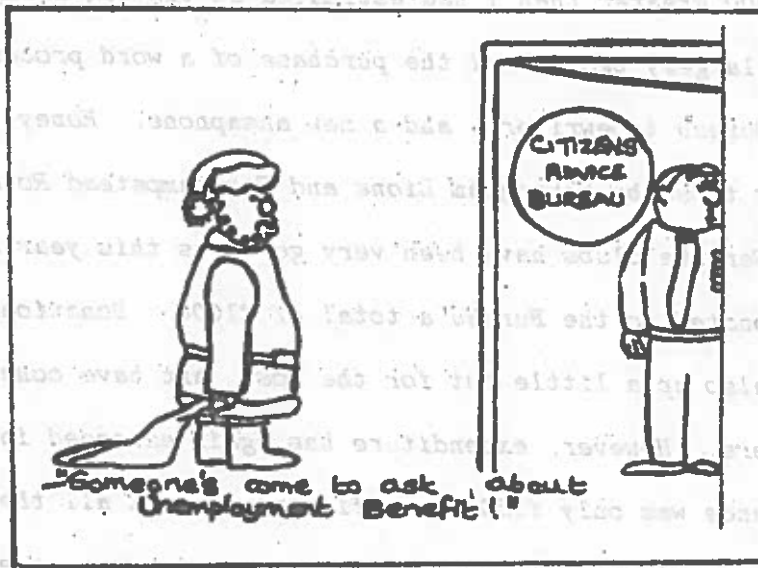
As the Chairman has reported, Mrs. Hughes resigned as Manager in September on moving from the area. The National Association was convinced that the Bureau needed not only a full time Manager to replace her, but also two salaried part time deputies. This was beyond Bureau resources but again the District Council came to the rescue and after accepting the Association's case entered into a new partnership agreement. Under this the cost of these salaries will be shared for 3 years by N.A.C.A.B. and the District Council on a 24% : 76% basis and after the 3 years will be borne entirely by the District Council. The Bureau is indeed grateful.

After allowing the additional cost from 1 February 1988 (when Mrs. Jackson was appointed) of a full time manager, expenditure for the year was some £900 greater than I had estimated at the beginning of the year. This was largely because of the purchase of a word processor - which doubles as the Bureau typewriter - and a new ansaphone. Money was donated specifically for these by Wokingham Lions and Easthampstead Rotary Club respectively. Service clubs have been very generous this year and have, between them, donated to the Bureau a total of £1000. Donations from local businesses are also up a little but for the most part have come from our regular supporters. However, expenditure has again exceeded income and the end of year balance was only £150, insufficient to meet all the bills that would fall for payment in April and before any grants were received.

I am most grateful to all those who have given the Bureau such generous support during the year - Wokingham District Council, Wokingham and Woodley Town Councils who have provided grants and accommodation, and all the firms and organisations listed (opposite) for their very much appreciated help.

Finally, after my 4 years as Treasurer, I must mention my admiration of the Bureau Staff. As a frequent caller I could not fail to notice the increasing pressures, particularly over the latter part of the year, under which they have worked and which they have cheerfully taken in stride.

JACK HARVEY
TREASURER



DONATIONS

	£. p
Donkey Derby	14.00
R. F. M. E.	150.00
Barkham P. C.	50.00
Intercare	15.00
Intereurope	25.00
Lewis Moss, Esq.	25.00
Winnersb P. C.	50.00
BEC Personnel	10.00
Central Employment Agency	10.00
R. J. Chan, Esq.	25.00
Mrs. A. Davis	5.00
Wokingham Inner Wheel	50.00
Maxwells (Woodley)	80.00
Hewlett Packard	100.00
Anonymous	10.00
R. P. Huggins, Esq.	30.00
Wokingham Rotary Club	100.00
W. J. Strange, Esq.	5.00
Easthampstead Rotary	350.00
Finchampstead P. C.	100.00
Wokingham Lions	500.00
All Saints Church	28.00

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LEGAL ROTA SOLICITORS:

Messrs. Clifton Ingram & Co.
Messrs. C.J. Giles & Co.
Haye + Reid
Messrs. Ratcliffe Duce & Ganner
T.S. Roberts + Co.
Messrs. Southorns
M. Stroud, Esq.

FINANCIAL ROTA ACCOUNTANTS:

Messrs. Browning Hotchkiss & Co.
~~Messrs. Jones & Dinham~~
Messrs. Owen West & McGregor,
~~Messrs. Peter Raphael & Co.~~
~~Messrs. Starnes & Co.~~
M.A. Straker, Esq.

ANNUAL REPORT COVER: / PRINTING

~~Darry Granger Publicity Services.~~

~~We would also like to express our grateful thanks to the members of ROTARACT who gave up their May Bank Holiday to decorate the Bureau, and also to the WOKINGHAM LIONS CLUB for providing the paint.~~

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