

**LEICESTER COMMUNITY LEGAL ADVICE SERVICE
PROGRESS REPORT April 2012**

Contract Year 4 – April` 2011 to March 2012

1) Overview:

Service Standards	Rating: Red/Amber/Green
Opening Hours	Green
Monthly Reports	Green
Translation Services	Green
Procedures For Dealing With Emergency Cases	Green
Database Of External Services	Green
Development Plan For Addressing Legal Problems In Target Area	Green
Facilities At Main Centre Access Point	Green
Performance Targets	
General Legal Advice provided during year 4	Green (8259)
Specialist NMS commenced during year 4	Green (3403)
80% of General Legal Help Clients in at least one priority group	Green (99%)
85% of Specialist Legal Help Clients in at least one priority group	Green (100%)
60% of Specialist and Representation Cases must provide a substantive benefit to the Client	Green (87%)
Quality of Advice – Peer Review rating of 3 or better in all categories	Green
80% of clients rate the service as either good or excellent	Green (97%)
Effective complaint resolution scheme	Green
All non urgent clients receive an appointment within 10 working days for either generalist or specialist advice	Green
All clients with an enquiry related to an emergency or urgent proceedings receive an appointment within 1 working day (or 4 days where a hearing date is set less than 14 days from when the client contacts the centre).	Green
Effective referrals	Green
SQM	Green
Programme of Community Legal Education	Green
Programme of Social Policy Work	Green

2) Generalist & Specialist NMS –Year 4 Performance

Leicester CLAC Cases Started

	Total Exp	Base Target	Fcast YTD	Act YTD	Act v YTD Fcast	Act as % of YTD Fcast	Act YTD	Act YTD
							Vs Base	Vs Total
Debt	1427	1090	1427	1584	157	111%	145%	111%
Housing	700	808	700	615	-85	88%	76%	88%
Employment	352	351	352	304	-48	86%	87%	86%
Community Care	176	122	176	80	-96	45%	66%	45%
Family	197	171	197	174	-23	88%	102%	88%
Welfare Benefits	900	547	900	646	-254	72%	118%	72%
Totals	3752	3089	3752	3403	-349	91%	110%	91%
Generalist	7589	7500	7589	8259	670	109%	110%	109%

Leicester CLAC Reported NMS (Telephone Cases)

Telephone Advice	Total Exp	Fcast YTD	Act YTD	Act v YTD Fcast	Act as % of YTD Fcas	Total Act vs Total Exp
Debt	550	550	421	-129	77%	77%
Welfare Benefits	300	300	261	-39	87%	87%

Welfare Benefits

Most clients presenting at CLAC are seeking help with welfare benefits. The majority of this has materialised as a result of the welfare reforms undertaken and the effect this is having on client benefits, finding them refused or stopped and wishing to appeal, and we anticipate more people seeking advice in the final year. As a result, the welfare benefit team has been working flat out at capacity and we have expanded the team now to cope with the extra demand, which is being done face to face within CLAC.

Family

Advice, particularly on relationship breakdown and access and residency of children, continue to be highly demanded by clients, and as such a good performance was seen against the targets set, with the base target being achieved yet again by the family team.

Employment

Employment advice is increasingly being sought by clients driven mainly by an increase in the number of dismissal cases and discrimination cases. We have also seen increases in TUPE cases, along with contract, wage and holiday disputes. Casework continues to be complex and lengthy (mainly around discrimination and dismissal) so to achieve the sort of levels seen is a great achievement by the employment team

Debt

The number of clients seeking debt advice is still as strong as ever. The impact of benefit changes, inflation increases in utilities and food has meant many are struggling to pay their bills (particularly single people) but we have achieved a good result for many clients where more affordable payments have been negotiated. We have also noticed an increase in the way Payday Loan debt has impacted client debt. We have also helped many debt clients understand their debt issues and given them the necessary advice so they can resolve these issues for themselves.

Housing

Demand for housing advice continues to be strong. As discussed in previous reports, we believe that more housing issues may be getting resolved without the need to issue proceedings, with more negotiation between landlords (private, council and social) and tenants in resolving issues on rent arrears or disrepair. We have noticed recently an increase in cases where people who had support on their mortgage interest payments are now finding these coming to the end of the statutory 2 year relief period (for those on income based job seekers allowance) and are coming to us for advice. We anticipate that more cases will materialise over the coming months over issues of deposits not being returned by private landlords. We have seen fewer cases for homelessness in the city, possible offset by the option of allocating people facing this situation privately rented lodgings to ease pressure on council stock.

