



East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau Weekly Update

17/12/2020

ERCAB – Year in Review

East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau unlocked a total of £4.1 Million for the local people who sought their help in the year 2019/20.

The sum includes money gained through social security payments, employment entitlements, savings on utility costs and reductions in debt payments.

In response to lockdown, ERCAB had to suspend face-to-face advice in March 2020 but adapted quickly to circumstances and remained contactable for advice by phone and email. Since April the CAB has issued 14,534 pieces of advice. We reopened for face to face advice in essential circumstances for vulnerable clients in August. [

CAB Manager, Teresa O’Hara said:

“I’m extremely proud of the work that our team does every day. Our advisers concentrate on individual cases day by day, but when you see the total amount that we gained for people it really is quite breath-taking.

“And I would expect that a lot of that money will be spent in local shops and businesses, so helping to boost them too.

“Investing in CABs is investing in our people and the local community. For Every £1 invested in core advice ERCAB delivered £19 for people in East Renfrewshire. That’s a great return on investment that makes a real difference for people.

“This has been a year like no other, and the pandemic changed the way of life for so many of us, but our amazing advisers didn’t miss a beat and ensured people in East Renfrewshire got the advice they needed.

“It just goes to show that, if you are struggling financially, our advice really can help you. Our service is completely free, impartial and confidential.”

Best wishes to everyone for Christmas and the New Year!

This is the last ERCAB News of 2020; we will be back on 6 January 2021. We wish you all a safe and happy holiday when it comes. Thank you for reading our Newsletter, things can only get better in 2021!

East Renfrewshire CAB has been involved and working with partner organisations in a number of projects including: Connecting Scotland, Spirit of Christmas, back to School Bank and assisting clients with food and fuel vouchers for over the Christmas Period.

Housing Success Story

Client first attended Bureau with this matter in August 2019. She is a registered landlord and used a letting agency to manage the tenancy for her for which she paid them a 10% fee of the rental income. Client never received the correct amount of rent, was never provided with monthly statements, copies of invoices/costs incurred or details of any deductions made from the rent. As a result client has been underpaid. Despite numerous attempts to resolve the issue with the agency client was getting nowhere so came to ERCAB for assistance.

“Letting Agent Code of Practice” notification letter sent to agency but received no response.

Helped client to apply to the First Tier Tribunal Housing and Property Chamber (HPC)

After numerous delays due to COVID Conference Call Hearing finally took place on 1 September 2020 with Housing Adviser representing client

Outcome

Tribunal found in favour of client and issued Letting Agent Enforcement Order (LAEO) requesting they provide copy of Management Agreement written statement and records of all financial transactions relating to the tenancy (rent received, invoices etc.).

Compensation Awarded: £500 as it was difficult to determine exact amount due to lack of records/invoices. Client was delighted with the outcome

Agency did not respond/comply with LAEO so Tribunal will now serve notice of the failure to comply with the LAEO on the Scottish Ministers and the case will shortly be referred to the police for prosecution.