

**moneyadvice**scotland  
Scotland's Money Charity

2018  
IMPACT  
REPORT



To be the driving force towards financial  
wellbeing for the people of Scotland

## FOREWORD



First of all it has been our privilege to have been involved in Money Advice Scotland, as Convenor, and Chief Executive respectively over the past year.

Year end 31 March 2018 was yet another challenging year for Money Advice Scotland. Like other organisations we experienced funding cuts which ultimately affect some service provision. Our Impact Report however shows that we continue to be at the forefront of being the driving force towards financial wellbeing for the people of Scotland, and to promote a fairer Scotland where people are not stigmatised by debt.

As an organisation we believe that advisers and consumers in general are at the heart of our strategy. Despite having fewer incoming resources, we spent more on our charitable activities last year. Our Council of Management took the bold step of agreeing to continue funding of the Helpline, previously funded by Scottish Government (until 30 September 2017), and the Helpline continued through the application of our unrestricted reserves. It is our view that we need to be able to offer support to people who are in debt, and to get them to the debt advice agency that suits their needs. Our helpline last year received 1977 contacts, which is an increase of 32% on the previous year. Clearly there is a growing demand for this type of signposting/referral service.

We know from our own internal research and that of other agencies that consumers, when presenting with debt problems, are doing so as they are experiencing issues with managing everyday living costs. Whilst people still have credit card and other debts, everyday living costs are much more prevalent than before.

Whilst resources are a challenge for us, there are many opportunities before us. The Wyman review set out a number of recommendations for the advice sector, including using digital engagement more effectively. For example, improved use of web chat, and online advice. We appreciate that some agencies don't have resources to move to a digital agenda. However, we have a part to play and we want to assist the sector with support and to get more people to advice at the earliest opportunity using other methods than face to face. This should help free up some resources to deal with clients who need face to face intervention.

Our new strategy from 1 April 2018 acknowledges the need for more support for advisers, through digital channels and tools, and we aim to achieve that over the next few years. Early progress has been made, but there is much to do to achieve this strategic aim.

Now turning to successes over the past year. We have maintained a steady training programme, with access to new courses. Overall 726 advisers attended 63 Wiseradviser courses. In addition, the MATRICS Consultancy service reached record levels during this report year, with 576 issues being dealt with by the staff. This resulted in a 22% increase since last year.

We provided 740 financial capability sessions across Scotland. The team delivered 83 Money Goals workshops.

In terms of member engagement, we held a very successful conference, 167 members attended our consultation events, which included topics such as the Common Financial Tool.

On the positive side of funding, we secured new funding from the Big Energy Fund which resulted in us working in partnership with organisations and individuals in the West Dunbartonshire and North Glasgow areas. This was an awareness raising exercise, which assisted consumers in making better choices with regard to their energy efficiency, and their bills in general.

So, all in all a busy year, but the big challenge is achieving sustainable funding. For those partners who fund us, thank you. We really appreciate your support, and look forward to working with you next year.

Yvonne MacDermid OBE  
Chief Executive

Christine Sinclair  
Convenor

# OBJECTIVE ONE



## LEADING AND IMPROVING THE EDUCATION, TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS OF MONEY ADVISERS IN SCOTLAND

### >> TRAINING

Training remains our fundamental service for the advice sector in Scotland.



In 2017/18, **726** advisers benefited from **63** free-to-access Wiseradviser training courses, delivered in partnership with Citizens Advice Scotland and Money Advice Trust.

On average, **94%** of attendees rated training as good or excellent.

### >> MATRICS

Enquiries to MATRICS reached record levels in 2017/18.

**576** issues were advised on by the project which is delivered in partnership with Citizens Advice Scotland – a **22%** year-on-year increase.



At a time when cuts to advice services have reduced the number of experienced advisers within the sector, expert second-tier support is essential. **98%** of MATRICS responses were rated as excellent.

### >> STANDARDS

During the 2017/18 period, we continued to support the sector towards achieving SNSIAP.



After working with our consultancy service, one advice provider recorded a **51%** increase in assessment score.

### >> CONFERENCE

Our annual conference is the premier event on the money advice calendar.



As ever, thanks to all delegates, speakers, exhibitors, and our contributors, for helping to make our conference the success that we all look forward to year after year.

