

THE HISTORY OF BAF 1997 – 2023

BAF is now 26 years old. The table below gives a short history of BAF.

Year	Membership area	Members	Chair	Income	Main activities
1997/98	North Bedfordshire	No record	Helen Voce (Bedford Citizen Advice Bureau)	No record	Bedford Advice Forum formed at meeting in July 1997 No records available for 1997/98 Forum meetings (3?)
1998/99	North Bedfordshire	No record	Helen Voce (Bedford Citizen Advice Bureau)	No record	No records available for 1998/99 Forum meetings (4?)
1999/00	North Bedfordshire	No record	Helen Voce (Bedford Citizen Advice Bureau)	£573	Forum meetings (4) - including AGM Training Sub-Group meetings Training courses (3) Development of Bedfordshire Advice Directory
2000/01	North Bedfordshire	No record	Helen Voce (Bedford Citizen Advice Bureau)	£635	Forum meetings (4) – Including AGM Training Sub-Group meetings Training courses (6) Launch of first Bedfordshire Advice Directory (2000) Developing links with the new CLS Partnership for Mid and North Beds Collation of benefit gain figure from BAF members
2001/02	North Bedfordshire & Mid Bedfordshire	42	Helen Voce (Bedford Citizen Advice Bureau) and then, from October 2001, temporary Chairs elected for each Forum meeting	No record (closing balance was £1,790)	Forum meetings (4) – Including AGM Training Sub-Group meetings Extension of BAF membership to Mid Beds agencies Training courses (7) Information sessions (2) Input into local bid for Financial Literacy Project Appointment of part-time administrator for BAF (through Lottery funding for BHL)

Year	Membership area	Members	Chair	Income	Main activities
2002/03	North Bedfordshire & Mid Bedfordshire	No record	Diane Wynne-Powell (Council for Voluntary Service – North Bedfordshire)	No record (closing balance was £4,122.43)	Forum meetings (4) Training sub-group meetings Training courses (6) 2 nd edition of Advice Directory (2003) Links with Mid and North Beds CLS Partnership Launch of BAF-STEP project (including research into local training and development needs)
2003/04	North Bedfordshire & Mid Bedfordshire	54	Diane Wynne-Powell (Council for Voluntary Service – North Bedfordshire)	£77,000	Forum meetings (4) Training-sub-group meetings (6) Links with Take the Credit benefit campaign BAF-STEP project (including 26 training courses, consultancy support to 12 BAF members and NVQ support programme for 10 candidates) Links with Mid and North Beds CLSP LSC LID project (2 training courses)
2004/05	North Bedfordshire & Mid Bedfordshire	52	Linda Wood (Bedford Citizen Advice Bureau)	No record	Forum meetings (4) + AGM Formation of BAF Steering Group (replacing training sub-group) Steering Group meetings (6) Development of BAF policies on Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety and Environment Links with Mid and North Beds CLS Partnership BAF NVQ programme Training courses (5) 3 rd edition of Advice Directory (2005)
2005/06	North Bedfordshire & Mid Bedfordshire	56	David Verney (Age Concern Bedfordshire)	£740	Forum meetings (4) + AGM Steering Group meetings (4) Training courses (4) Completion of BAF NVQ programme Survey of BAF members for <i>Debt Advice in Bedfordshire</i> Discussions on future of BAF – <i>A positive future for BAF</i> Links with research into <i>Benefits Advice in Bedfordshire</i>

Year	Area covered	Members	Chair	Income	Main activities
2006/07	North Bedfordshire & Mid Bedfordshire	52	David Verney (Age Concern Bedfordshire)	£1,875	Forum meetings (4) + AGM Steering Group meetings (6) Training courses (4) Development of BAF Strategy (2006-2009) Discussions on forming a trading company for BAF Amendment sheet (2006) for Advice Directory distributed Work on developing a standardised referral policy for BAF agencies Input into discussion on potential Advice Plus funding bid
2007/08	North Bedfordshire, Mid Bedfordshire & South Bedfordshire	65	David Verney (Age Concern Bedfordshire)	£2,745	Change of name to Bedfordshire Advice Forum Extension of BAF membership into South Bedfordshire Further implementation of BAF Strategy Launch of BAF's trading company - Advice Bedfordshire CIC Forum meetings (4) + AGM Steering Group meetings (4) Training courses (3) Support for development of the new Q-cas quality standard
2008/09	North Bedfordshire, Mid Bedfordshire & South Bedfordshire	42	Wendy Anderson-Welsh (Bedford Race Equality Council)	£6,715	Forum meetings (reduced to 3 a year) + AGM Introduction of BAF membership fees Steering Group meetings (reduced to 3 a year) Advice Bedfordshire started trading (surplus of £653) Training courses (5) Launch of BAF website BAF joined VoluntaryWorks – and accessed Capacitybuilders funding to enable the development of links with local strategic forums
2009/10	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	42	Wendy Anderson-Welsh (Bedford Race Equality Council)	£19,386	Forum meetings (3) + AGM Steering Group meetings (3) 2 training programmes (7 courses) – <i>Advising in the Economic Crisis</i> - funded by Bedfordshire County Council Development of further links with strategic forums using Capacitybuilders funding from VoluntaryWorks Funding from Bedfordshire County Council – for development of online Bedfordshire Advice Directory, and research into links between advice agencies and children's centres Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £352)

