

**We want advice  
to be easy to get  
and policy to respond  
to people's lives**

**citizens  
advice**

**One  
service  
strategy**

**2015-2020**

**We'll help  
people find a  
way forward**

**(it's our mission)**

**The Citizens Advice service is here for everyone. We are relied on by millions of people across England and Wales every year.**

In turn, we rely on the commitment and energy of tens of thousands of volunteers and staff.

We owe it to everyone involved in our service, whether they receive help or give it, to make sure our work is as effective as possible. So this **One service strategy** sets out how the Citizens Advice service as a whole will keep improving what we do, even in extraordinarily difficult times.

Although just two of us are formally signing this document, it is the work of hundreds of people over more than two years. There are those who have helped us understand what people need today and will need tomorrow; those who have contributed ideas; and those who have simply shown how we can do things better.

Our ambition is simple.  
So this strategy is short.

It's supposed to be a quick, straightforward read, focusing on the most important things to get right. (Our more detailed plans in each area change over time, and are there for those who'd like to talk with us about them.)

One of our most important goals in this strategy is to become a **stronger champion for equality**, as a natural part of approaching all that we do. So our work in this area is shown in an integrated way in this strategy.

Over the next few pages we hope that you will be able to see the big things we're planning, so that you can join us, help us, and hold us to account.

**John Gladwin, Chair of Trustees**  
**Gillian Guy, Chief Executive**

**We'll be  
inventive,  
responsible  
and generous**

**(it's our culture)**

# Our world is changing fast

## The needs of people who use our services come first.

So we take care to properly understand what people need from our service, and how we can continually adapt to help, support, advice and guidance in a way that fits their lives and priorities.

Our research shows clearly that people increasingly want and expect to get advice in person, on the phone, and through a range of digital devices - and to have a seamless experience across these. They want us to speak in the way they do, using their words and providing simple, intuitive services.

Although the problems we see change over time, with payday loans and employment and support allowance having been particularly noticeable recently, people value our ability to offer practical advice across a wide range of issues in a holistic way.

So we need to develop even better ways of rapidly deepening our help in emerging issues, while keeping expertise across a wide range of areas, from energy to postal

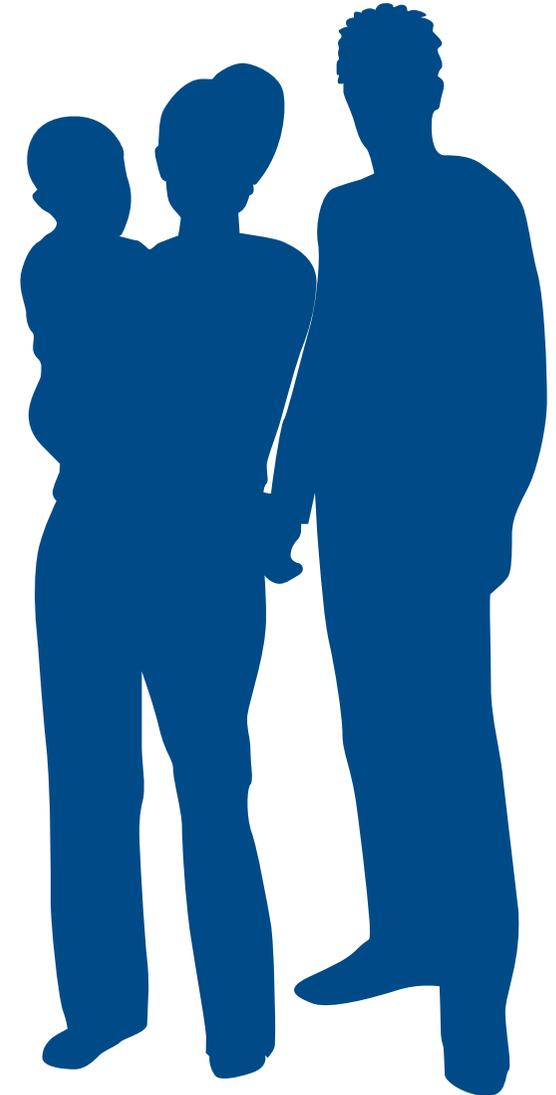
services, pensions to health, discrimination to mobile phones, welfare to justice.

At the same time, there is less money to fund vital services across the public sector – the greatest source of income across our service.

We see our partners often shrinking services, and many of our funders facing very tough spending decisions.

This means we need to work more closely with a diverse range of partners, adapting our service to local needs, without diluting what remains our core strength: helping people make better decisions through advice, and helping those with the power to shape our society to understand what people really need.

While we fiercely defend people's need for good independent advice, and the benefits this brings for society, for business, and for growth in the economy as whole, it places a responsibility on our service to build on the best of what we do.