Community Care

We are pleased to see an improvement around community care in recent months, following a great deal of awareness raising around the city. Clients are seeking help on matters including general assessments for services and provision of equipment / adaptation; carers assessment matters; Power of Attorney assistance and Court of Protection assistance for clients / family when a Power of Attorney is no longer appropriate due to the donor lacking mental capacity.

Summary

All told, 12,500 people presented at CLAC during year 4, with over 800 being seen at outreach. This is an increase of 1,500 on the previous year. The demand for the service continues to be enormous and the CLAC has performed well against the targets set. We anticipate more demand for services in the final year, driven mainly by the changes to welfare benefits and the knock on effect this will have on client income and housing issues. The financial gain delivered to clients amounted to some £1.72m.

3) Substantive Outcomes

% Sub Outcomes	Year 4		
	CC	SO	SO %
Community Care	50	33	66%
Debt	1214	1084	89%
Employment	374	338	90%
Family	212	119	56%
Housing	578	516	89%
Welfare Benefits	623	580	93%
Total	3051	2670	88%

- 88% of clients receive a positive outcome
- A third of all housing positive outcomes involved saving a client from eviction or successfully re-housing them.
- 44% of all Employment positive outcomes resulted in financial gain for the client.
- Over a third of all Welfare Benefit positive outcomes involve a better financial position for the client
- 33% of all Debt outcomes mean the clients have less debt or can better afford to pay their debts

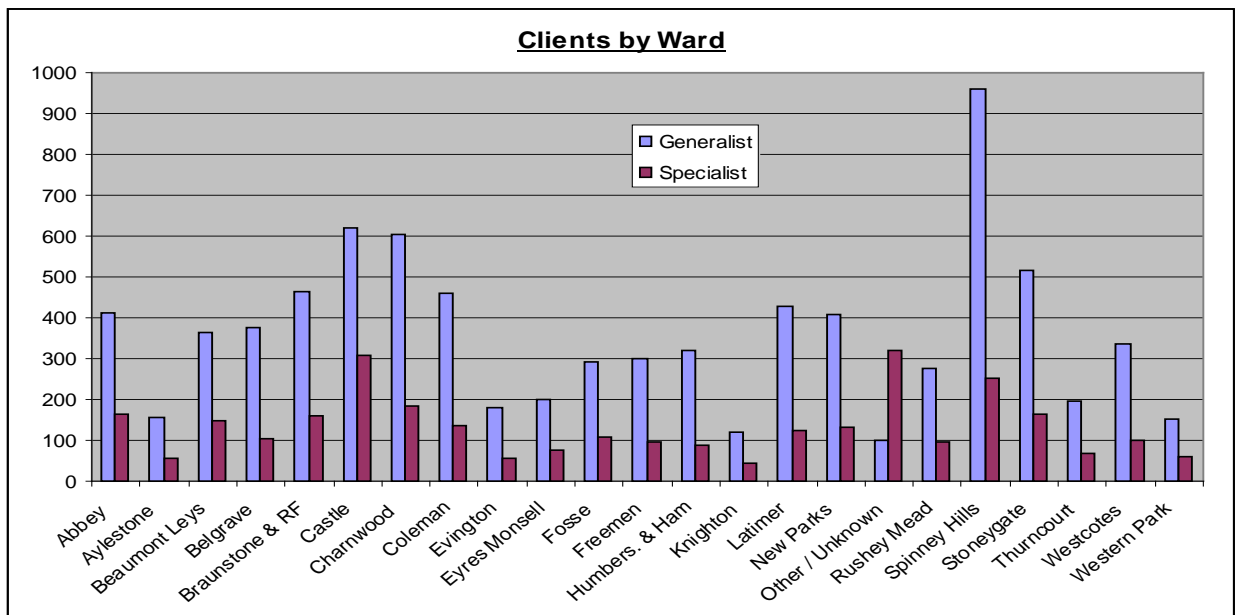
The table below shows a summary of the positive outcomes achieved

