

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31st March 2016

Registered Charity 1085779

**Company limited by guarantee
Registered in England 4079521**



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Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name:	Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau, also known as Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell.
Charity Registration:	1085779
Company Registration:	4079521
Principal Office:	The Old Town Hall The Parade Epsom Surrey KT18 5AG
Chief Executive:	Liz Dobson
Company Secretary:	Shaun Jones to 25 September 2015 Robert M Davidson from 25 September 2015
Bankers:	Charities Aid Foundation
Independent Examiner:	David C Evans FCA 2 The Oaks Epsom Surrey KT19 5HH

The following people were directors/trustees of the charity on the date of approval of the report or had been directors/trustees during the course of the year:

Charlotte Dixon	Chair
Michael Smith	Vice Chair from 25 September 2014. Resigned 14 June 2016
Shaun Jones	Re-appointed 17 September 2015 (previously a director from 2006 to 2013)
Elizabeth Cannon	Treasurer
David Rosen	Resigned 18 June 2015
Hon. Ald. Ruby Smith	Retired 17 September 2015
Alan Winkworth	
Mark Tiley	
Regina Benveniste	Resigned 27 July 2015
James Wells	
Angela Yahaya	
Karen McLean	Resigned 25 August 2015
Ann Flower	Co-opted 26 February 2015
Alison Cribbs	Appointed 17 September 2015
Christine Key	Appointed 17 September 2015

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's appointed representatives for the year 2015/16 were Cllr Liz Frost and Cllr Robert Geleit.

Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau has an honorary President, a position that is customarily offered to the incoming Mayor of Epsom & Ewell for the term of his or her mayoral year. The President for the 2015/16 mayoral year was Councillor Chris Frost. The position of President is unpaid and non-voting.

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

Report of the Directors and Trustees

The Trustees (who are also Directors for the purposes of Company Law) present their annual report and unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2016.

1. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee incorporated on 27th September 2000. The maximum liability of each member is limited to one pound. Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association as amended on 30th June 2004 and 13th January 2011.

Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau is also known and referred to as Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell.

The company commenced operations on 27th September 2000 at which date the assets and liabilities of the former unincorporated association of Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau were acquired.

A register of Trustees' interests is maintained at the registered office, and is available to the public. A register of advisers' interests is also so maintained.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

Our Trustees, who are also Directors of the Company, are drawn from the local community of Epsom and Ewell and surrounding areas. Volunteers for the position of Trustee are interviewed by a panel of Trustees. Those selected are proposed for appointment either by resolution of the Board or by election at a General Meeting. The Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer are elected annually at the next Board Meeting following the date of the Annual General Meeting. No other persons or bodies external to the charity are entitled to appoint persons to the Trustee Board.

By invitation, Epsom and Ewell Borough Council nominates two representatives to attend meetings of the Board. The Council's representatives attend Board meetings as non-voting observers.

As part of their induction, new Trustees are encouraged to sit in on client interviews, having signed a confidentiality agreement, to help develop their understanding of the work of the bureau, and to attend the short induction course conducted by the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux. New Trustees are encouraged to take an active role in sub-committee work at an early stage.

Organisational Structure

Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau is governed by its Trustee Board which is responsible for setting the strategic direction and policies of the organisation. The Trustees carry the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau and for ensuring that the charity satisfies its legal and contractual obligations.

Trustees meet at least four times per year. A number of sub-committees have been constituted, some of which include paid staff and other non-board members co-opted for the purpose. A number of trustees have accepted responsibility for specific areas of activity.

Day-to-day management of the organisation is delegated to the Chief Executive. An Advice Services Manager reports to the Chief Executive.

Related Parties

Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau is a member of Citizens Advice, the operating name of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, which provides a framework for standards of advice and casework management as well as monitoring progress against these standards. Operating policies are independently determined by the Trustee Board of Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau in order to fulfil its charitable objects and comply with the national membership requirements.

The charity is a member of Citizens Advice Surrey, a consortium in which Citizens Advice Bureaux across the county of Surrey are working together on common objectives.

The charity also co-operates and liaises with a number of other advisory services, local charities and social services departments on behalf of clients. Where one of the trustees also holds the position of trustee/director of another charity they may be involved in discussions regarding that other charity but not in the ultimate decision-making process.

Risk Management

Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces, which are reviewed as part of our Business Planning process.

External funding is a key risk area. We seek to mitigate this risk by nurturing relationships with key stakeholders, developing a range of funding sources and maintaining the quality and relevance of our service. Health and safety is another key risk area and policies have been implemented governing, inter alia, home visits and outreach appointments. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of financial controls and procedures for authorisation of transactions. The quality of our advice is managed through use of centralised national information systems, rigorous training and supervision, and is audited regularly under the terms of our membership agreement with Citizens Advice.

A financial risk analysis is performed regularly by the Finance sub-committee and this informs the Board's consideration of an appropriate policy and target range for cash reserves. Reserves targets at any point in time are calculated with the aim of ensuring that the core advice service is sustainable, that early action can be taken to deal with forecast surpluses and deficits and that we have sufficient funds to meet our liabilities both externally and to staff.

2. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objects

The Charity's objects (as stated in our Articles of Association) are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of the community in Epsom and Ewell and surrounding areas. Our values and vision are set out more specifically in the next paragraph.

Values and Vision

In fulfilling these objects, we ensure that the advice we offer is free, independent, confidential and impartial. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination. We act as a responsible employer, and ensure that in all our work we value and respect the interests of both our clients and our staff.

Our longer term vision is that we will continue as a local Bureau providing an excellent service to local people and acting as a strong positive influence on local and national policies and practice. We will aim to:

- improve the ease with which clients can access our service
- work actively to prevent social problems, as well as providing advice on solving those problems
- work closely with other Bureaux and partners in Surrey and nationally, learning from them and co-operating with them toward continuous improvement of our service , and
- provide a service underpinned by well-informed governance, skilled, motivated and well-trained staff, and more sustainable finance.