Year	Area covered	Members	Chair	Income	Main activities
2010/11	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	44	Wendy Anderson-Welsh (Bedford Race Equality Council)	£13,822	Forum meetings (3) + AGM Steering Group meetings (3) Development of Advice Strategies in Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Training courses (7) – including 6 courses funded by the Bedfordshire Redundancy Support Group on <i>Advising in the Economic Crisis</i> Further funding from Capacitybuilders through VoluntaryWorks enabling continued links with local strategic forums Pilot launch of new Bedfordshire Benefits Network Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £22)
2011/12	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	42	Lorraine Gunther (Bedford Citizen Advice Bureau)	£1,070	Forum meetings (3) + AGM Steering Group meetings (3) 2 nd pilot meeting of Bedfordshire Benefits Network Development of Work Plan for BAF (2011/12) Implementation of Advice Strategy for Bedford Borough and facilitation of new Advice Management Group (3 meetings held) Agreement of Advice Strategy for Central Bedfordshire BAF was a partner in successful VoluntaryWorks bid for Transforming Local Infrastructure project Further support for local Q-cas training programme Training courses (2) Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £286)
2012/13	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	44	Lorraine Gunther (Bedford Citizen Advice Bureau)	£17,823	Forum meetings (3) + AGM Steering Group meetings (3) Meetings of Bedfordshire Benefits Network (3) Development of Work Plan for BAF (2012/13) Facilitation of Advice Planning Board (Central Bedfordshire) – 2 meetings held Funding from Bedford Borough Partnership Board to facilitate Advice Management Group (3 meetings), organise consultation with advice service users, and develop links with Bedford Jobs Hub Welfare Reform awareness sessions (2) and training courses (4) Lunchtime talk on insolvency Support for VoluntaryWorks Transforming Local Infrastructure project Project to develop closer links between advice agencies and local solicitors in Bedford Borough Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £569) Initial input into development of local bids to the new Advice Service Transition Fund (ASTF)

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2013/14	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	45	Fiona McLeod (Money Advice at St Andrews)	£14,147	Forum meetings (3) + AGM Steering Group meetings (3) + 2 extra meetings to discuss future of BAF Bedfordshire Benefits Network meetings (2) with funding from Bedford Borough Partnership Board Development of Work Plan for BAF (2013/14) Funding from Central Bedfordshire Council for facilitation of Advice Planning Board – 4 meetings held Funding from Voluntaryworks Transforming Local Infrastructure Project for development of 4 accredited advice skills training courses Further work on solicitors project (in Central Bedfordshire) Developing links with new ASTF projects – Bedford Advice Network and AdviceCentral Launch of Welfare Reform webpage on BAF website Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £350)
2014/15	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	44	Fiona McLeod (Money Advice at St Andrews)	£2,862	Forum meetings (3) + AGM Steering Group meetings (3) Bedfordshire Benefits Network meetings (2) with funding from Bedford Borough Partnership Board Funding from Central Bedfordshire Council for facilitation of Advice Planning Board – 3 meetings held Campaign in Central Bedfordshire to recruit volunteers into advice agencies Funding from Voluntaryworks Transforming Local Infrastructure Project to provide 4 advice skills training courses linked to an NOCN IAG qualification Arranging a webinar for solicitors and advice agencies (in Central Bedfordshire) Updating BAF members (through the BAF website) on Welfare Reform changes Arranging 5 briefing sessions on Universal Credit – at BPHA and at the CVS for BAF members (in Bedford Borough) Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £105)
2015/16	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	35	David Verney (Advice Bedfordshire)	£1,568	Forum meetings (3) + AGM Steering Group meetings (3) Bedfordshire Benefits Network meetings (2) with funding from Bedford Borough Partnership Board Funding from Central Bedfordshire Council for facilitation of Advice Planning Board – 3 meetings held Arranging 4 briefing sessions on Universal Credit – at Amicus and at Aragon Housing Association for BAF members (in Central Bedfordshire) Working in partnership with Voluntaryworks to develop the Building Better Opportunities (Financial Inclusion) Project Advice Bedfordshire (deficit = -£901)

