

Douglas Bain

I am a teaching fellow at the University of Aberdeen, School of Law. I have experience as civil justice researcher. I formerly worked for Shelter at the Aberdeen Housing Aid Centre from 1987-2003, where I undertook regular advice and representation work across a range of housing law areas. I was also the centre manager. From 2003 - 2006 I worked as a housing advice volunteer at Aberdeen Cyrenians. I remain interested in housing law. I have publications in property law (Gloag & Henderson, 12th edition, 2007, Edinburgh Law Review, September 2008) and in relation to the regulation of legal advice (2 articles in Scolag, November & December 2008). I have a BA, an LLB, a research LLM, a Diploma in Legal Practice and a postgraduate certificate in Management Studies. I am currently undertaking a PhD in the field of land law. I have done in excess of 30 audits to date. I have done Housing and Money Advice quality audits but now mostly do process auditing. I have acted as lead auditor in a number of audits.

Diane Connock

I have over 13 years experience working within a housing advice environment. I was a Recoveries Officer with a local authority for 5 years and I have been a Senior Adviser with Shelter since 2001. In my current role I provide advice, advocacy and representation at Type III in all of the 15 areas of housing law. I work closely with varied client groups, many with multiple needs. My role also involves compiling reports and presenting findings and writing and delivering training courses. I have been a Quality of Advice Auditor for Michael Bell Associates since 2003 and have been involved in a number of audits. Most recently, I have been the Lead Auditor which comprises of liaising with the agency prior to the on-site visit, leading the team whilst on-site and compiling the audit report. I have also arranged and facilitated workshops and reported on the findings. I am fully committed to the National Standards and have embraced my role as Quality of Advice Auditor over the last 5 years

Martin Conroy

I am a Money Advice Officer in the, The Highland Council Finance Service. I am responsible for providing budgeting and money advice to the general public both on a one to one basis and in group presentations. I liaise with, and refer to, external agencies for additional assistance, e.g. Social Work, Job Centre, Accountant in Bankruptcy. I liaise with members of the Trading Standards Unit over contract terms and conditions and raises complaints where necessary. I manage a caseload in an increasingly busy service, advising external agencies on issues relating to money advice. I prepare and submit cases to the Accountant in Bankruptcy under the Debt Arrangement Scheme. I check and sign off cases for non qualified colleagues under the Debt Arrangement Scheme.

Mhairi Craig

I am currently employed as a Service Administrator and Helpline Adviser for Shelter. My areas of expertise lie in Housing Legislation and also administrative processes to enable effective housing advice. I have been a process auditor for Michael Bell for two years and have carried out several process audits, with varying outcomes.

Lynn Daniels

I am currently employed by North Lanarkshire Council as Money Advice Centre Manager, Trading Standards. I provide a supervisory and advisory role to all relevant staff, dealing with in depth cases referred by officers where the use of arbitration or litigation may be indicated as a form of securing relief. I am also required to keep up to date with legislative changes affecting money advice/welfare benefits. I am responsible for the regular monitoring and review of casework and audit cases in line with the Money Advice Scotland, Code of Good Practice and to ensure that the case management of the Approved Money Advisers meets the required criteria to maintain the approval of the Accountant in Bankruptcy. Prior to taking up my current post I was employed from 1995 - 1997 as a rent arrears officer and 1977 - 2004 as a money adviser for South Lanarkshire Council providing a generic money (adviser competency III) and benefits(adviser competency type I-II depending on area of law) advice service for residents and employees.

I am currently a sessional auditor for the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers, auditing/lead auditing for money advice adviser competencies I -III and benefits advice at competency I. I have an enthusiasm and commitment to the Scottish National Standards for information and Advice Providers: in order to ensure advice services across Scotland are providing quality information, a robust audit and accreditation framework is required and these standards provide such a framework.

Amanda Gallagher

I have worked in the Welfare Rights field for 14 years, and am currently employed by North Lanarkshire Council as a Senior Officer within the Financial Inclusion Team. Based in Headquarters I am responsible for providing welfare rights support, advice and guidance to Headquarters teams such as Children and Families, Justice, Community Care etc. As well as having the functional responsibility for training, I assist the Service Co-ordinator in monitoring the quality and implementation of Income Maximisation procedures throughout Social Work localities. I am competent in all 19 areas of the national standards welfare rights law, as well as housing support issues. I am a qualified Internal Reviewer for Investors in People, and have also attained an MBA in Public Sector Management which covers all aspects of public sector management including, continuous improvement and monitoring service quality.