Area	Outcome	Positive Outcomes	Outcome %
Com Care	Assessments / services obtained or deficiencies remedied	23	46%
	Client advised and enabled to plan and/or manage their affairs better	2	4%
	More effective protection of vulnerable adult	1	2%
	Money provided or liability to pay charges reduced or eliminated	2	4%
	Statutory complaint is progressed more effectively	5	10%
	Total Files with Positive Outcome	33	66%
	Total files Closed	50	
Debt	Client advised and able to plan and/or manage their affairs better	693	57%
	Affordable payment arrangements negotiated on behalf of client	205	17%
	Admin order, Bankruptcy, IVA or DRO made	122	10%
	Debt written off / reduced or liability contested successfully	64	5%
	Total Files with Positive Outcome	1084	89%
	Total files Closed	1214	
Employment	Client advised and enabled to better understand their employment rights	166	44%
	Client receives financial award	163	44%
	Employer action benefits client	8	2%
	Total Files with Positive Outcome	337	90%
	Total files Closed	374	
Family	Advice given – no further action required	57	27%
	Decree Absolute/Dissolution obtained	53	25%
	Settlement with benefit or no loss for the client	3	1%
	Client and partner reconciled or sent to mediation	6	3%
	Total Files with Positive Outcome	119	56%
	Total files Closed	212	
Housing	Client housed, re-housed or retains home	194	34%
	Client advised and enabled to plan and/or manage their affairs better	253	44%
	Other party action benefits client	43	7%
	Repairs undertaken to client home	9	2%
	Client receives financial award / or amount owed is reduced	17	3%
	Total Files with Positive Outcome	516	89%
	Total files Closed	578	
Welfare Benefits	Client advised and able to plan and/or manage their affairs better	342	55%
	Client receives increased payment / backdated amount or amount owed is reduced	238	38%
	Total Files with Positive Outcome	580	93%
	Total files Closed	623	

4) Priority Groups

Priority Groups	Gen	Spec
Clients with a disability	17%	19%
Clients on very low incomes	71%	87%
Age Under 19	4%	7%
Age over 60	10%	9%
Clients who are unemployed	40%	49%
Clients who are lone parents	9%	13%
Clients from BME groups	61%	50%
Clients who are homeless	2%	2%
Clients who are victims of violence	1%	2%
Clients who are carers	3%	3%
Clients living in a priority area	74%	79%

The CLAC continues to see clients a wide range of clients who come from diverse backgrounds, are vulnerable and are on low incomes. Spinney Hills continues to be the ward where most clients come from, closely followed by castle and Charnwood.



5) Waiting Times

- 61% of clients are waiting less than hour to see a generalist on average and 82% are seen within an hour and a half.
- Waiting times for specialist appointments Year 4.

	Avg Q1	Avg Q2	Avg Q3	Avg Q4	Year Avg
Debt	3	3	1	1	2
Welfare Benefits	11	11	9	8	10
Employment	6	7	5	8	6
Family	7	9	5	7	7
Housing	3	2	1	1	2
Community Care	4	0.5	3	4	3

6) Client feedback

	Total	G	S
Clients who rated our service as good or excellent	96%	97%	96%
Clients who said our staff were easy to understand	95%	97%	94%
Clients who rated the advice from staff as good or excellent	95%	97%	94%
Clients who said they were treated fairly	89%	86%	91%
Clients who said they would recommend us	89%	87%	91%

7) Outreach

	No of clients	No shows	WB	DEBT	FAM	EMP	CC	HOUS	Other	Form Fill
Apr-10	63	12	31	10	2	2	1	8	3	1
May-10	70	8	46	11	3	3	0	2	2	3
Jun-10	91	13	62	10	4	4	1	3	1	3
Jul-10	68	8	54	1	3	4	0	0	2	3
Aug-10	85	8	65	4	3	2	0	6	2	0
Sep-10	93	10	64	4	5	3	2	1	6	1
Oct-10	79	4	58	11	1	3	3	1	5	1
Nov-10	95	14	66	8	2	4	4	3	5	4
Dec-10	60	13	41	0	4	1	0	3	2	3
Jan-11	89	12	59	8	6	3	1	3	3	3
Feb-11	76	11	58	7	0	0	2	3	2	3
Mar-11	79	17	49	17	4	0	4	4	3	7
YTD	948	130	653	91	37	29	18	37	36	32

The outreach service continues to be widely used with Welfare Benefits the main issue arising

8) Marketing & Referral Networking – Year 4 Highlights

- Series of meetings, presentation of CLAC services and / or training sessions delivered to frontline staff in organisations such as Residents group in New Parks, LCC Revenues and Benefits teams, LCC Housing Teams, Work Programme providers, Connexions, Family Intervention Project, Money Advice Bureau, Money Advice Service, Open Hands.
- 150 organisations contacted to raise awareness of Community Care advice available for their service users
- Increased Outreach provision at Northfields and Netherhall.
- Attended local services event at Eyres Monsell Community Centre raising awareness of CLAC services to local residents
- New CLAC literature developed and distributed around St Peters and by Housing Officers to take into every home as part as their “every tenant” visitation programme. This is being led through the team at New Parks.
- Reviews of welfare and CLAC services with [REDACTED]
- CLAC represented on the Leicester Welfare Advice Forum
- Advert and Feature space taken in Community Care Guide 2012, The Saff ward magazine, City Housing News and the Leicester Mercury

9) Telephone Service

421 of 1584 debt cases (26%) and 261 of 646 welfare benefit cases (40%) were done by telephone during the year.

