

German Welfare Council

Registered Charity Number:
288538

Annual Report 2022

Our work in 2022 became more normalised after the Covid-19 measures subsided.

We advised in more than 1000 cases, held 151 face to face consultations and made 23 home visits.

We continued to advise clients over the phone and via email, additionally we offered an increased number of Zoom and Skype meetings for clients which require this service, appreciating a friendly face and having the convenience of an consultation from home fitting their busy schedules or concerns around health and safety.

Throughout the reporting year clients were in need of advice

when moving between Germany and the UK, as for some specific scenarios advice cannot be found online or clients needed to confirm that their understanding is correct.

We have helped clients in difficult personal circumstances such as financial hardship due to the cost of living crisis and applied for heating and emergency grants and passed on a total of more than £55,000. The majority of these payments were made to pensioners, people with disabilities, families on low income or families with only one parent.

We offer

- Pension Advice - help and advice with German and UK pension applications, Life Certificates, tax on German pensions
- Advice for moving between Germany and UK, health insurance and social security systems, and benefits with Pre/Settled Status
- General Social Advice – benefits and health insurance in Germany and the UK
- Support for vulnerable people

Patron:

His Excellence the Ambassador of
the Federal Republic of Germany
Andreas Michaelis

Committee:

Mr U. Bauer – Chairman
Mr U. Maynard – Vice Chairman
(resigned in January 2022)
Mr J. Rhys
Ms V. Gronewold
Ms B. von Alten
Mr A. Blum
Mrs A. Haase

Employees:

Mrs D. Scording (full-time qualified
Social Worker)

Independent examiner:

King's House
9-10 Haymarket
London
SW1Y 4BP

Bank:

HSBC sort code: 40 04 07
Account number: 31055909

Emergency Grants

In collaboration with other charities, we have been able to secure donations for:

- a woman and her children fleeing domestic violence with a deposit to secure a flat and fridge/freezer, beds and table/chairs
- a pensioner to buy a new Hoover
- a single parent and her daughter to obtain a German passport in order to apply for settled status
- a divorced father on low income to buy a bed and mattress and desk for when his son visits
- an elderly couple with petrol costs to go to and from hospital for cancer treatments
- a single father of two children to pay gas and council tax bill

Life Certificates

In 2022 Germany and the UK introduced facilities to electronically cross check death data. This is possible if the National Insurance number has been provided. As a result less life certificates have been requested by the German Pension Centre. However, private pension and work pension providers cannot access this data and therefore still send out requests for life certificates. The same applies for restitution payments.

Our gratitude goes to:

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The German Ambassador Miguel Berger and his staff

Charities administered by the Kaiser Wilhelm II Fund

The German YMCA

Our corporate members and members

Our volunteers

The German parishes in England

All organisations and individuals, not specially mentioned

Buergergeld – the new ‘Hartz 4’ in Germany

This benefit is paid to support unemployed jobseekers since January 2023. It is more generous than the old system with a monthly payment of 502€ for a single person and the first applicant can have savings of up to 40.000€ (15.000€ for further applicant). In order to make an application you have to live in Germany, provide your German ID, bank statements of the last 3 months and documentation about your savings.

Fuehrerschein – German Driving licence

Since 2013 the Member States of the EU can only issue driving licences with a validity of 15 years. Driving licences issued before this date are valid until 19 January 2033. This means that holders of a German driving licence resident in the UK must exchange it for a British driving licence by 19 January 2033 or (if earlier) their 70th birthday. The DVLA will do this just for a fee and no test needs be taken. This process is staged depending when your German Driving licence was issued, please find more information on the website of the German Embassy <https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/A-Z/driving-licence/2487364?openAccordionId=item-2508546-0-panel>