How our Activities Deliver Public Benefit

The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance where relevant. Our main activities and who we try to help are explained below.

General Advice: the principal activity of Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice Bureau is the provision of free, confidential, independent and impartial advice and information for

members of the public. Advisory services are provided through face-to-face consultations, and by telephone. We refer to this as our core service.

Mid and East Surrey Mental Health Outreach (MESMHO): our specialist unit provides an accessible advice service for clients suffering severe and enduring mental illness who are unable to access the bureau through our core service. In 2015/16 this service covered Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead and Tandridge: commissioned by the National Health Service, with additional funding from the Big Lottery Fund and Toyota (GB).

Debt Advice: a further specialist unit provides debt advice, both to individuals and to community groups. The work mainly involves advising clients who are in financial difficulties but members also includes talks and presentations designed to prevent people getting into serious debt.

Healthwatch: with other Surrey bureaux we have participated in the delivery of "Signposting, Information and Advice" for Healthwatch Surrey – the independent consumer champion that gives people a voice to influence decision makers to help improve and shape health and social care services.

Online Advice: our external website www.cae.org.uk provides information and links to online advice. It also provides online facilities for volunteering, and for people to request a phone call from one of our advisors.

Surrey Local Assistance Scheme: With other Surrey bureaux we assist Surrey County Council by advising clients on applications for support to meet their immediate and urgent short-term needs.

Research and Campaigning: as well as providing an advice service to the public, an important aspect of our work concerns the identification of any cases of injustice and unfair practices that come to our attention. We identify and record specific issues, take up local issues with relevant agencies and companies; keep in close contact with our Member of Parliament; network with other Citizens Advice Bureaux to address wider issues; and work with Citizens Advice at a national level to influence government, agencies and businesses.

We primarily aim to benefit those who live, work or study in the borough of Epsom and Ewell. However, in certain cases we are ready to consider assisting clients outside the borough, for example where clients might otherwise suffer, or where there are potential efficiency gains from working with other Bureaux.

3. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Chair's Report

2015/16 has been a year in which we have been able to maintain and in some cases strengthen the services we offer our clients, despite a number of risks and challenges. It has also been a year where we have reviewed and strengthened our governance to ensure we avoid the failures which have beset some other charities.

In October 2015, Citizens Advice at a national level was named as Charity of the Year in the Charity Times Awards, after helping 2.5 million people with 6.2 million problems. We are proud to be a small but vital part of this network of independent charities.

Our focus is on the needs of those who live and work in Epsom & Ewell, and our staff and volunteers use their knowledge of those local needs, and of local opportunities, to offer expert advice backed up by continually updated national systems. The result is that our clients benefit from advice which we do not believe can be matched in terms of its quality and the extent of its coverage. Following audit in January the quality of our advice was once again recognised in the re-award of the Advice Quality Standard – the national “kitemark” which offers our clients assurance on the reliability of the advice they are given.

Most of our clients continue to want and need face to face interviews, and in the past year we have sought to improve their experience with shorter waiting times and a better appointment system. We have also continued during 2015/16 to improve the service for those clients who prefer to access our service by telephone or online. We plan to expand these services further in 2016/17.

About half the funding to provide the services our clients need, together with accommodation, is provided by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, and we are very grateful for the support they have continued to give us, despite the increasing financial pressures faced by all local authorities. We have been particularly grateful during 2015/16 that the Council have been able to help us with additional accommodation.

We have also been extremely grateful to Rosebery Housing Association who have in 2015/16 doubled their support for our specialist work on **Debt Advice**. This vital support enables us to undertake difficult casework and help our clients deal constructively with situations which might otherwise deteriorate to the point where the client and often their family might become homeless.

We have also been able to continue through 2015/16 our successful **Mid and East Surrey Mental Health Outreach** project, thanks to support from the Big Lottery Fund, the NHS and Toyota (GB). With much regret, we have received the decision that despite their recognition of the value to our clients the BLF funding agreement will expire at the end of August 2016, though the smaller element of the project that is funded by the National Health Service will carry on at least until the current contract expires in March

2017. Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell has a long tradition of providing much valued advice services to those with mental health problems, and it is the Board's intention to make every effort to continue to provide such a service in Epsom & Ewell, subject to securing further funding. The Board would like to place on record its thanks to the MESMHO team for their hard work and professionalism over the last three years in what has been a very successful project by any measure.

With generous support from the National Counties Building Society we have been able to deliver practical **financial education** to students at the North East Surrey College of Technology, and this has been very well received.

In co-operation with other Bureaux in Surrey we have continued to provide support to those who have **emergency needs**, and advice and information on **Healthwatch**.

We see many opportunities to expand and improve our service and recognise the need to put continuous effort into our own **fundraising and income generation**. I am happy to report that we received over £10,300 in 2015/16 in donations and legacies, and a further £5,400 through a range of fund-raising events. These amounts include a donation of £6,000 as a result of our selection as one of the Mayor's three chosen charities for 2014/15, and we are exceptionally grateful to Councillor Robert Foote, his wife Rosemary and the Mayor's Charity Committee for the hard work put into their event programme.

Once again I would like to thank the management team and all of our volunteers - friends, trustees, advisers, assessors and support staff without whom the service would not be able to carry on. 2016/17 is likely to be a year where the challenges we face intensify, and we will need clear leadership and excellent team working to ensure those challenges can be transformed into opportunities.

I would also like to express my immense gratitude to the firms of solicitors - Howell-Jones LLP, TWM, and Jacky Lewis Family Law - who gave pro-bono legal advice to our clients during the year. Finally, many thanks to David Evans for his services as Independent Examiner of our accounts.

