

Services offered by CAS to member citizens advice bureaux

Citizens Advice
Scotland
(CAS) delivers
a wealth of
support to
its member
citizens advice
bureaux

Citizens Advice Scotland and the Scottish CAB Service

Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS) is the national umbrella body that provides support services for Scottish citizens advice bureaux and collates client case evidence to shape policy in Scotland and the UK. In particular, CAS:

- Provides a range of services and the best possible advice and support to its member bureaux to meet the needs of existing and potential clients
- Sets quality standards and audits bureaux compliance with these standards
- Is the voice of the CAB Service in Scotland and its clients to raise the profile of the service and make changes to social policy.

This briefing outlines the services CAS delivers to bureaux. Every organisation that funds a bureau benefits from the work of CAS, as do all CAB clients.

Information

CAS and our sister organisation, Citizens Advice (England and Wales) jointly produce and update AdviserNet, the internet-based information system for bureaux and Adviceguide, our public information website. Both websites cover legislation passed by Westminster and Holyrood, and the interaction of legislation between the two parliaments. We also provide an Information Consultancy service for bureaux.

Contact

Citizens Advice Scotland
1st Floor, Spectrum House, 2 Powderhall Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4GB
t: 0131 550 1000 f: 0131 550 1001 w: www.cas.org.uk
need advice? www.adviceguide.org.uk

The Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux - Citizens Advice Scotland
(Scottish charity number SC016637)



Training support

CAS supports bureaux to deliver the Adviser Training Programme (ATP) - a competence-based training programme that combines training units, e-learning modules, face-to face sessions, shadowing and hands-on experience, to ensure that all CAB advisers are equipped to deliver a high quality service to clients. This support includes tutor training, intranet resources, materials and consultancy and, in certain circumstances, tailored training for individual bureaux. We also provide a programme of free training courses on a wide range of topics outwith the ATP and arrange delivery of training on money advice and housing through our partnerships with other organisations.

IT support and infrastructure

All bureaux have server-based networks and computers that are business critical for their operations. Our Bureau Infrastructure Project has provided a platform for:

- Web-based services such as AdviserNet and Caslink, the Scottish CAB Service intranet
- A remote IT support model
- Interaction, on behalf of clients, with e-government services
- The introduction of an electronic client case management system (CASTLE).

CAS provides IT support and gives advice on the purchase of ICT hardware and software and provides general consultancy on all IT matters (such as the requirements for a CAB moving or upgrading offices).

Quality assurance

A small, dedicated Quality Assurance (QA) team carries out quality audits of bureaux on a rolling basis.

Bureaux are audited every three years to assess their compliance with the standards of the Membership Scheme to gain and retain membership of the Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux. The audit covers both organisational management and quality of advice provision.

Specialist support in advice giving

CAS provides specialist support using a variety of models, notably in the areas of money advice, housing, representation and issues relating to legal process and points of law. In addition, our Information Consultancy team signpost advisers to appropriate specialist support, and will help find and/or clarify information in AdviserNet.

The experience gained through this specialist support work feeds back into the work of our Information and Training sections.

Bureau management and funding services

We deliver management consultancy through our Field Services team. Our guidance covers areas such as governance, staff and volunteer management, finance and fundraising, quality assurance, service delivery, and strategy and planning. We also work directly with bureaux to help them negotiate funding and provide training to support effective bureau governance.

Public affairs work

CAS uses marketing, media and parliamentary activity to promote the work, aims and priorities of the Scottish CAB Service at national and local level. As well as undertaking direct work, we also support our member bureaux in undertaking marketing and promotional work at a local level.

Social Policy work

The second and equal aim of the CAB service is to exercise a responsible influence on the development of social policy and services, both locally and nationally. We use client evidence provided by bureaux to represent the experiences of CAB clients to private industry, government (both Scottish and Westminster) and civil servants. We call for necessary changes to policies, procedures and laws to prevent Scottish citizens facing similar problems in the future.

We also support bureaux at a local level in terms of understanding and identifying social policy issues, as well as supporting them both to feedback this information nationally, and to be active in addressing the issue locally where relevant.