



**6<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

**Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire ensures people living with multiple sclerosis receive the advice and support they need**

Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire has provided advice to people living with multiple sclerosis (MS) and their carers in the West Oxfordshire area for many years. The charity's free advice service supports people with a variety of issues such as benefits, consumer, employment, energy and supporting appeals.

The MS Society (West Oxfordshire) have worked in partnership with Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire to fund this essential service for people with MS.

As many people living with MS have mobility and memory issues, the charity provides home visits to ensure they are given the extra support they need. Issues tend to be complex so third party support is essential to help them navigate the range of benefits and forms to be completed. Typically issues are a combination of \*Personal Independent Payment (PIP) claims and appeals, Universal Credit claims, energy advice and more.

**The charity helped appeal a benefit decision that found her fit for work, creating an overpayment of Employment and Support Allowance, The client said:** *"I wouldn't have had a clue without your advice and would have just repaid the overpayment and carried on as I previously had done"*. Citizens Advice successfully challenged the decision, removing the overpayment and ensuring that her income was maintained.

**Another client's father following the outcome of a successful Personal Independence Payment appeal, said:** *"As a family we cannot thank you enough for all you have done for us."* Our MS Caseworker has identified that Marie should be eligible for PIP, helped her to claim and when it was refused, help her to appeal the decision. This made a significant difference to her income and increased her eligibility for other benefits.

**Tracy Clark, Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire Supervisor said:**

"The MS project is a really rewarding project to work on as the client group are facing many challenges with their health as well as the presenting issues. The clients tend to have a real perseverance to overcome the difficulties they are faced with and are often very humble individuals. It's a pleasure to work on this project."

**How to get in touch**

Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire dedicated MS adviser can give free, confidential, impartial and independent advice on a range of issues, including:

- Benefits – entitlement, claims and appeal
- Housing
- Debt and money
- Work
- Family
- Discrimination
- Health & social care
- And many other issues

➤ **Website:** [citizensadvicewestoxon.org.uk](http://citizensadvicewestoxon.org.uk)

➤ **Telephone:** 01993 892065

➤ **Email:** [advice@oxfordshiresas.org.uk](mailto:advice@oxfordshiresas.org.uk)

To find your local Oxfordshire Citizens Advice for advice, visit [www.caox.org.uk](http://www.caox.org.uk)

### **Notes to editors**

\*Many people with MS can claim Personal Independence Payment (PIP). It's a benefit that can help cover the extra costs people may face if they need help doing everyday tasks or find it difficult to get around your home. Find out more about [MS Society](#) and how they can support people living with MS.

### **About Citizens Advice**

**We give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.**

- The four Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire, Oxford, North Oxfordshire and South Northamptonshire and South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse all exist to provide free, confidential, independent advice in Oxfordshire and they are all members of Citizens Advice, the national charity
- For Citizens Advice general local free telephone advice, visit [www.caox.org.co.uk](http://www.caox.org.co.uk).
- Citizens Advice Freephone Adviceline 0800 144 8848 and Textphone: 0800 144 8884
- Citizens Advice in Oxfordshire are supported by more than 670 trained volunteers and 52 paid staff working across 14 advice centres. In the last year, we helped 27,000 people across Oxfordshire with 78,000 issues.
- Citizens Advice is made up of the national charity Citizens Advice; the network of independent local Citizens Advice charities across England and Wales; the Citizens Advice consumer service; and the Witness Service.
- Citizens Advice helped 2.7 million people face to face, over the phone, by email and web chat in 19-20. We had 3.5 million visits to our national website. For full service statistics see Citizens Advice monthly publication [Advice Trends](#).