Chief Executive's Report

It has been a year of change both for our clients and for us. The continued rollout of Welfare Reform and the introduction of other new legislation has meant a lot of change for the people who come to us for help and advice. Within our local Citizens Advice we have had to work hard to enable our (primarily volunteer) advice staff to keep up to date with all the new changes, and to adopt and adapt to the new national Citizens Advice changes for better client service.

In all this change, the constant has been the dedication of our wonderful volunteers and staff who have helped us provide advice to thousands of clients in 2015-16. Thanks to

them, we were able to help 3,316 clients last year – which approximates to about 11% of all Epsom & Ewell households coming or telephoning for help. One of the distinct features of last year was the increase in demand through our local telephone service, as it passed its first birthday at the start of the year, and for which we managed to increase the number of calls we could answer. Looking ahead, we see a subtle but distinct change in the ways in which clients want to access our services. Demand for phone access to advice in 2015-16 was high, and has risen steadily since the introduction of the service. We see that clients are changing their lifestyles and working patterns in response to changes acting on them, and that means they want to access our service in different ways that fit in with their changing lives. This is in many ways a local echo of the findings of our national organisation, which has during this year re-launched the national advice website for better access by clients directly, together with a new brand to make us more recognisable to clients, and championed alternative access methods for clients, such as email and webchat. We are looking to bring one or more of these methods to Epsom & Ewell in the future.

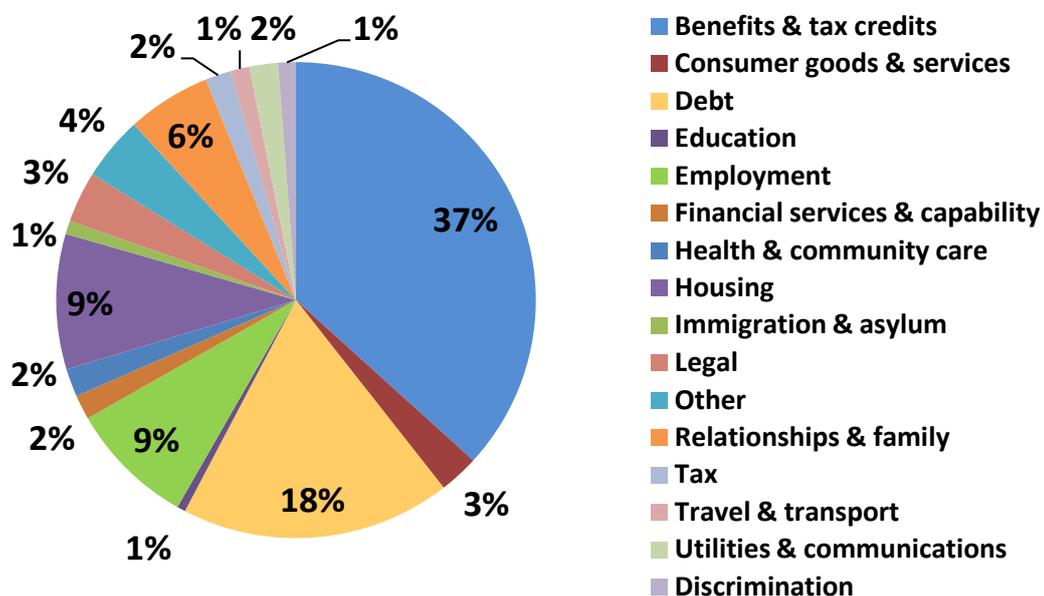
While the way clients access our service began to change, so did the nature of the problems they brought to us. Debt problems became more serious, especially where they combined rent and council tax arrears and so put clients at risk of losing their homes. This, combined with tough changes to the housing allocation policy (how people are assessed for their eligibility for support with housing if homeless), has meant clients with serious debt problems can often very quickly find them escalating into risk of homelessness. This problem was also recognised by our local Rosebery Housing Association, with whom we are working closely to reduce arrears in rent and council tax and keep clients in their homes.

In 2015-16, in addition to the external changes of ongoing welfare reform, we also found ourselves with the opportunity to undertake short-term projects that helped clients: the local provision of Pensionwise appointments for Epsom & Ewell residents in 2015-16 (and now continuing into 2016-17) and the energy saving advice service available just until March 2016. We increased the number of advice staff answering the telephone advice line on the busiest days and introduced texted reminders to help clients. Our ability to adapt flexibly to these changes was made considerably easier by the provision of an extra room for advice staff next to our existing rooms, for which we are most grateful to our Borough Council, for the room and in the time and effort in making it available to us.

Finally, while we are trying to ensure that clients have the best possible access to the advice they need, we also want to ensure that we provide them with the highest quality of advice that we can. For this, we have to undergo a detailed three-yearly Quality Audit, which happened during 2015-16, and which we passed, with additional Accreditations for Casework in Debt and Welfare Benefits. This is a fitting tribute to the hard work and selfless dedication of our team here in Epsom, upon whom over 3,000 local people depend each year.