I am a keen advocate of the Standards, and welcome the long awaited recognition of welfare rights services. North Lanarkshire embraced the Standards and we are working now to look at how we can use the standards as a foundation to a welfare rights qualification. I believe the standards are necessary not only as a continuous improvement tool within the service, but, also to allow service users to know they can approach advice agencies with confidence in the knowledge that they will receive a quality service. It is my hope that the Standards become mandatory for all advice agencies.

Kelly Gallagher

I have been working with MBA as an auditor for the past 4 years, I have thoroughly enjoyed my involvement with this project and I am committed to continuing to work with MBA to provide the accreditation service for the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers. I am currently employed by Fife Council as a Money Advice Officer. I have been working as an approved money adviser under the Debt Arrangement Scheme (Scotland) Regulations 2004 since January 2005. I have also been working as a Debt Arrangement Scheme Assessor since the Debt Arrangement Scheme (Scotland) Regulations 2004 came into force. I have worked in the advice sector for 8 years and have held posts within both Citizens Advice Bureau (Manager at Leith Citizens Advice Bureau and Money Advice Service Co-ordinator at Penicuik Citizens Advice Bureau) and Local Authority Money Advice Services (Edinburgh City Council and Fife Council). I am currently involved in the provision of specialist money advice to members of the public and have a comprehensive working knowledge of relevant legislation. As part of my work relates to income maximisation I also have a comprehensive understanding of the benefits system. The National Standards for Information and Advice Providers have had a positive impact on the quality of advice provision in Scotland, undoubtedly benefiting both service users and providers. I am very enthusiastic about continuing with my work in this area and I am committed to promoting the National Standards and working with agencies to improve the quality of advice services in Scotland.

Eileen James

I started off in the advice giving field in 1984 as a volunteer with the Castlemilk CAB. Since then my work has included Benefits Advisor in an Unemployed Workers Centre and Money Advisor in the Castlemilk Money Advice Centre. This position required an in-depth knowledge of money advice and welfare rights and an understanding of consumer law. During this time I undertook research on a court procedure, namely a Time Order, created by the Consumer Credit Act 1974. This procedure was little known in Scotland I eventually brought this to the attention of the Scottish Rules Council in Edinburgh. I went on to become Money Advice Centre Manager in charge of a dedicated team of Money Advisors and helped to establish a community credit union.

I have had two articles published in Scolag magazine and hold a Paralegal certificate in Civil Court Practice. I am currently employed as a Money Advice Co-ordinator for South Lanarkshire Council responsible for ensuring the quality of money advice throughout South Lanarkshire Money Matters Advice Service offices. I regularly carry out audits of casework and give feedback to Team Leaders. I also ensure training and updates are provided on any new legislation impacting on money advice. Previously I was a Debt Arrangement Scheme Assessor evaluating Approved Money Advisor casework and am delighted to be part of the auditing team for the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers.

Alex Kirkwood

I am currently Housing Support Manager for Cunninghame Housing Association. I successfully led my team through accreditation against the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice providers last year and I have developed a clear understanding of how to evidence compliance with the Standards. I am responsible for the Association's Homeless Services provision in accordance with the policies, procedures, practices and targets outlined in the Scottish Government's performance standards, the Care Commission standards and internal planning documents. I am responsible for strategic development and implementation of the Association's housing support service delivery and for the day to day management of residential housing support projects and outreach service.

Jennifer Laughland

I have worked in the housing advice field for around 15 years. I am currently the Principal Solicitor at Shelter Housing Law Service. I have been in that role for the past 2 years. My work includes representing clients with a range of housing problems, giving second tier advice on housing issues, training on housing law and giving legal advice on housing policy. I have also worked with Michael Bell Associates as an auditor for the last 6 years. My previous roles include Principal Solicitor at Paisley Law Centre, solicitor at Shelter Housing Law Service and Dundee City Council, trainee solicitor with Stirling Council and refuge/advice worker at Dundee Women's Aid.

