

## AdviceUK Newsletter

Hello

Welcome to our Autumn update. We're excited to present the latest on our Skilling Up For Justice project, a dedicated initiative to [strengthen the advice sector workforce](#) within minority ethnic communities. Plus, how we're [tracking advice trends](#) and highlighting the need for funding to meet the escalating demand for advice services.

Developments in our case management system are not just about efficiency, they directly translate to an enhanced level of support advisers can give to clients. [Find out more below.](#)

You can discover more about the impact created by our members: [Working Families and Turning Point](#) and how we're working with the Scottish Government to deliver the [Advice in Accessible Settings project](#), which is already having a substantial effect.

### SKILLING UP FOR JUSTICE

#### Building a strong workforce for a resilient community advice sector



The [Skilling Up for Justice project](#) is now well underway - we've been working with a wide range of AdviceUK members serving minority ethnic communities and vulnerable migrants in London. We are currently assessing expressions of interest from 15 organisations looking to develop career pathways that give people opportunities to move into different advice sector roles, including entry level volunteering, adviser posts and roles in management and leadership.

Excitingly, our first cohort of learners have embarked on AdviceUK's Learning to Advise programme and we've also had strong interest in the fully-funded vocational qualifications that are also on offer through the project. Over the next 2 months we will begin investing in selected proposals put forward by our members: exploring how they can build career pathways that work for them and the communities they advise.

We are looking forward to sharing this learning with our funder, [London Legal Support Trust](#) and other projects funded through [Propel](#). We are expecting to learn a lot about pathways into advice work and skilling up the workforce, which we will share with funders and with key partners across England, Scotland and Wales. We are keen to hear from you in response to our learning and for you to share what you are doing in this area of work.

Get in touch if you would like to know more, by e-mailing [influencing@adviceuk.org.uk](mailto:influencing@adviceuk.org.uk)

## ADVICE TRENDS

Halfway through the financial year, the number of new cases opened by advisers working for AdviceUK members remains largely unchanged across all areas of social welfare law. This might seem surprising given the impact of the cost of living crisis on households.



However, what this indicates is that most AdviceUK members are working at capacity and are therefore unable to respond to the growth in demand. More funding is needed to increase capacity and meet demand. This situation has been exacerbated because advisers are seeing more complex cases, which take longer to resolve. One indication of this complexity is the steady growth in the number of clients who have deficit budgets, i.e. where their income is not sufficient to meet their essential expenditure.

In September and October this year, **over 43% of clients advised had deficit budgets, an increase of over 5%** compared to the immediately preceding months.

You can find full details on the latest Advice Trends on our website:

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

## ADVICE IN ACCESSIBLE SETTINGS - SCOTLAND

AdviceUK have been working with the Scottish Government to distribute almost £1 million of funding to partnerships between advice agencies and other local services in Scotland, such as schools, charities, hospitals, community settings, and mental health services, as part of the government's new Advice in Accessible Settings Fund.

Projects with a focus on the Government's 6 priority groups - Lone parents, Minority ethnic families, Young mothers under the age of 25, Families where the youngest child is under 1 year old, Families of three or more children, Families where there is a disabled adult or Child - have been successful in securing funding.



The project has a particular emphasis on providing advice to those who are traditionally hardest to help or who have not sought advice before. Projects had to outline how they would deliver holistic (income maximisation, debt and welfare) advice in either an education, health or other community/accessible settings. They were also required to demonstrate the viability of partnership and collaborative working, including evidence of a plan for sustainability of the partnership beyond the funding period. Plus, demonstrate how system and delivery changes will be affected in order to embed advice provision into existing services.

All 24 AdviceUK Members who submitted an application were funded. They are now working with 42 partner organisations to provide Advice in Accessible Settings to 66 organisations across Scotland.

In the first quarter covering 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023, a total of 1131 clients have been assisted across 20 Local Authority Areas across Scotland as a result of the funding. Over £817,947.67 of debt is currently being managed as a result of this funding and £809,455.35 of Financial Gains have been recorded.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

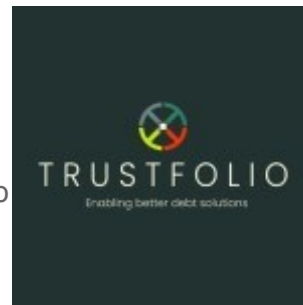


**ACCELERATED CASE MANAGEMENT**

**Instant access empowers advisers to enhance client support**

Since the beginning of November 2023, the case management system AdvicePro has been piloting new functionality in partnership with Trustfolio.

An application programming interface (API) is being tested by a group of AdviceUK members that embeds two valuable new functions into AdvicePro:



**Instant access to credit reports** significantly reduces the amount of time it takes to obtain credit reports for clients from credit reference agencies and makes it much easier to process applications for Debt Relief Orders.

**Instant access to IVA (Individual Voluntary Arrangement) referrals** makes it simpler for advisers to refer clients to an Insolvency Practitioner in cases where an IVA has been identified as the best option for dealing with the client's debts.

If the pilot is successful, this new functionality will be made available to all subscribers to AdvicePro. It is also intended to add a third enhancement, Open Banking, to the API in future. This will provide an invaluable tool for advisers, allowing them to analyse and discuss their finances with clients.

[ADVICEPRO WEBSITE](#)

## OUR MEMBERS

Every day, AdviceUK Members are there for clients facing various life challenges. Find out how some of our member organisations are making a big difference in people's lives and even shaping positive changes in government policies:

**Working Families'** mission is to remove the barriers that people with caring responsibilities face in the workplace. They provide [free legal advice to parents and carers](#) on their rights at work and [give employers the tools they need to support their people](#) while creating a flexible, high-performing workforce. Working Families also advocate on behalf of the UK's 17.5 million working parents and carers, influencing policy through campaigns informed by ground-breaking research.

Their recently released [Benchmark Report](#) and [recorded webinar](#) helps employers know how best to support their staff with family-friendly and flexible working practices.



**Working  
Families**

## FIND OUT MORE

**Turning Point** is Scotland's leading social care developer and provider, supporting people to build communities and be active citizens.



They specialise in supporting people facing the most complex and challenging situations:

- Learning disabilities
- Alcohol and drug misuse
- Adult harm reduction and recovery
- Mental health and emotional conditions
- Huntington's disease
- Justice - promoting rehabilitation, reduce reoffending rates and facilitate reintegration into communities
- Homelessness and Prevention
- Autism

You can discover further details around the work Turning Point Scotland does on their website:

## FIND OUT MORE

22/11/2023



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