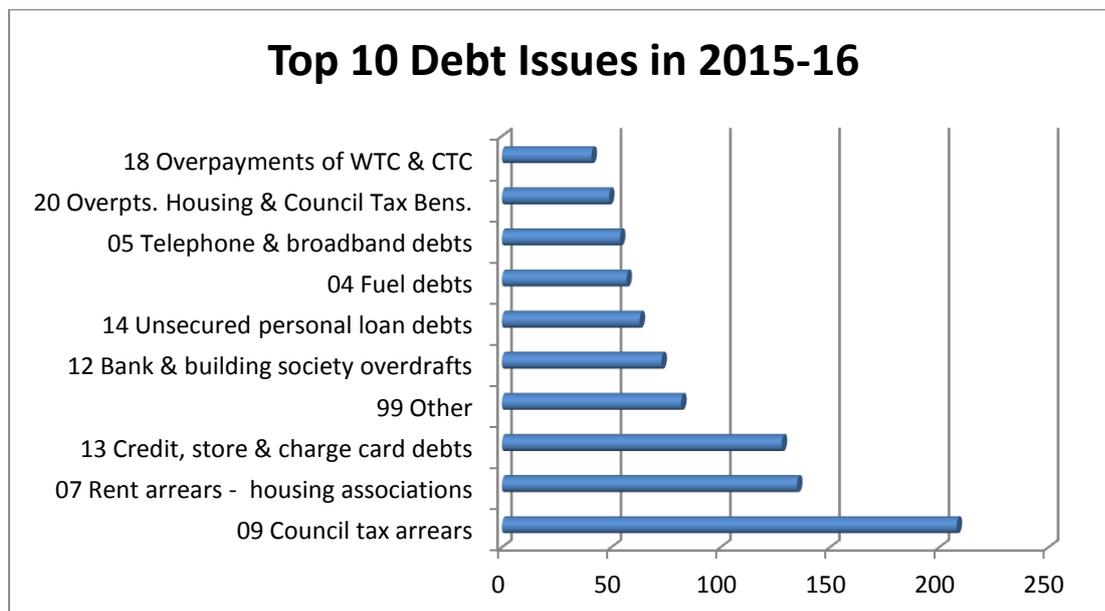
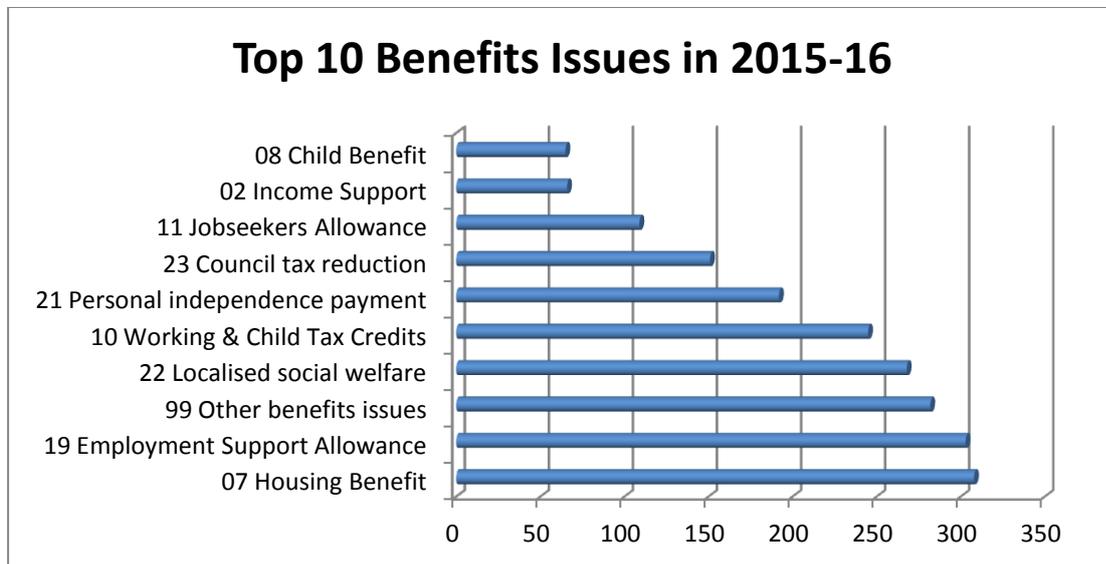
Our Service to Clients

We saw 3,316 clients in 2015-16. Our clients came to us seeking advice for 11,151 issues, over half (55% together) of which were related to **Benefits** and **Debt**. The next most common issues are related to **Housing** (9%) and **Employment** (9%). These are our typical 'Big Four' but a look at the pie chart below gives an indication of the breadth of the advice knowledge that we have in-house to be able to help clients with their problems. This breadth of knowledge is what underpins the essential element of our advice service – its holistic approach, where we can hear a client's story but move beyond the immediate problem to be able to address it on the various levels required.



In this year, the external landscape of changes included the arrival of Universal Credit in February 2016, of new statutory Acts in October 2015 (the De-Regulation Bill and the Consumer Rights Bill) and the ongoing process of Welfare Reform which included the second Welfare Reform Budget in 2015. Within Welfare Reform, the changes we saw having the most impact on local residents included the increased rate of transition for clients off the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) benefit and onto the less accessible Personal Independence Payments (PIP) benefit. Many of our clients, especially those with mental health issues being advised by our specialist casework team, have found this process difficult and often distressing. The combination of the reduction in the benefits cap in 2015 with changes to housing support and other benefits has put many less well off clients in very difficult financial positions. As many of our clients have often needed their benefits to top-up the income they need in order to pay their rent, Council Tax and other bills, we have found that changes to the benefits landscape has unsurprisingly led to changes in client debt. The most prominent debt issues we saw in 2015-16 were Council Tax arrears (by far – see chart below) followed by Rent Arrears. The most prominent single benefits issues we saw in 2015-16 were Housing Benefit (which goes to pay the rent), Employment Support Allowance (ESA), and the Surrey

County Council Local Assistance Scheme (called 'localised social welfare' on the chart below), which is an emergency payment to those assessed as being in critical need and having no other source of money.



Money Advice & Debt

Our Money Advice and Debt Service continues to be a key service that is available to all clients. Dealing with debt is a complex process and not all Citizens Advice offices handle it in-house, even more so with the introduction of regulation for free debt advice by the Financial Conduct Authority last year, for which we have ensured our advisors are FCA-compliant trained in debt advice. We saw the number of debt issues we dealt within the Bureau in 2015-16 rise to 18% of all issues (2014-15: 15%)

An example of our general debt work

One of our volunteer Gateway Assessors helped a vulnerable client whose emergency enquiry included bailiffs enforcing a council tax debt. She prioritised the client, then phoned the bailiffs, who agreed to put enforcement action on hold. Her next task was to find out why this had happened to try to prevent the situation from worsening. She accompanied the client to the Housing Benefits office, and as a result of working with both the client and the Council, the client had Housing Benefit of £108.99 per week reinstated and Council Tax support of £14.39 awarded. The client was greatly relieved.