Area	Fund	Face to Face	Telephone
DBT	LA	24%	7%
	LSC	76%	93%
WEB	LA	23%	15%
	LSC	77%	85%

For Debt, 24% of cases for Face to Face advice were funded by LCC, but only 7% by telephone
The LSC funded 76% Face to Face and 93% by telephone

For Welfare Benefits, 23% of cases for Face to Face advice were funded by LCC, but only 15% by telephone. The LSC funded 77% Face to Face and 85% by telephone

Outcomes

Area	Outcome for client	Face to Face	Telephone
DBT	Debt written off, reduced or liability successfully contested	5%	7%
	Affordable payment arrangements negotiated on behalf of client	13%	23%
	Cleint referred for Admin order, IVA, Bankruptcy or DRO	13%	4%
	Client advised and able to plan and/or manage their affairs better	57%	57%
	Total Positive Outcome	89%	91%
WEB	Client receives lump sum / increased payment or liability is successfully contested	38%	39%
	Client advised and able to plan and/or manage their affairs better	56%	52%
	Total Positive Outcome	94%	91%

Within debt, an outcome where more affordable payments are negotiated on behalf of the client occurs more often. For more complicated matters, such as debt relief orders, face to face appears to work best. Overall the telephone service provides a level of positive outcome similar if not more than Face to Face (although on far less clients)

In Welfare Benefits, results are fairly even in securing increased levels of benefit for clients, as well as advising clients on how to better manage their affairs. Overall the telephone service provides a level of positive outcome similar to Face to Face (although on far less clients)

Accessibility

Ethnicity	Face to Face	Telephone
Other	3%	3%
White British	36%	49%
White Irish	0%	0%
Black British African	10%	6%
Black British Carribean	3%	3%
Black British Other	1%	1%
Asian British Indian	19%	14%
Asian British Pakistani	3%	2%
Asian British Bangladeshi	1%	1%
Chinese	0%	0%
Mixed White and Black Carribean	1%	2%
Mixed White and Black African	1%	1%
Mixed White and Asian	0%	0%
Mixed Other	1%	1%
White Other	5%	5%
Asian British Other	4%	3%
Unknown	12%	9%

Disability	Face to Face	Telephone
Not Considered Disabled	75%	79%
Long Standing Illness	8%	5%
Physical Impairment	6%	6%
Unknown	4%	3%
Mental Health Condition	4%	4%
Other	1%	2%
Learning Disability	1%	1%
Sensory Impairment	0%	1%
Cognitive Impairment	0%	0%

Age	Face to Face	Telephone
Under 19	5%	18%
20-29	20%	28%
30-29	24%	16%
40-49	25%	20%
50-59	18%	15%
Over 60	9%	9%

The use of the telephone service is fairly evenly spread across demographic groups when compared to face to face advice.

Younger and older age groups seem to prefer telephone advice, whilst those with middle age prefer face to face. Clients with disabilities are represented fairly evenly.

The CLAC has welcomed the use of telephone advice over the past 3 years, without which the level of casework actually achieved would not have been possible. However, whilst it can still play a role, we are actively seeking additional staff for face to face roles, for the additional demand for the service we envisage in the final year

Final Contract Delivery Year

The CLAC continues to deliver strong results in meeting the advice need in Leicester at the end of this fourth contract year. Work still to be done however, to continually improve the service, including,

- Continue to support advice on housing and debt issues across the city, working with housing teams, council income management teams, other advocacy organisations and community groups
- Provide more assistance in the area of welfare benefits, to assist with handling the increase demand for this service, as a result of welfare changes already undertaken, and those yet to come.
- Continue working with care organisations to promote Community Care advice
- Continue to deliver training events to external organisations and their frontline staff to raise awareness of CLAC and help them better understand the issues people may be facing that can help them refer to us.
- Assist LCC with identifying the lessons to be learned from CLAC, so that the choices made about how advice in Leicester post March 2013 are as informed as possible.