



## **Report to Felixstowe Town Council Financial Year 2024-25**

### **Background**

The past financial year has seen increased demand for advice, along with increasingly complex cases. In 2024/25 Citizens Advice East Suffolk (CAES) supported 8,591 clients, addressing over 40,000 issues and securing positive outcomes worth more than £3.2 million for our clients.

This year has been one of significant change and challenge for CAES. We have undertaken essential refurbishments to improve our offices and upgraded our Wi-Fi to enhance service delivery. Unfortunately, we have lost some valued volunteers due to ill health or relocation. Rising costs have also placed additional pressures on our organisation. Despite these challenges, we have maintained our level of service and remain committed to meeting client needs. We are actively recruiting and training new advisers to strengthen our team and ensure continued support for the community.

The ongoing financial challenges have also placed considerable strain on our clients. We have worked hard to expand our services within our available resources to ensure we remain accessible and responsive to client demand. We are deeply grateful for the continued support of Felixstowe Town Council, which helps us sustain and develop these vital services for our community.

### **Felixstowe**

Our office operates five days a week, with face-to-face appointments available on four of those days. To better accommodate our clients, we have extended our opening hours to cover lunch times. Clients can access advice through multiple channels, including email, phone, and in-person visits. While we primarily operate on an appointment basis, we strive to assist walk-in clients whenever capacity allows, particularly in urgent cases.

In addition to our main office, we have continued with our outreach service at The Oaks Family Hub. This initiative ensures that residents in the area have direct and convenient access to our support.

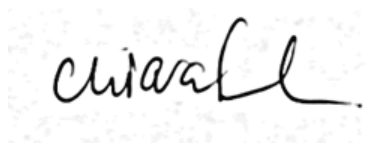
We have actively engaged with the community by participating in local events such as Love to Work in Felixstowe, Talk Money Week held at Felixstowe Library and a redundancy support event for a local business (Cogent Technologies).

Our partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) continues to enhance our ability to support clients while also creating valuable work experience opportunities. We are currently welcoming our second work placement, following the success of our first placement for a volunteer receptionist. This individual remained with us beyond the initial six-week programme, demonstrating the impact of the opportunity, and only stepped away due to health reasons.

Over the past year, we have supported 908 Felixstowe residents with 3,686 issues, 18% of which were handled through face-to-face appointments. Whilst cases are becoming more complex, we are also delivering much higher financial outcomes. Our work in the last financial year has resulted in financial outcomes exceeding £325,000 for clients, including over £200,000 of debt relief.

The most common areas of advice continue to be benefits, tax credits, and Universal Credit—particularly assistance with Personal Independence Payment (PIP) forms—alongside housing, charitable support, debt, and family-related issues. Given the ongoing financial challenges faced by many, we expect these to remain our primary areas of focus.

Our Felixstowe office remains a vital part of Citizens Advice East Suffolk, and we look forward to continuing our work in partnership with the local community to provide essential support and guidance to those in need.



Chiara Saunders  
Chief Executive  
Citizens Advice east Suffolk