Our Specialist Debt Service

For the most complex and serious of debt cases, we have a Specialist Debt Casework service available by referral. We are grateful to the Borough Council for their ongoing funding for this service, and to Rosebery Housing Association for their increased funding from 2015-16 which enabled us double our caseworker capacity to be especially able to help assist Rosebery residents out of rent and Council Tax arrears. This increased funding meant that in 2015-16 the Specialist Debt Service saw 104 new clients (as well as continuing to look after the existing clients), more than doubling the number previously seen. Council Tax debts and rent arrears are two of the biggest issues these clients face, as these debts left unresolved can ultimately result in loss of their home. We not only helped these clients to bring their debts under control, but also oversaw £25,923 of Council Tax debts repaid and £127,605 of rent arrears repaid for Rosebery residents; excellent results for the year.

An example of our specialist debt work:

We assisted a lone parent resident in temporary accommodation to claim Income Support following a period of maternity leave. She was awarded £73.10 weekly and we helped to clarify payment issues. She had rent arrears following a benefits suspension and had been left with just less than £15,000 non priority debts incurred by her ex-partner who had taken out loans in her name. We drafted a financial statement with the resident, discussing her budget to enable her to better understand her finances. We negotiated payment arrangements to discharge £640 rent arrears, ensured that the £161.84 Housing Benefit weekly was restored, and encouraged her to use an online rent account system to keep herself fully informed for the future. We recommended a debt relief order as an option and considered the pro's and con's of proceeding with this solution. We referred the resident to the Citizen's Advice Debt Relief Order Unit. We negotiated with the client's non priority debts to prevent interest and charges accruing. She was granted relief at the end of April 2016, clearing £15,880 of non-priority debt. She has a clearer understanding of her finances and is now able to maintain priority payments.

Note: All gains calculated as annualised

Our Specialist Mental Health Outreach Service

Our other specialist service is the Mental Health Outreach service, who provide an in-depth and supportive advice service by referral for clients with severe and enduring mental health issues. In 2015-16, the Mental Health service saw 211 newly referred clients, and during the year secured a much needed £1,028,523 of income gains for ongoing clients. We have run this service for over 20 years, varying in size over the years, and at time of writing we were sadly coming to the end of a 3 year expanded project which had allowed us to work in more depth with clients. We are pleased however that the benefits of advice for those with the top tier of mental health problems continues to be recognized by the two local NHS CCGs, and we are working hard with them to ensure ongoing funding to support these clients into the future. We have developed strong links with the mental health wards in both Epsom Hospital and Langley Green Hospital, both of which we visit as part of providing our specialist mental health outreach service. We work closely with the local Community Mental Health centres, and also provide outreach services at these in Epsom, Dorking and Reigate. We are also pleased to work closely with, and often receive referrals from, a number of mental health support groups in the area, including Mary Frances Trust, Richmond Fellowship and Love Me Love My Mind.

Two examples of our mental health work:

We helped a vulnerable client with his PIP appeal, which was successful. The enhanced daily living component was awarded for 4 years on the basis of 19 daily living points. His previous score had been only 4 points. As a result of this, the client received 7 months of back dating which amounting to £2,500. The client will now also qualify for SDP amount of arrears of £1,875 and EDP amount of arrears of £500. In total, the amount received by the client from the DWP was £4,875. Going forward, he was also better off weekly by £159.90. This was of immense relief for the client he could now manage his finances.

We helped a client who has suffered from severe depression for many years. When she was referred to us, her only source of income was early retirement pension of £650 per month and child benefits of £80 and she was heavily in deficit financially. She was struggling to make ends meet and had been using credit cards (resulting in debts of over £20000) to make up monthly mortgage payments of £1200 (against an outstanding mortgage of £130,000). We helped maximise her income through Tax Credit, ESA, PIP, Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Housing Payment applications and reviews. As a result, her monthly income has increased to £1765. We also successfully asked Barclaycard to write off an outstanding balance of £5000 and other creditors agreed either token payments or a moratorium until her circumstances improve.

Note: All gains calculated as annualised

Research & Campaigning

A vital part of our work is to identify common issues that adversely affect people's lives and take action to deal with them. Our aim is to prevent problems like this from re-occurring.

Living in an area which is generally regarded as affluent does not lessen the hardship experienced by some Epsom & Ewell residents adversely affected by poor administration or the unintended consequences of legislation.

Working in Partnership

We know that we cannot 'do it all', and that the best results for clients can be achieved by working closely with other groups, with each having its own special focus and strengths.

The **Foodbank**: We are a referral partner for the Epsom & Ewell Foodbank, which means that when we see a client whose situation would be helped by a Foodbank food donation, we are in the trusted position to offer this to our client, often as part of a help in crisis parcel that we build for them, quickly.

Our local **Charitable Trusts**: we are very grateful on behalf of our clients for the ongoing financial support that our local trusts of Epsom, Ewell and Stoneleigh provide for our clients in times of need and crisis.

Surrey County Council's **Local Assistance Scheme**: We are also a referral partner for this 'help of last resort' financial provision provided by the County Council. Although funds are very limited it is still a most valuable resource to be able to call upon for those clients in hours of financial crisis. Across, Surrey, Epsom & Ewell is one of the highest volume of crisis payments awarded – another small but important piece of evidence of the hidden difficulties that Epsom residents face.