# We'll make five big changes by 2020

- 1** We'll make it **easy to get advice**
- 2** We'll be **more influential**
- 3** We'll work together as **one service**
- 4** We'll become even more **sustainable & effective**
- 5** We'll be a **stronger equality champion**

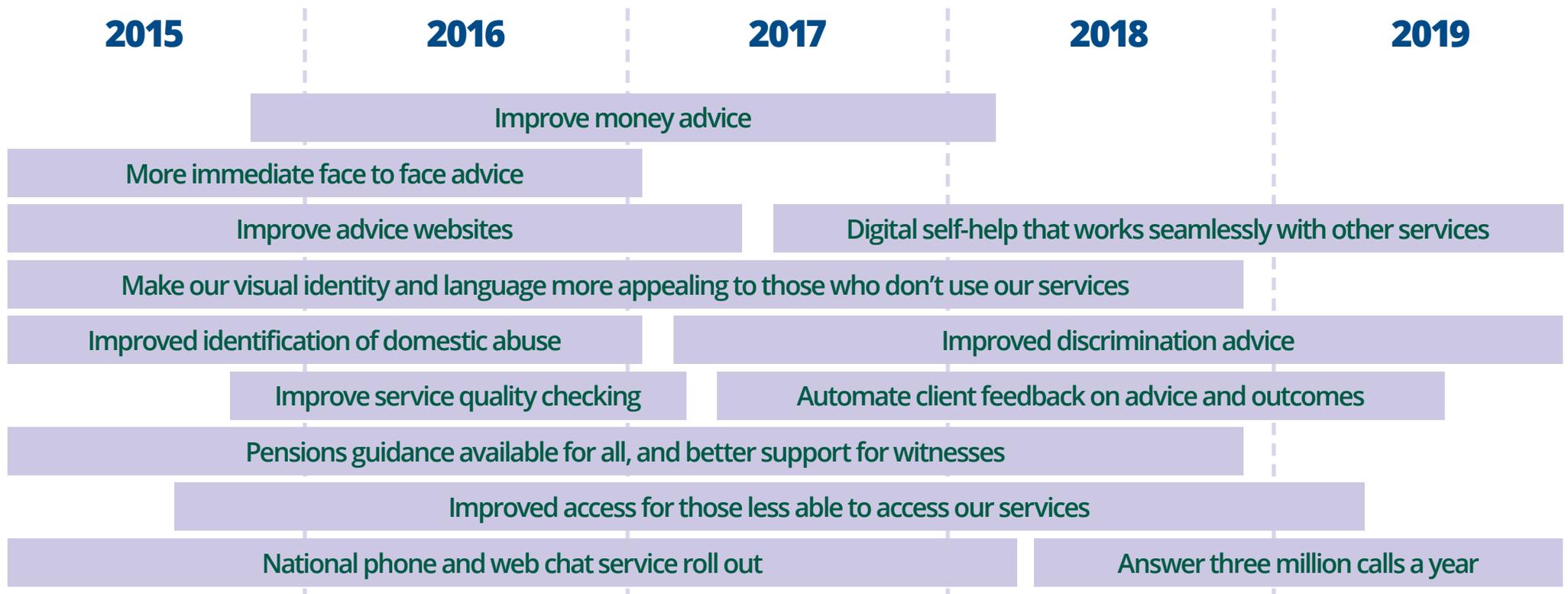


We'll make it  
easy to get  
advice

## By 2020, citizens should expect to...

- get through on the phone quickly
- be able to move seamlessly between face to face, phone and digital services without repeating themselves
- get tailored help that meets their needs, with clear action plans every time
- book appointments at a time that suits them
- feel that Citizens Advice is for them, whoever they are.

## ...so over the next five years we'll focus on



**We'll be  
more  
influential**

## **By 2020, citizens should expect to...**

- be able to see their ideas and experience reflected in research that shapes how companies and government improve their services
- have the opportunity to campaign for change on the issues affecting them or those they care most about
- see change routinely happening because they got involved, particularly for those facing discrimination.

## **...so over the next five years we'll focus on**



We'll work together as one service

## By 2020, citizens should expect to...

- only tell the Citizens Advice service their story once, regardless of place or way of getting help
- be helped by the next available adviser, wherever they are
- benefit from lessons learned and shared across the Citizens Advice service.

## ...so over the next five years we'll focus on



We'll become  
even more  
**sustainable  
& effective**

## By 2020, citizens should expect to...

- understand the outcomes we achieve, and see services changed accordingly
- use reliable, fast and intuitive technology
- see us repeatedly win national and local contracts based on quality and value for money
- have clear opportunities to support our service, with easy ways to do so
- see us plan ahead with confidence, taking decisions for the long term.

## ...so over the next five years we'll focus on



# We'll be a stronger equality champion

## By 2020, citizens should expect to...

- have discrimination issues consistently identified and acted upon
- see our equality influence working in an impactful way
- feel the Citizens Advice service understands them, whoever they are
- contribute to our service, whoever they are
- see their local communities better reflected in our service.

## ...so over the next five years we'll focus on



## Not everything that really matters can be measured

But these targets will help keep us on track:



This would make us proud, but we'll do a lot more besides.

# I care about whether this strategy leads to changes in real life.

What actually happens is what matters. So I'll make sure that Citizens Advice does what it says.

# Over the next five years we'll need to adapt our thinking

No strategy should be set in stone. New opportunities come up all the time and we'll be ready to take them.

We'll decide whether to take on new services based on a simple test: does it help us meet people's needs, and does it fit closely with our core services.





**citizens  
advice**

**[citizensadvice.org.uk](https://citizensadvice.org.uk)**

**@CitizensAdvice**

**Charity number 279057**

**Helping people find a way forward**