Helen McGreevy

I am currently a Benefits Projects Team Co-ordinator in South Lanarkshire Council. I am responsible for the development and promotion of joint working initiatives with internal/external organisations. I provide day to day management, supervision and coordination of a team responsible for delivery of all aspects of a Benefits Advice Service to customers within South Lanarkshire Council. I am also responsible for the development of policies, procedures and standards ensuring adherence to changes within legislation. I

supervise staff within the team ensuring tasks, targets and timescales for providing quality services are clearly understood and carried out by the team.

Heather Milton

I am currently employed by South Lanarkshire Council as a Homelessness Strategy Officer with responsibility for housing information and advice. I have been in this post for four years. In this role I am responsible for developing and implementing the housing information and advice strategy for the authority, which includes developing and improving housing advice services and implementing the Scottish National Standards. I provide professional support in the form of secondary advice to the Council's Housing Advice Officers as well as carrying out quality of advice audits on their casework. I also provide secondary advice to housing and homelessness staff dealing with housing advice issues. In addition I am the training supervisor for staff undertaking the Professional Development Award in Housing Law Advice. Previous to this role I was a Housing Aid Worker with Shelter for three years providing advice on a range of housing law issues. I have also held housing positions with an RSL and New Town Development Corporations. I have been a Housing Advice Auditor with Michael Bell Associates since December 2006. During this time I have been involved in several local authority and CAB audits in both lead auditor and support auditor roles. My main areas of expertise are: homelessness, security of tenure, housing options, discrimination and harassment and relationship breakdown. I am keen to continue being part of the auditing team for the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers, ensuring that the quality of housing advice in Scotland continues to improve.

John Mulholland LLB

I have been involved in the Housing Sector for over 25 years, this involvement included tenant activist, local councillor, vice-chair of the Tenant Participation Advisory Service for Scotland (1988-1992) and Co-ordinator of Ayr Housing Aid Centre. I started in the Housing Aid Centre in 1993 and since then we have developed services in terms of Housing Advice, Information, Advocacy and Support. I currently manage a team of 9 staff. I have wide knowledge of housing law and practice in all sectors and all related subjects. I have very good knowledge of welfare rights and debt related matters. The Housing Aid Centre is accredited in terms of the national standards at type III. I have a SVQ 4 in Health and Social Care and currently working on a SVQ 4 in Leadership and Management I have been a Quality of Advice Auditor with Michael Bell Associates for a number of years, auditing a range of services including Shelter Scotland and a number of CAB's across Scotland.

Jane O'Neill

I currently work as the Service Manager of Shelter's Support Service, Glasgow. One remit of the team I manage is to provide a housing support service to homeless families. A key element of this work is the provision of Type 1 and 2 housing advice. Prior to this role I worked as a Housing Aid Worker for 5 years at Shelter's Glasgow Housing Aid Centre. In that role I provided Type 3 housing advice across all areas. My particular area of expertise was homelessness. I have completed, as both lead and second auditor, a number of audits undertaken for Michael Bell since the pilot phase of the accreditation service. I have completed the Homepoint Level 3 advice training. I hold an Honours Degree in Scots law from Glasgow University (LLB Hons) I am passionate about the value of good quality housing advice as a vehicle for improving lives. I have enjoyed being part of the accreditation service and taking what I believe to be an important role in raising standards.

Stephen Rhind

I have 16 years experience of delivering front line advice services in the not-for-profit sector. An experienced auditor, I have been involved in the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Accreditation Service for 3 years. As a Lead Auditor I have responsibility for audit planning & delivery and production of audit reports including recommendations where practice may be improved. Formerly a Training Co-ordinator, I have developed programmes for people recovering from addictions or suffering chronic illness and disability to combat social exclusion and non-participation. A qualified Community Educator, I have significant experience of working with a variety of marginalised groups

Suzanne Slavin

I have been employed with Ayr Housing Aid Centre since August 1997 and am the Assistant Co-ordinator. The Centre is an Independent Housing Advice registered Charity. The Centre achieved Accreditation in the National Standards for Housing Information and Advice at type III. I have completed type III National Standards Training and later upgraded to the Professional Development Award, (Level 7 and 8). I have recently completed a BSc which included Housing and Social Policy. I provide service users with advice and advocacy on a daily basis in all 15 areas of Housing Law as per the standards and Housing related benefits. I have carried out many Audits with MBA in various types of agencies. I feel the Standards are an essential tool for any agency to illustrate their skills and the Audit Process focuses on strengths and ensures quality throughout the advice sector.