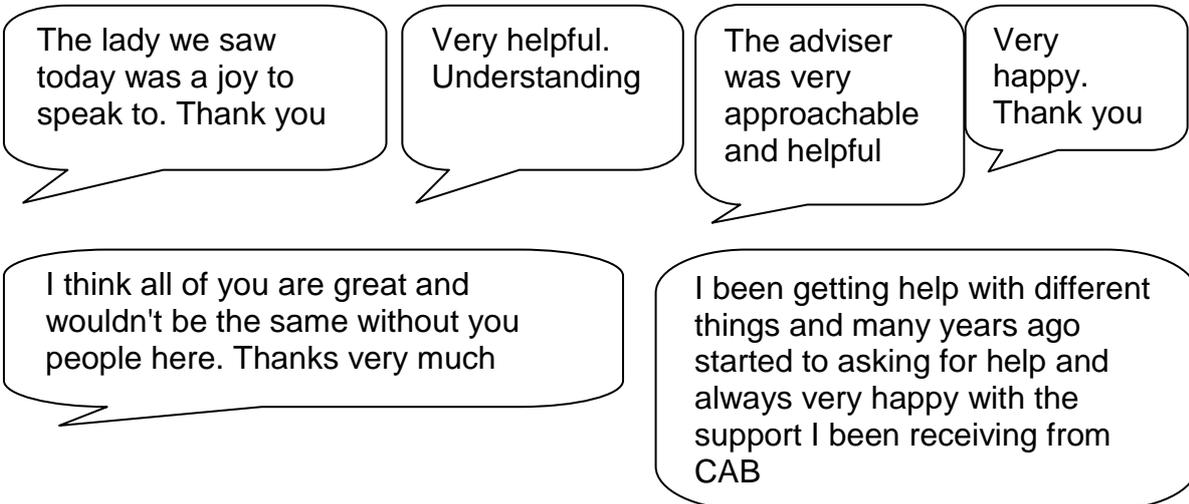
Healthwatch: For 2015-16 we participated in the delivery of "Signposting, Information and Advice" for Healthwatch Surrey – the new independent consumer champion that gives people a voice to influence decision makers to help improve and shape health and social care services.

Pensionwise: when the free pension guidance service was introduced in 2015-16, delivered by a selected number of Citizens Advice offices, we arranged with Citizens Advice Sutton to hold twice-weekly slots at our Epsom office so that local residents could have free pensions advice on the doorstep.

Surrey: We continued to be an active member of Citizens Advice Surrey, the consortium of Surrey bureaux, with our Chair being a member of the board and the Chief Executive attending the AGM. This consortium manages the Local Assistance Scheme and Healthwatch services provided by Surrey County Council on behalf of the Surrey bureaux.

The proof of the pudding - what our clients think of our service

Our annual client survey in March 2016 found that 100% of clients interviewed were happy with our service, 96% thought that the advice that they received was useful, and that 100% said they would use the Bureau again. We collected together some of their comments left on the feedback forms:



4. FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial Position

In total, the bureau made a small surplus of £3,796 in 2015/16, representing a loss of £969 on the unrestricted fund offset by a surplus of £4,765 on the restricted fund. These figures take into account a transfer of £16,134 to restricted funds from the unrestricted fund.

At the year end the unrestricted fund stood at £101,860 compared with £102,829 at the previous year end. Restricted funds stood at £14,183 compared with £9,418 at the previous year end.

During the year a designated fund of £32,000 for redundancies and project end costs was established from unrestricted funds. We have budgeted to spend about half of that fund during 2016/17.

The bureau will need to use some of the unrestricted reserves to meet the budgeted deficit for 2016/17.

The bureau did not have any borrowings from any providers or other sources at 31st March 2016. Net assets at 31st March 2016 amounted to £116,043 (previous year £112,247). No funds were in deficit at 31st March 2016.

Reserves and Reserves Policy

In arriving at the recommended reserve level, the Board has taken a two-pronged approach.

First it has reviewed the financial risks facing the bureau in detail (and quantified both the probability and magnitude of various risks to ensure that there are enough funds to meet those risks if they crystallise). This analysis indicated that reserves should drop no lower than £39,000.

Second the Board considered the cost of running the bureau for 2 months to ensure that operations can continue in the short term if there was suddenly no income and added an amount to cover redundancies to that. This analysis indicated that reserves should drop no lower than £101,000.

In view of the results of this analysis the Board agreed to opt for an average of these amounts and resolved as a policy that reserves should drop no lower than £70,000. However, that level remains under regular review, especially in the light of changes both in the risks we face and in the running costs of the bureau.

As indicated above, actual reserves were comfortably in excess of that amount at 31st March 2016 although if the budgeted deficit is realised in 2016/17, reserves will drop to a level close to or just below the recommended level.

Investment Policy and Objectives

During the year the Finance Committee agreed that a minimum of two months' cash operating costs should be held at instant access and the remainder of the funds which are not immediately required for operational purposes should be held on deposit in UK based accounts. The Finance sub-committee periodically reviews the deposit account arrangements having regard to the best available market rates of interest, flexibility, accessibility, and risk.

Principal Funding Sources

Core Bureau Service

We would like to thank Epsom & Ewell Borough Council for their essential help in funding our Core Service, which is the backbone of the holistic advice service we offer to clients.

Mental Health Outreach

We would like to thank Surrey NHS and the Big Lottery Fund for their kind funding which allows us to provide our Mental Health Outreach Service. We are also very grateful to Toyota (GB) for providing additional funding for this service



Debt Advice

Thanks to Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and Rosebery Housing Association for funding our debt advice service.

Healthwatch

Thanks to Surrey County Council for funding our work on Healthwatch, through Healthwatch Surrey.

Surrey Local Assistance Scheme

Thanks to Surrey County Council for funding our work on this scheme, through Citizens Advice Surrey.

