

## Glasgow Citizens Advice Bureaux

Bridgeton CAB  
Castlemilk CAB  
Central CAB  
Drumchapel CAB  
Easterhouse CAB  
Glasgow North West CAB  
Greater Pollok CAB  
Parkhead CAB



## Preventing Homelessness – The Work of Glasgow’s Citizens Advice Bureaux

**Every 18 minutes**, someone in Scotland becomes homeless. In 2021/22, the latest year for which Government figures are available, just **under 29,000 households** - **some 47,000 people** including **14,000 children** - became homeless. Glasgow has the second highest rate of homelessness in Scotland, next to West Dumbarton.(1)

All CABx in Glasgow treat homelessness, or the threat of homelessness, as an emergency and prioritise those clients along with other emergencies such as clients who present with no money, phone or access to credit, and those under threat of eviction, deportation or domestic abuse.

(1) All figures are taken from Scottish Government figures, Crisis Briefing March 23.



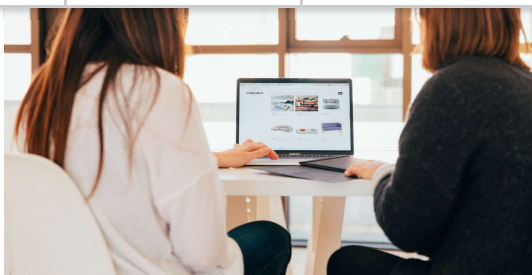
## CABx – A Holistic Approach

While all CABx deal with housing and homelessness issues, two separately funded outreach projects managed by two of Glasgow's CABx make a specific contribution to the prevention of homelessness.

In collaboration with Glasgow City Council's Homelessness Team, Glasgow Central Bureau work to try to ensure that homeless families are able to sustain their tenancies when moving out of temporary accommodation into permanent housing.

CAB's holistic help begins with a benefits check to ensure that clients are claiming all their entitlements. As the client moves into their new home, help extends to assisting with advice on council tax, discretionary housing benefit, energy issues and applications to the Scottish Welfare Community Grants to secure necessary furniture and white goods as well as assistance with outstanding debts.

Charley Mackay, Glasgow Central's outreach worker, works with a wide variety of clients, single people as well as families with children, and on average sees each client on three or four occasions. According to Charley, the key causes of homelessness are relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, mental health issues and evictions. Charley says ***"I love my job... There is no better feeling than a client coming in, completely distraught, with debt issues, feeling like it is the end of the world and by the end of the appointment, after discussing outcomes and commencing a debt resolution solution, the client leaves feeling a great weight lifted off their chest and is able to see an end to their struggles."***

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*me...calling them for me and giving me feedback.” (Client)*

### Daria's story

On separating from her husband because of domestic abuse, Daria faced a mountain of rent arrears and a landlord that threatened to change the locks and evict her. During her marriage, Daria's husband had controlled all the finances, the tenancy agreement had been in his name and he had told the landlord that he was terminating the tenancy. The CAB adviser contacted the landlord, informed him that the threatened eviction was illegal, supported Daria to make her own claim for universal credit and other benefit entitlements and worked with the local job centre to ensure she was allocated a work coach that understood the abusive circumstances of Daria's separation.

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### Statistics for Glasgow 21/22

Number of households homeless or at risk of homelessness **5,700**

**480 households** slept rough in **3 months** prior to a homeless application

Households in temporary accommodation: **3,009**

**22%** of Glasgow CABx clients in 21/22 presented as emergencies (includes threat of/ or homelessness)

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## Lack of Joined Up Policies

'My Great Start' project runs from Drumchapel Bureau in collaboration with the Wheatley Group housing association with the similar aim of helping people moving from temporary accommodation into new homes to secure and sustain their tenancies.

Fiona Temple, the outreach worker, emphasises the importance of the holistic approach: "CABx can offer advice and help on all aspects – people don't have to trudge to different organisations to get help." She commented on the fragmented nature of housing and social security policies.

On signing a tenancy agreement new tenants have to pay a month's rent in

person may well end up starting life in their new home in debt.

If applications for discretionary housing payment to cover rent advancements are not successful the result is often rent arrears. This is compounded by the considerable backlog in the Scottish Welfare Fund which means that new tenants may have to wait a couple of months before getting the goods that will make their home habitable; all the while waiting to move in, paying rent in their existing accommodation and on their new home.

## Brenda's Story

Brenda is single and recently homeless. She works 20 hours a week earning £10.42 an hour and was not claiming any benefits when she was offered a new tenancy and was referred to 'My Great Start'. The CAB adviser helped her to claim universal credit to top up her wages, a single person's discount for council tax and made an application to the Scottish Welfare Fund for some essential furniture and white goods. Brenda also received information and advice on energy suppliers and information about the warm homes discount scheme. Brenda had been very worried about how she would manage to pay her rent and other bills, now she is looking forward to the move and settling in. The total financial gain for Brenda over the year amounted to £3,973.

\*\*All names have been changed to protect confidentiality. All case studies have been drawn from CABx housing outreach services.

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