



# East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau Weekly Update

24/09/2020

## EU Citizen Support Project & Immigration Advice Update

Throughout the pandemic, East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau has maintained supporting client's with immigration related issues. Both EU and non-EU nationals can receive confidential and impartial advice by one of our advisers, who is trained to OISC level 1.

One case study in particular, which highlights the importance of maintaining immigration advice throughout Covid-19 is from a recent client who approached the Bureau for support. This client is an asylum seeker living in the UK with Refugee leave. He has lived in East Renfrewshire since the beginning of 2020 and is looking to be reunited with his children, who are still living in his home country, after 2 years. The client had to flee his home country for his own safety and left behind 6 children, who have been cared for by his elderly mother. The client is desperate to have his children living in Scotland with him and came to the Bureau for advice on how he can be reunited with them. The client was supported in applying for a family reunion for 5 of his children who are under the age of 18. Applications were filled in by our EU Support Adviser, along with all the necessary paperwork which coincides with the applications as evidence and support. During his appointment, the client was also supported with a variety of other non-immigration related issues, including: A community care grant application to the Scottish Welfare Fund, council tax reduction and a benefit check.

Cases like this demonstrate the range of advice and the holistic support approach our CAB advisers are able to offer and often clients can be supported with multiple issues during the same appointment.

Our EU Citizen Support Officer is also still providing over the phone advice to those who need to complete a Settled Status Application and supporting those EU Citizens who wish to stay in the country following Brexit. Any client looking for immigration or Settled Status support and advice can contact our office on 0141 881 2032, or contact our EU Support Adviser Cara on 07500972862.

## Money Talks Project Update

The warm home discount is now open for applications. ERCAB have been dealing with Warm home discount applications where customers could be entitled to get £140 off their electricity bill. You may be eligible if you receive the guarantee credit part of pension credit or are on a low income. Please contact citizen's advice bureau to see if you are eligible.

ERCAB have also been working with clients with their utilities debt. We have made applications to a number of grant schemes who are able to help towards your gas and electricity debt. This has made clients set up a payment plan more affordable to them.

ERCAB energy adviser has been working closely with utility companies to make sure clients are on their priority services register. This helps clients who are disabled, of a pension age or if you are considered vulnerable. Clients have been able to get help with things such as, reading your energy meter, moving your energy meter free of charge or getting your bills sent to someone else eg. A carer.

ERCAB have been working hard filling out community care grants for clients who are in desperate need. If you need essential help and you want assistance in filling out a community care grant then please contact the citizen's advice bureau who can assist you in filling out the form over a telephone appointment.

Our office can be contacted on 0141 881 2032 for support on any of the above matters, or our Money Talks Adviser Mark can be contacted directly on 07539378806.

## Patient Advice & Support Service (PASS) Success Story

This week, our PASS Adviser Maureen received the good news that the SPSO are fully upholding one of our PASS client's NHS complaints. This is a great outcome for the client and the hard work that Maureen has put into this case.

**This update will be distributed weekly with the next expected on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020.**