5. AIMS FOR THE FUTURE

Welfare reform, reductions in public finance and other changes have led to continued demand for our services and some increase in the complexity of cases brought to us by our clients. We expect this to continue. We are constantly developing and training our advisors and supervisors to meet newly perceived needs.

It is also clear that the expectations of our clients are rising, particularly about the ways in which they can access the services they need in the way that best suits them. While many clients will continue to want to visit the Bureau and meet an adviser, others already use available information on the Citizens Advice website as their first call, but wish to discuss their individual problems by e-mail, webchat or on the telephone. This presents both opportunities and challenges to ensure we are providing the optimum service within the funds available.

We are also improving our underlying support systems to optimise our efficiency and effectiveness, and continually seeking ways of diversifying our sources of funding. Wherever appropriate we seek to be innovative in identifying and implementing new ways of serving our clients.

We have carefully observed the difficulties faced by some other charities recently and will be regularly reviewing our governance to ensure it is fit for purpose. Through all our work we will be collecting evidence to enable more effective analysis of how problems for individuals can arise from the policies and practice of the organisations with which they deal, and to ensure those organisations are alerted to the problems we identify.

We expect 2016/17 to be a year of significant change and development to enable our continued provision of excellent services to our clients.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CMT Dixon', with a horizontal line underneath.

Charlotte Dixon
Chair
by Order of the Board

August 2016



Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts

Section A		Independent Examiner's Report	
Report to the trustees/members of	Charity Name	EPSOM AND EWELL CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU	
On accounts for the year ended	3 1 0 3 1 6	Charity no (if any)	1 0 8 5 7 7 9
Set out on pages	23 - 33		(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner	<p>The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act, to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention. 		
Basis of independent examiner's statement	<p>My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.</p>		
Independent examiner's statement	<p>In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below*):</p> <p>(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or <p>(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.</p> <p>* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.</p>		
Signed	<i>David C Evans</i>	Date	25 / 7 / 16
Name	DAVID CHARLES EVANS		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any)	FELLOW, INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS (ENGLAND & WALES)		
Address	2 THE OAKS EPSOM SURREY KT18 5HH		

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

**Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2016
Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account**

	Note	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 2016	Total funds 2015
		£	£	£	£
Income from:	1b				
Donations and legacies	2	10,310	-	10,310	5,218
Charitable activities	3	136,086	192,571	328,657	296,143
Other (including fundraising)	4	7,801	52	7,853	4,507
Total Income		154,197	192,623	346,820	305,868
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	5	1,318	-	1,318	435
Charitable activities	5	137,714	203,992	341,706	324,974
Other	5	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure		139,032	203,992	343,024	325,409
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers	6	15,165	(11,369)	3,796	(19,541)
Transfers between funds		(16,134)	16,134	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		(969)	4,765	3,796	(19,541)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Balances brought forward 2015	10	102,829	9,418	112,247	131,788
Balances carried forward 2016	10	101,860	14,183	116,043	112,247

There are no recognised gains or losses in the year, other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

All activities derive from continuing operations.

**Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2016**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2016 £	Total 2015 £
Current Assets					
Debtors	8	1,300	1,871	3,171	-
Cash at bank and in hand		106,655	29,715	136,370	116,173
		<u>107,955</u>	<u>31,586</u>	<u>139,541</u>	<u>116,173</u>
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	9	6,095	17,403	23,498	3,926
		<u>101,860</u>	<u>14,183</u>	<u>116,043</u>	<u>112,247</u>
Net Current Assets					
		<u>101,860</u>	<u>14,183</u>	<u>116,043</u>	<u>112,247</u>
Net assets					
		<u>101,860</u>	<u>14,183</u>	<u>116,043</u>	<u>112,247</u>

Represented by:

Funds of the Charity

General Funds	10	69,860		69,860	102,829
Designated Funds	10	32,000		32,000	
Restricted Funds	10		14,183	14,183	9,418
		<u>101,860</u>	<u>14,183</u>	<u>116,043</u>	<u>112,247</u>

For the year ending 31st March 2016 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 14 June 2016 and signed on their behalf by:


Chair
Charlotte Dixon


Treasurer
Elizabeth Cannon

Company Registration No: 4079521
Charity Registration No: 1085779

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016

1. Accounting policies

a) Accounting basis

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and are in accordance with the Companies Acts 1985 to 2006, applicable accounting standards and the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (FRSSE) 2015.

b) Incoming resources

i) Grants receivable

Grants made to finance the activities of the Bureau are credited to the income and expenditure account in the period to which they relate.

ii) Bank interest

Bank interest is included in the income and expenditure account on receipt.

iii) Other income

Sales of services are included in the income and expenditure account in the period to which they relate. Other income, including donations, gifts and covenants are included as they were received.

iv) Gifts and Intangible income

In addition to the above, the charity also receives help and support in the form of voluntary assistance in advising the public. This help and support is not included in the financial statements. However, its value to the Charity has been estimated and disclosed in the directors' report.

v) Deferred income

Grants received in advance of the period in which the funder requires the expenditure to be applied will be reflected in deferred income within the balance sheet.

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016

1. Accounting policies (continued)

c) Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. All expenditure directly related to the provision of advice services is included within expenditure on charitable activities. Other costs incurred have been allocated between management and various administrative activities - there having been no fundraising and publicity costs this year. Where such costs relate to more than one functional cost category they have been split on an estimate of time or floor space basis, as appropriate.

d) Fixed assets and depreciation

Fixed assets are included at cost and are capitalised if their value is over £2,000. No such capital expenditure has been included.

e) General funds

General funds are unrestricted funds that are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the bureau and which have not been designated for other purposes.

f) Restricted funds

Income received for the restricted purposes is included in a separate restricted fund against which appropriate expenditure is allocated.

g) Designated funds

Designated funds are allocated out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes. The use of such funds is at the trustees' discretion.

