

## Torrige, North, Mid and West Devon Citizens Advice Bureau

the charity for  
your community



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Dear Mr Asbridge,

As you know, Torrige, North, Mid and West Devon Citizens Advice Bureau offers a free service to members of the public across the West Devon area, providing advice and information for the benefit of the individual and the community. Many members of the public come to the Citizens Advice Bureau in difficult circumstances when they have no one else to turn to.

Although Universal Credit has not yet been introduced locally the many changes to the welfare benefit system has led to an increase in demand for our services. These changes mean that there is a continuous need to train and update the knowledge of our volunteers. Also with the increased use of the internet and telephone for communication we are looking to ways of broadening the way we deliver our advice. We already run an Advice Line telephone system, which we are expanding, due to high demand, and are always looking at increasing the number of volunteers delivering this service. We also recognise that many clients in our area find it challenging to claim on line and need our assistance to help them access advice. To do all this we need to train our volunteers to not only deliver up-to-date advice but to support clients digital claims to Government Departments who will no longer accept telephone calls or claims by post. We are also looking to increase our volunteer presence in local offices and other outreach venues which are more accessible to the rural communities which make up a significant part of our client base.

During 2013/14 we received 12 enquiries about debt and 33 enquiries about welfare benefits from clients in the Ward of Milton Ford All these clients were provided with free, independent, confidential and impartial advice.

We Understand that you are the Parish Clerk for three Parishes in Milton Ford and we would be extremely grateful if Milton Abbot, Bradstone and Dunteerton Parish Councils would consider making a donation to this valuable service.

Yours sincerely,

**Stephen Davis Chief Executive Officer**