

---

---

# **Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice Research and Campaigns Newsletter November 2018**

**Evidence gathering underpins our Research and Campaigns work.**

## **What is Research & Campaigns?**

This is our second external newsletter from the Research and Campaigns team. Our service holds a huge amount of insight and data about the problems our clients and their wider communities face. We use this to do several things:

- To help us research issues further
- To influence decision makers to change policies and practices
- To campaign to get decision makers to change policies and practices



Citizens Advice Arun & Chichester is an operating name of Arun & Chichester Citizens Advice Bureau. Arun & Chichester Citizens Advice Bureau is a Company Limited by Guarantee Registered Company No. 4787378, Registered Charity No. 1099640  
Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN 617491  
Registered Address: 14/16 Anchor Springs, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 6BP

---

---

## Don't miss a trick, Be Safe Online and Avoid the Fraudsters



In partnership with WSCC Community Wellbeing and Safety we hosted a large event for groups supporting vulnerable or socially isolated people in our community on 20 September. Providing Tools, Hints, Tips and Sign-posting to avoid the Fraudster. 39 organisations attended who provide support to 10s of thousands of people across the county.

The most powerful presentation came from a scam victim, identified only as Sally. She was tricked out of just over £10,000 by an online 'sweetheart'. The lonely pensioner told those present how the lying Romeo spun her a series of lies, deceits and denials to cruelly play on her emotions. The impact on the victims is not just financial; it is also distressing and has a long-term emotional affect and mental health impact on people's wellbeing as well.

Katy Bourne, the Sussex police and crime commissioner, said her elders' commission of 65-85-year-olds told her the risk of being conned left elderly people more terrified of picking up their home phone than of anti-social behaviour in the streets. An average of £20,000 was being taken from each scam victim across Sussex,

She said, "These criminals are experts in what they are doing. It's big business to them. The more people are talking about it, the more people are educated about it – the better it is."

We learnt that you can with a little thought avoid all nuisance calls and the need for vigilance to stay safe online.

## **Benefits**

In the first three months of full Universal Credit (UC), Arun Chichester Citizens Advice has supported 256 clients who have attended the Centres for assistance. Some of the issues they have come for are as follows; making the initial claim, digital support, personal budgeting, housing costs, foodbank and LAN vouchers, advance payments, debt, and being sanctioned. We would welcome any case studies you wish to share with us on all UC related issues. Email [campaigns@arunchichestercab.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@arunchichestercab.org.uk).

In October Citizens Advice published a report on UC for Single Disabled People. It highlights a significant drop in financial support for single disabled people in a range of circumstances. This includes losses that can be more than £300 a month for working disabled people because of flaws in the design of the new benefit. The Work Allowance is meant to improve work incentives for disabled people in Universal Credit. To access the report the link is below:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/policy/policy-research-topics/welfare-policy-research-surveys-and-consultation-responses/welfare-policy-research/universal-credit-for-single-disabled-people/>

## **Arun Council Tax Reduction Consultation**

Arun District Council is consulting on proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction scheme from 01st April 2019. If you would like to have your say on their proposals you can complete their online survey on their website – <http://www.arun.gov.uk/counciltax> and click on Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/2020 Consultation. The consultation closes on 14th November 2018.



## Campaigns



### Big Energy Saving Week

This year is taking place week beginning Monday 21 January. The aim of the week is to get people to Check, Switch and Save. We'll be raising awareness of how to switch energy supplier or tariff to get the best deal, access discounts and grants, and make homes energy efficient. We'll also be helping people to find the support they need. We are at the planning stage of the week, events are to be targeted in areas of fuel poverty.



**National Consumer Week 2018** runs from 26 November ("Cyber Monday") and will focus on consumers' rights when using online marketplaces. Your rights can be different when buying from an online marketplace – websites where traders and private individuals list and sell products. This will be a poster and social media campaign. To find out more about your rights and national consumer week at [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/NCW18](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/NCW18)

Following seeing several clients wrongly claiming exemption from **NHS charges** we are looking at what we can do to prevent this. This has become more important now that the government are clamping down on service providers (dentists, pharmacies and opticians) and people claiming exemption through benefits and health conditions. If you have any experience of this please email [campaigns@arunchichestercab.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@arunchichestercab.org.uk)

If you want to know more about our research and campaigns work we would really like to hear from you. We value your input. You can contact the team on [campaigns@arunchichestercab.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@arunchichestercab.org.uk).