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016

1. Accounting policies (continued)

h) Pension

The bureau operates a defined contribution group personal pension plan for its employees. Payments are charged to the income and expenditure account in the period in which they are incurred.

i) Leases

Rental costs under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities in equal amounts over the period of the leases. However, there have been no such costs in 2015/16.

j) Irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure included in the accounts includes VAT as the bureau does not recover VAT.

k) Cash Flow

The bureau has taken advantage of the exemptions in Financial Reporting Standard No 1 from the requirement to produce a cash flow statement on the grounds that it is a small company.

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016

2 Donations

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2016	Total 2015
	£	£	£	£
Voluntary income				
Stoneleigh Charitable Trust	-	-	-	250
Emergency Fund	-	-	-	3,000
Mayor's charity	6,000	-	6,000	-
Other donations	4,310	-	4,310	1,968
	10,310	-	10,310	5,218

3 Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2016	Total 2015
	£	£	£	£
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council	111,261	12,000	123,261	116,593
Surrey County Council	14,770	8,261	23,031	20,100
Big Lottery	-	83,210	83,210	96,950
NHS Surrey	-	41,000	41,000	41,000
Toyota	-	1,100	1,100	1,500
National Counties Building Society	-	-	-	5,000
Rosebery Housing Association	-	47,000	47,000	15,000
Other	10,055	-	10,055	-
	136,086	192,571	328,657	296,143

Further information about these grants are provided in the Report of Directors and Trustees.

4 Other Income

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2016	Total 2015
	£	£	£	£
Room hire	1,500	-	1,500	-
Fundraising events	5,430	52	5,482	2,437
Investment income	290	-	290	1,350
Miscellaneous income	581	-	581	720
Total Other Income	7,801	52	7,853	4,507

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016

5 Analysis of expenditure

	Generalist Advisory Services (Unrestricted funds)	Specialist Advice and Information (Restricted funds)	2016	2015
	£	£	£	£
Raising funds	1,318	-	1,318	435
Charitable Activities				
Staff costs	74,172	170,074	244,246	243,545
Other direct costs	1,895	4,043	5,938	5,436
Support costs	61,647	29,875	91,522	75,993
Total Expenditure by Activity	137,714	203,992	341,706	324,974
Support Costs				
	Generalist Advisory Services	Specialist Advice and Information	2016	2015
	£	£	£	£
Governance	548	254	802	257
Management	17,104	8,166	25,270	16,095
Office, IT & communications	14,737	7,020	21,757	16,552
Premises	29,084	14,348	43,432	42,573
Other	174	87	261	516
Activity Total	61,647	29,875	91,522	75,993

The basis of allocation of support costs is hours contributed by staff and volunteers.

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell
Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016

6 Net income/ (expenditure) for the year

	2016	2015
	£	£
This is stated after charging:		
Depreciation	-	-
Operating lease costs	-	-
Auditors' remuneration	198	-
	198	-

7 Information regarding Trustees, Directors and Employees

	2016	2015
	£	£
Wages and salaries	235,800	234,372
Social security costs	18,014	18,421
Pension costs	2,084	2,538
Benefits	-	-
Temporary Staff	1,631	-
	257,529	255,331

The average number of employees, analysed by function was:

	2016	2015
Charitable purposes	9	9
Fundraising & publicity	-	-
Management and administration of charity	4	2
	13	11

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000

No Trustee was remunerated for any services. All payments were by way of reimbursement for expenses.

Travel costs amounting to £131 (2015 - £257) were reimbursed to 2 (2015 - 3) members of the Trustee Board. No trustee indemnity insurance was purchased.

The local Citizens Advice Bureau paid £1,520 in the year ended 31 March 2016 for various insurance services, including professional indemnity cover.

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016

8 Debtors

	Total	Total
	2016	2015
	£	£
Grants receivable	2,945	-
Prepayments	226	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,171	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>

9 Creditors - amounts falling due within one year

	Total	Total
	2016	2015
	£	£
Deferred income (grant in advance)	16,835	-
Other creditors including tax and social security	5,628	3,926
Accruals	1,035	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	23,498	3,926
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016

10 Movement in funds

	At 1 April 2015	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 March 2016
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted Funds:					
Health Watch	-	8,261	(7,700)	-	561
Debt advice	6,892	59,000	(54,023)	-	11,869
Mental Health	385	125,362	(141,881)	16,134	-
Emergency Fund	2,141	-	(388)	-	1,753
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Restricted Funds	9,418	192,623	(203,992)	16,134	14,183
Unrestricted Funds:					
General fund	102,829	154,197	(139,032)	(48,134)	69,860
Designated funds	-	-	-	32,000	32,000
Total Unrestricted funds	102,829	154,197	(139,032)	(16,134)	101,860
Total funds	112,247	346,820	(343,024)	-	116,043

Restricted Funds

Health Watch: A restricted fund paid by Surrey County Council through Citizens Advice Surrey to help improve the health and social care services in Surrey.

Debt Advice: A restricted fund financed by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, Rosebery Housing Association and the Bureau general fund to pay for a dedicated debt adviser.

Mental Health: A restricted fund supported by the Big Lottery Fund, Toyota (GB) and Surrey NHS to support the Bureau in its work with the outreach project for those with severe and enduring mental health issues.

Emergency Fund: A restricted fund paid for by an anonymous donor to allow the bureau manager to make small provision to people in the Epsom and Ewell area where such funding cannot be obtained by other means.

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016

Unrestricted Funds

Local Assistance Scheme: An unrestricted fund paid by Surrey County Council to all Surrey bureaux to assist the Council in advising clients on applications for support to meet their immediate and urgent short-term needs.

Designated Funds

Redundancy reserve: This reserve has been designated by the Trustees for the purpose of covering any redundancy and associated costs that may arise.