

## community advice centre

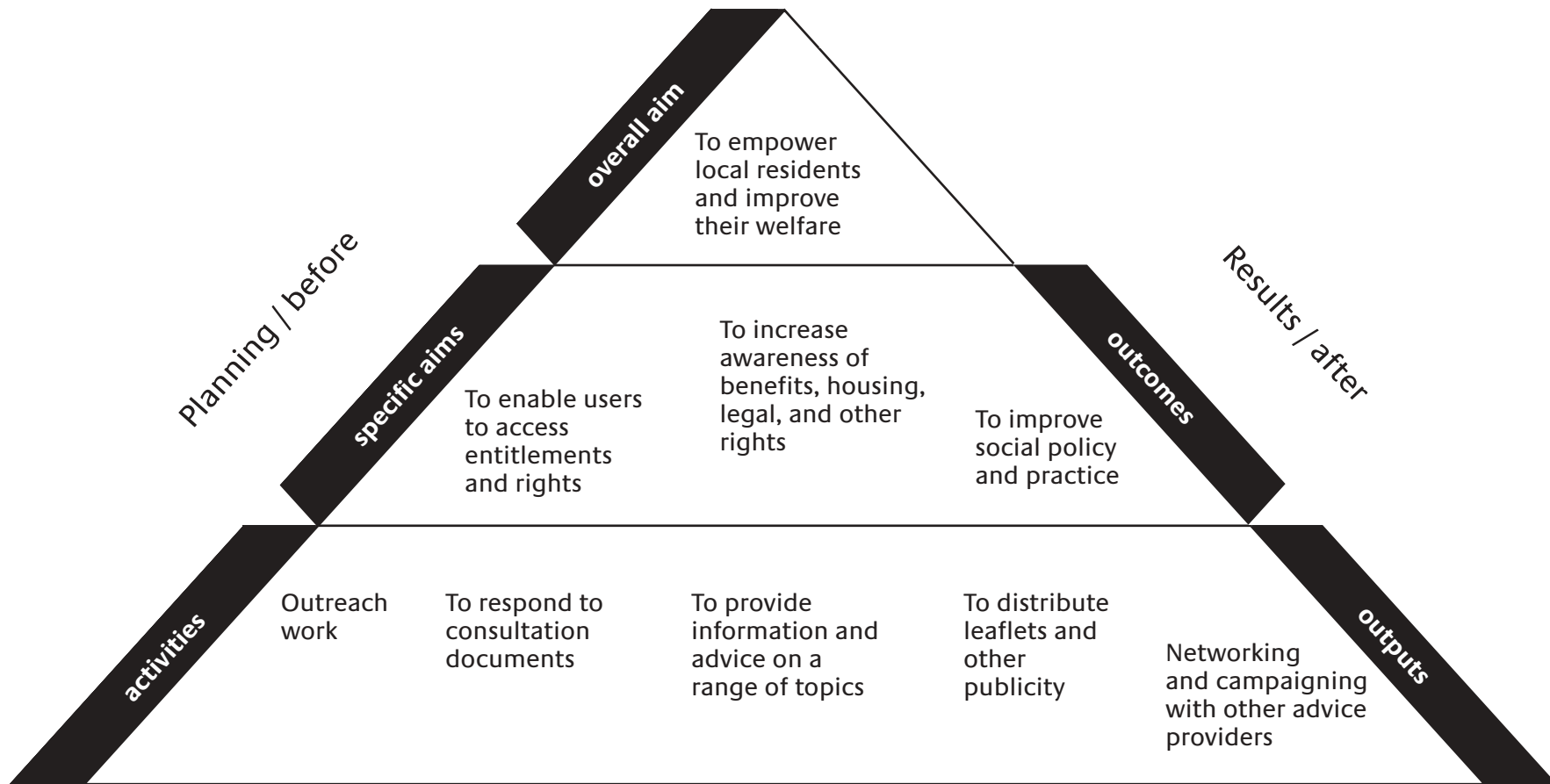
This is a local advice centre in an area of rural South East England with a high incidence of social exclusion. It offers advice and information on a wide range of issues. The support most in demand is around housing rights, access to benefits and also legal rights, including immigration issues. A key aim of the advice centre is enabling people to increase their income from benefits and the centre closely monitors the increased income it helps to bring in for clients.

Workers at the advice centre provide support with form-filling and applications, which helps meet the advice centre's aims. However, this is not one of their stated objectives, or planned activities. Rather, it is something that workers or volunteers often do because they want to help and/or because it is quicker and easier than showing someone how to complete the form for themselves.

The advice centre has a broader agenda than providing practical support to those who come through the door. There is known to be a high proportion of the population who do not access benefits to which they are entitled. The advice centre aims to increase awareness of benefit entitlements, and of other rights relating to housing, immigration and legal issues.

The advice centre also aims to influence policy and practice in the key areas of concern. Managers at the centre take part in a number of networks and consultations on key areas of legislation and policy. This takes up a considerable proportion of their time.

# community advice centre



## community advice centre

### Outcomes

Specific aims	Outcomes
To enable users to access entitlements and rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clients better able to access entitlements</li><li>• Increased confidence to take action on own behalf</li></ul>
To increase awareness of benefits, legal, housing and other rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased awareness within the local community of:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• benefits entitlements</li><li>• housing rights</li><li>• legal and other rights</li></ul></li></ul>
To improve social policy and practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improvement in main social policy statements relevant to the advice centre</li><li>• Improved practice</li></ul>

## community advice centre

### Outcomes and indicators

Outcomes	Indicators
Clients better able to access entitlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of clients supported to make a claim</li><li>• Number of clients completing claim forms by themselves</li><li>• Proportion of clients claiming who receive benefit</li></ul>
Increased confidence to take action on own behalf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Level of confidence reported by clients</li><li>• Number of clients taking action on their own behalf</li></ul>
Increased awareness of benefit entitlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Level of enquiries or claims to local benefits office</li><li>• Number of people attending the advice centre for information or help claiming benefits</li></ul>
Improved policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extent to which local authority statements show required improvements</li><li>• Extent to which central government communications reflect the issues of the advice centre's target group</li></ul>