

Ribble Valley Citizens Advice Bureau Newsletter

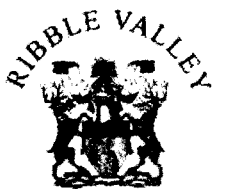
Autumn/Winter 2008



19/21 Wesleyan Row, Parson Lane, Clitheroe
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Special points of interest:

- Over £24,833 gained for Ribble Valley residents over the last 6 months
- Appointments now available at LONGRIDGE-Community Hospital
- Ribble Valley CAB celebrate 21 years of service
- RVCAB Winner of CAB Social Policy Oscar
- Prescription Charges
- Join our team and work for local people



BOROUGH COUNCIL

Over £24,000 gained for Ribble Valley Residents

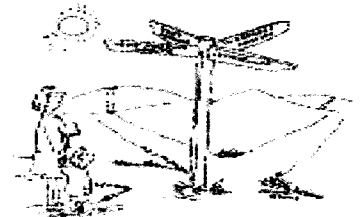
£24,833 is the income found for residents of the Ribble Valley over the last 6 months by the Ribble Valley Citizens Advice Bureau.

This extra money was

gained for our clients by working through benefit checks and highlighting clients entitlement to tax credits, housing benefit, council tax benefit, pension credits, refunds and employment payments.

We urge anyone who

thinks they may be entitled to benefits to get in touch and let us check it out for them.



CAB Celebrating 21 Years of service to the Ribble Valley

A Wine and Cheese reception, sponsored by Byrnes and Taste, was given at the Annual General Meeting held on 27th October 2008 at the Ribble Valley Council Offices, to celebrate 21 years of the Ribble Valley Citizens Advice Bureau.

The AGM was attended by

The Ribble Valley Borough Council Mayor and Mayoress and the Mayor of Longridge.

A picture was presented to the CAB by a grateful client for the help, advice and support she was given over the last 6 months.

Other testimonials from clients were read out in

gratitude for the help given by the CAB enabling a fresh start in life for some.



CAB now at Longridge

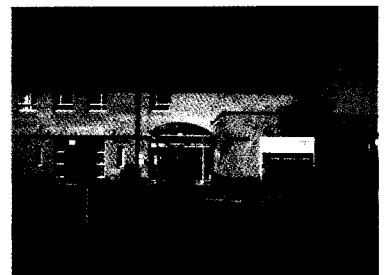
East Lancashire 
Primary Care Trust

Our outreach advice session was started in October of this year from bureau funds, initially for 6 months. Fortunately we have now secured funding from the East Lancs Primary Care Trust (NHS) for this to continue until March 2011.

Our CAB Adviser,

Catherine, is able to offer appointments on a Thursday morning at Longridge community Hospital.

To make an appointment please ring 01200 427336.



legal services
COMMISSION





Housing Benefit and LHA (Local Housing Allowance)

The House of Lords has ruled that the Rent Service has been acting unlawfully in the way it sets localities and broad rental market arrears (BRMAs) for local reference rents and local housing allowance purposes.

The Law Lords found that the Rent Service calculated Mr Herrman's local reference

rent using too large an area.

As a result of the judgement, The Rent Service has announced that it will review the guidance that it gives its rent officers in the setting of localities and BRMA's.

All existing locality and BRMA boundaries will remain as they are while the guidance review takes place. As soon as new guidance has been completed

an entirely new scheme of Rent Service reviews will commence.

We hope that this decision will have a positive effect in the Ribble Valley Area on Housing Benefit shortfalls, by reducing the size of the areas across which the LRR and LHA apply.

"On Incapacity

Benefit? Should they be exempt from prescription charges?

Prescription Charges

Gordon Brown recently announced that cancer patients will be exempt from prescription charges and that the government is considering further exemptions for other long term medical conditions.

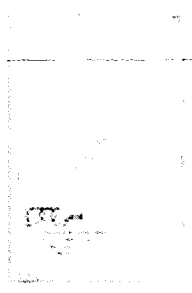
The National Citizens Advice have written to the Health Minister, Dawn Primarola MP, expressing concern that priority should be given to provid-

ing more help to those on local incomes with long term prescription needs, regardless of their medical diagnosis.

Citizens Advice made the argument, based on national bureau evidence, and that one way to achieve this would be to extend exemption to people in receipt of Incapacity Benefit (and ESA) since bureau evidence demonstrates that a common factor in the

vast majority of cases where charges are causing a problem, is that the person is in receipt of Incapacity Benefit.

If you know of anyone with problems with prescription charges please let us know. The information would have to include evidence of a persons income, benefits and medical condition.



Well done Ribble Valley CAB—Winner of the Social Policy Oscar

The National Association of CAB presented us with a national award in September for the best bureau press coverage over the past year.

For strategic planning and

achieving goals, raising the profile of the bureau, recruiting volunteer advisers and trustees.

The sustained and varied coverage achieved included: local take on campaigns i.e. use/

charges of the school bus,

Achievement of press releases and advice columns, promotion of bureau (new look for bureau), responding to local issues (local redundancy pay) and national issues eg 'Beware Of Mortgage Rescue'.

Oscar



Join our Team

Do you realise it takes a team of 40 people, with different backgrounds and skills, to run your local Citizens Advice Bureau service and we want the very best for the Ribble Valley.

We are always looking to recruit volunteer advisers and Trustee Board Members. At present we are looking for a volunteer administration worker for one day per week.

Please contact Manager Katy

Katy Marshall on 01200 428998 if

you think you may be interested.

Katy also welcomes invitations to give presentations to local groups and organisations about our work.