



## **A New Year Message from Andrea Dunhill, Chief Executive**

On behalf of our trustees and everyone at CARBS I want to wish our clients, funders and community partners a very happy and successful 2019.

My first task on taking over from Elaine Parr in November has been to meet as many of you as possible and get to know the brilliant volunteers and staff on our team. It's been an enjoyable and stimulating few weeks and I want to thank everyone for their time and kind welcome. Elaine is a hard act to follow but there is so much enthusiasm and goodwill towards our organisation that I'm confident we shall be able to build on her achievements.

### **Successes**

There have been many successes 2018. Most important of course are the reassurance and peace of mind we've been able to give so many clients. Whether it's receiving the correct benefits after a long wait; the relief of a family saved from eviction; or realising there *is* light at the end of a tunnel of debt.

As an organisation we have also succeeded in deepening our friendships with many partners in the public, private and charity sectors. I believe CARBS is at the heart of a network of public service and voluntary groups whose ability to work together for clients makes for a stronger community and better quality of life in the borough. Our close working with local foodbanks and the support we're giving to a lively coffee project at Redhill Library are just two examples.

### **Challenges**

It's also true that we were held back by uncertainty over the location of our office in Redhill. In March we moved into temporary premises in the High Street. This was a big, if short-lived, step forward and much appreciated by our clients and volunteers. The issue is still unresolved, however, and in the year ahead we shall redouble our efforts to find a secure permanent base. This is essential for the continuing high quality of our service but also our financial stability – both funding partners and charitable donors understandably need to be confident that we have secure foundations.

We continue to be very grateful for the core funding support of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council. But as a local charity we need to raise significant sums every year to continue to run and develop our service, including recruiting and training local volunteers. In 2019 we shall launch a new fundraising campaign to promote the community value of free advice for all.

My best wishes to you all.

Andrea.