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2016/17	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	30	Temporary Chairs elected for each Forum meeting	£2,877	Forum meetings (3) + AGM Steering Group meetings (3) Bedfordshire Benefits Network meetings (2) with funding from Bedford Borough Partnership Board Funding from Central Bedfordshire Council for facilitation of Advice Planning Board – 3 meetings held – and launch of revised Advice Strategy in Central Beds Training courses (3) for BAF members Working in partnership with Voluntaryworks to oversee the Building Better Opportunities (Financial Inclusion) Project Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £208)
2017/18	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	30	Temporary Chairs elected for each Forum meeting	£2,625	Forum meetings (3) + AGM – BAF's 20 th anniversary celebrated at AGM in July 2017 Steering Group meetings (3) Bedfordshire Benefits Network meetings (2) – funded by BAF Funding from Central Bedfordshire Council for facilitation of new Advice Strategy Management Group and overseeing Advice Strategy and new Delivery Plan – 3 meetings held Training courses (4) for BAF members Working in partnership with Voluntaryworks, providing direct support to the Building Better Opportunities (Financial Inclusion) Project Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £14)
2018/19	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	27	Temporary Chairs elected for each Forum meeting	£3,720	Forum meetings (3) + AGM Report produced on “20 years of BAF” Steering Group meetings (3) Bedfordshire Benefits Network meetings (2) – funded by BAF Funding from Central Bedfordshire Council for facilitation of Advice Strategy Management Group and overseeing Advice Strategy and Delivery Plan - 3 meetings held Training courses (3) for BAF members Promotion of BAF at Bedford Borough Community Network event on poverty Working in partnership with Voluntaryworks, providing direct support to the Building Better Opportunities (Financial Inclusion) Project Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £19)

Year	Area covered	Members	Chair	Income	Main activities
2019/20	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	20	Temporary Chairs elected for each Forum meeting	£2,040	Forum meetings (3) + AGM Steering Group meetings (3) Bedfordshire Benefits Network meetings (2), funded by BAF Funding from Central Bedfordshire Council for facilitation of Advice Strategy Management Group and overseeing Advice Strategy and Delivery Plan - 3 meetings held - flyer produced to promote "AdviceCentral" Training courses (2) for BAF members Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £12)
2020/21	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	24	Amanda Ryan (BPHA)	£2,920	Forum meetings (4) + AGM – online meetings were arranged due to the lockdowns in the Covid pandemic - an extra meeting was arranged to discuss the emergency services introduced by BAF members due to the pandemic Steering Group meetings (3 online meetings) Bedfordshire Benefits Network meetings (4 online meetings) – funded by BAF – extra meetings were arranged to keep up-to- date with the benefit changes made during the Covid pandemic Funding from Central Bedfordshire Council for facilitation of Advice Strategy Management Group and overseeing Advice Strategy and Delivery Plan – 2 online meetings held during Covid pandemic – flyer produced to promote "Everybody's got a role in advice" Training programmes (2) for BAF members – 8 training sessions were provided – online training was used for the first time by BAF – funded by The Harpur Trust Advice Bedfordshire (deficit = -£176)
2021/22	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	25	Amanda Ryan (BPHA)	£1,485	Forum meetings (3) + AGM – online meetings continued due to Covid Steering Group meetings (3) - online meetings continued due to Covid Bedfordshire Benefits Network meetings (2) – funded by BAF – September meeting was arranged online but March meeting was BAF's first physical meeting after the Covid pandemic Funding from Central Bedfordshire Council for facilitation of Advice Strategy Management Group – 2 meetings held – funding, and work on Advice Strategy, ended in September 2021 after 12 years – proposal agreed for new partnership arrangements between CBC and the advice sector in Central Beds Training courses (2) – one for HEART Academies Trust and the other for BAF members – both were online courses Advice Bedfordshire (deficit = -£21)

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2022/23	Bedford Borough & Central Bedfordshire	TBC	Amanda Ryan (BPHA)	TBC	<p>Forum meetings (3) + AGM – the Forum meeting (and AGM) in June 2022 were physical meetings but it was agreed to continue with online meetings for the Forum meetings in November 2022 and March 2023</p> <p>BAF's 25th anniversary celebrated at BAF AGM in June 2022</p> <p>Steering Group meetings (3) – online meetings continued</p> <p>Bedfordshire Benefits Network meetings (2) – physical meetings continued – funded by BAF</p> <p>Free online financial workshop on the “Cost of Living” crisis arranged in December for BAF members</p> <p>Google Groups network set up for communications between BAF members</p> <p>Report on “25 years of BAF” produced</p> <p>Advice Bedfordshire (surplus = £1)</p>