

ADVICE AGENCIES

ADVICE SERVICES ALLIANCE

All the important NfP agencies are members of the ASA, the coordinating body for independent advice services in the UK. The ASA founded Advicenow, an independent, not-for-profit website providing up-to-date information on rights and legal issues.

CITIZENS ADVICE

Best known NfP agency with 394 CAB across England and Wales. All members of Citizens Advice which provides training and support to member bureaux. Helps around 2 million people a year.

CAB offers free, independent and confidential advice' in many areas e.g. debt and consumer issues; benefits; housing; and legal matters such as crime employment and immigration. Advisers help fill out forms, write letters, negotiate with creditors and represent clients at court or tribunal.

Seeks to influence the Government's policies on areas that concern.

ADVICE UK

Largest network of independent advice agencies in the UK. By combining together, they have a better buying power in the purchase of goods and services for themselves and a powerful collective voice on social policy issues.

Many members target their services to meet the needs of particular sections of the population: identified, for example, by age, ethnicity, sexuality, disability or unemployment. Others target particular areas of need such as homelessness, people with HIV & AIDS or drug and alcohol abuse.

The member organisations are mostly registered charities and based in both inner-city areas and rural locations. Over half of them are based in Britain's 50 poorest localities. They vary considerably in size, resource levels, objectives and target populations. They range in size from small organisations serving local communities, through larger city-wide organizations, to those operating at a regional or national level.

Most member centres have a number of paid staff while a minority are staffed mainly by volunteers. The specialist nature of many members' services means that most deal with more complex enquiries that can require several hours work before being resolved. Many centres are experienced in pursuing problems right through to tribunal or court if required and there is an increasing trend for centres to employ solicitors.

LAW CENTRES

There are over 40 grant aided non-profit making Law Centres which together form the Law Centres Federation. They provide free legal service to local people of a type most suitable for that area. Their speciality includes welfare rights, immigration and nationality, housing and homelessness, employment rights, and sex and race discrimination. Other work varies according to local need and may include mental health, disability rights, education rights, juvenile crime and children's rights.

They also provide training and info about the law and people's rights; go out into their communities and identify legal problems at an early stage; take on cases that clarify and extend rights for the public; comment on and propose improvements in the law as it affects their clients; provide legal advice and services for community organisations.

Law Centres are funded under contract from the LSC and by other organisations. All law centres have salaried lawyers, both solicitors and barristers.

SPECIALIST AGENCIES

Advice on specific matters e.g Age Concern - elderly; DIAL - disabled; Homeless UK and Shelter - homeless; Mind - mental health; and the National Debtline

TRADES UNIONS

Free legal advice offered as part of the membership, especially for personal injuries at work. **NOTE** Unite offers free legal advice and representation across a wide spectrum for members **and their families**.

OTHER SOURCES

LITIGATION FUNDING. A **commercial** third party finances litigation but has no direct interest in the proceedings. Funder receives around 20% of the net proceeds of a successful case by way of a DBA. Most are members of the Association of Litigation Funders. In 2021, litigation funders committed some £2.2billion to legal claims.

CROWDFUNDING. The public, who have **no personal financial interest**, donate small sums to enable C to fund a case. CrowdJustice the main source for donations.