## OBJECTIVE TWO



### LEADING AND IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL WELLBEING OF THE PEOPLE OF SCOTLAND

#### >> HELPLINE

The Money Advice Scotland Helpline acts as a gateway into advice for people in debt and financial difficulty.



In 2017/18, our helpline received **1,977** contacts – an increase of **32%** on the previous year.

**93%** of callers reported a drop in worry levels after contacting our helpline.

#### >> FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

**740** individuals attended workshops and sessions delivered by our financial capability project.



The team delivered a total of **83** Money Goals workshops. **242** individuals were enrolled in a coaching unit.

#### >> E-LEARNING MODULES

Our financial capability team administers the mandatory e-learning modules that are completed before a person is discharged from bankruptcy.



In 2017/18, **1,340** people were registered as new e-learners for our modules.

#### >> FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Our quality assurance consultant supported the establishment of Conduit Scotland, a new community lender operating in Fife, West Lothian and Falkirk.



The project aims to provide an alternative to high-cost short-term lenders.

## OBJECTIVE THREE



### LEADING AND IMPROVING PUBLIC AND SOCIAL POLICY IN SCOTLAND

#### >> A VOICE FOR OUR MEMBERS

Money Advice Scotland is a membership organisation and we work to ensure that the voice of our members features persuasively on the policy agenda.



During 2017/18, we responded to **11** consultations on subjects including the future of debt advice, and the future of the Common Financial Tool.

#### >> MEMBERS EVENTS

Our information and consultation events are designed to keep our members up-to-date with the issues of key importance to the sector.



**167** members attended our consultation events delivered in partnership with organisations including the Financial Conduct Authority, the Banking Standards Board, and the Accountant in Bankruptcy.

#### >> EVIDENCE BASE

The MAS Evidence Base – a new social policy reporting tool for advisers to report concerns – was launched in 2017. This provides essential intelligence to help influence policymakers and regulators.



Calls to action in our 2017/18 Evidence Base report included:

- We call on the Scottish Government to consider all options available to help ensure that debt advice is adequately funded, so that the sector can continue to provide essential support to the growing number of people who need it
- We call for a full review of alternative approaches to calculating contributions for debt solutions, and advocate for the introduction of a new minimum income/living standards check on all financial statements
- We call on the AiB, the FCA, and relevant RPBs to take action to address the growing numbers of clients in trust deeds when other options are more suitable

## LOOKING FORWARD



in 2018, we launched our new strategy.

Our 2018-23 strategy is our most ambitious yet and builds on our existing offering to our members, to the people of Scotland, and in terms of influencing social policy.

Following extensive consultation with staff and Council of Management, we recognised that it was important to take heed of the changing landscape that we are working within.

To that end, the strategy incorporates a new fourth objective to advance the availability of digital products and services.

Highlights and upcoming developments include:



NEW TRAINING FOR  
THE ADVICE SECTOR



UPDATED FINANCIAL INCLUSION  
PROGRAMME TARGETED AT  
PRIORITY GROUPS



WEBCHAT SERVICE OFFERING  
A GATEWAY INTO ADVICE



RESEARCH THAT CAPTURES  
THE STATE OF THE NATION'S  
PERSONAL FINANCES



A NEW RANGE OF  
ONLINE LEARNING MATERIALS,  
TOOLS AND RESOURCES

# THANK YOU



Our work is underpinned by support from a range of sources.

This Impact Report sets out the key highlights of our activity across 2017/18, but we could not achieve a fraction of this work without the ongoing support and backing from the following grant funders, supporters and partners:

- Accountant in Bankruptcy
- Big Energy Fund
- Citizens Advice Scotland
- CEMVO Scotland/SLAB
- Money Advice Service
- Money Advice Trust
- Provident
- Scottish Government

# CONFERENCE 2017



Our 2017 annual conference was held at Crieff Hydro in Perthshire.

The event remains the premier conference on the money advice and financial inclusion calendar.

Thank you once again to all delegates, speakers, exhibitors, and, of course, our contributors, for helping to make our conference such a success:

## Headline supporter

Royal Bank of Scotland

## Premier supporters

Computershare Loan Services  
Lowell Group

## Platinum supporters

Harrington Brooks  
Provident Financial

## Gold supporters

AIC  
Gregory Pennington  
AMI Financial Solutions  
Experian  
UKAR  
WalkerLove  
Wescot

## Silver supporters

Payplan  
Perth & Kinross Council

## Bronze supporters

Grant Thornton

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