

Citizens Advice Scotland housing advice data

February - October 2020

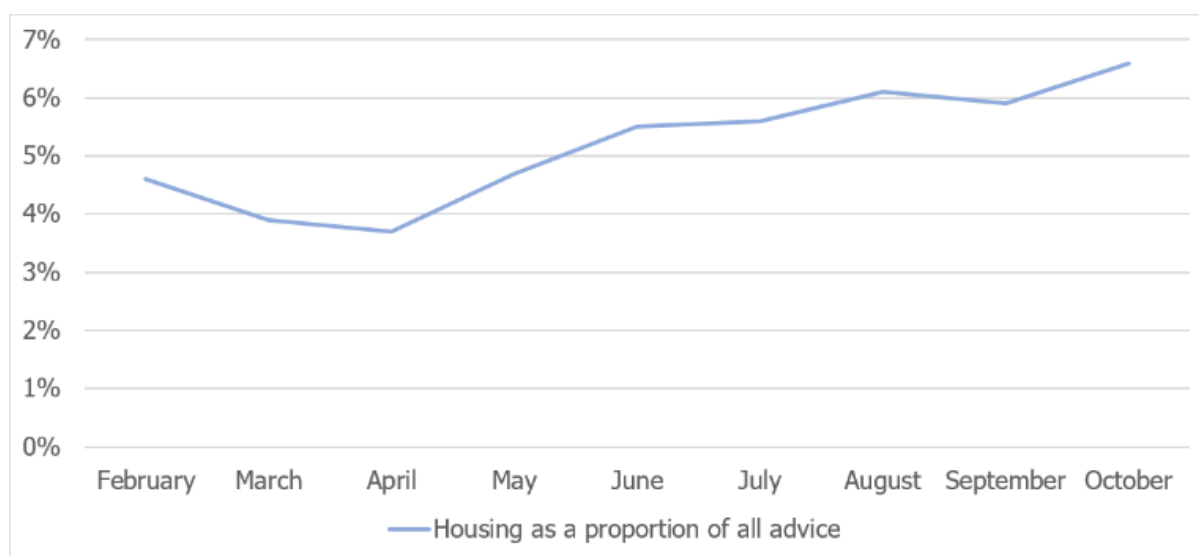
Note on the data

All charts are based on advice code data. These are recorded by advisers every time advice in relation to a particular topic is issued. All figures are expressed as percentages of their “parent” advice code category: e.g. housing advice is expressed as a proportion of all advice issues, and PRS advice is expressed as a proportion of all housing advice. This allows for more effective comparisons between months when overall numbers of clients fluctuate and/or there are changes in advice provision (e.g. the shift to telephone and email at lockdown).

This document contains data on housing advice code trends and the most common housing advice codes.

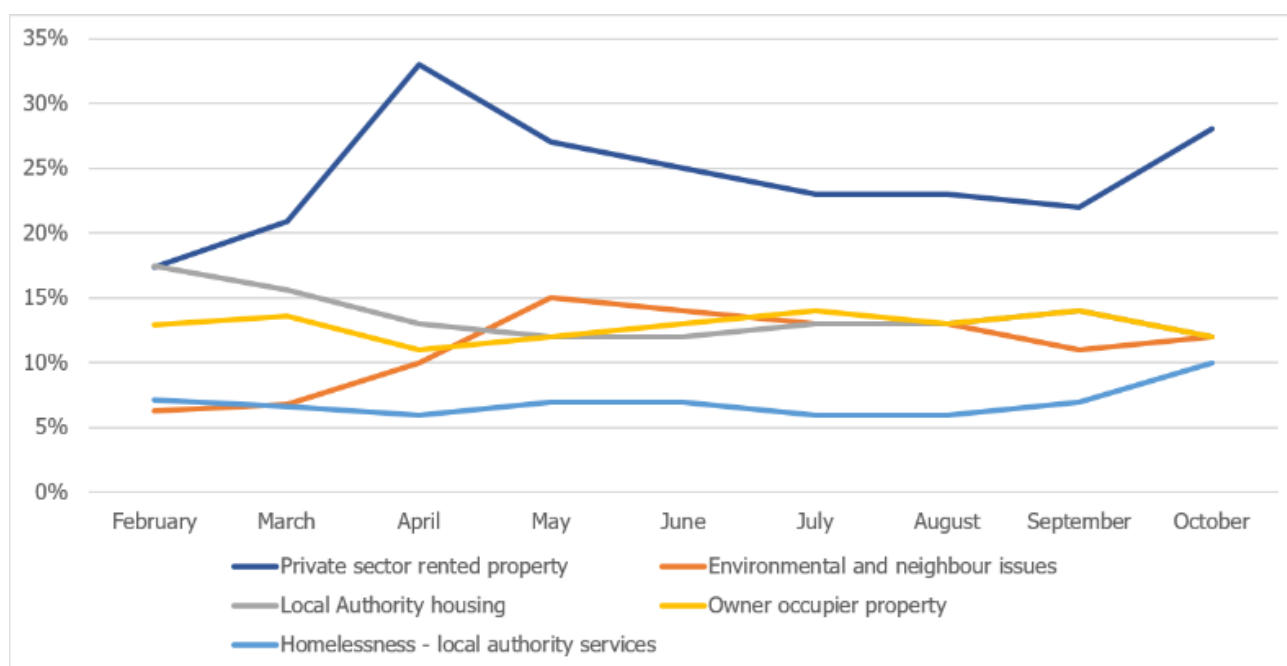
Advice code data

Chart 1. Advice on housing as a proportion of all advice



Month	Housing advice as proportion of all advice
February	4.6%
March	3.9%
April	3.7%
May	4.7%
June	5.5%
July	5.6%
August	6.1%
September	5.9%
October	6.6%

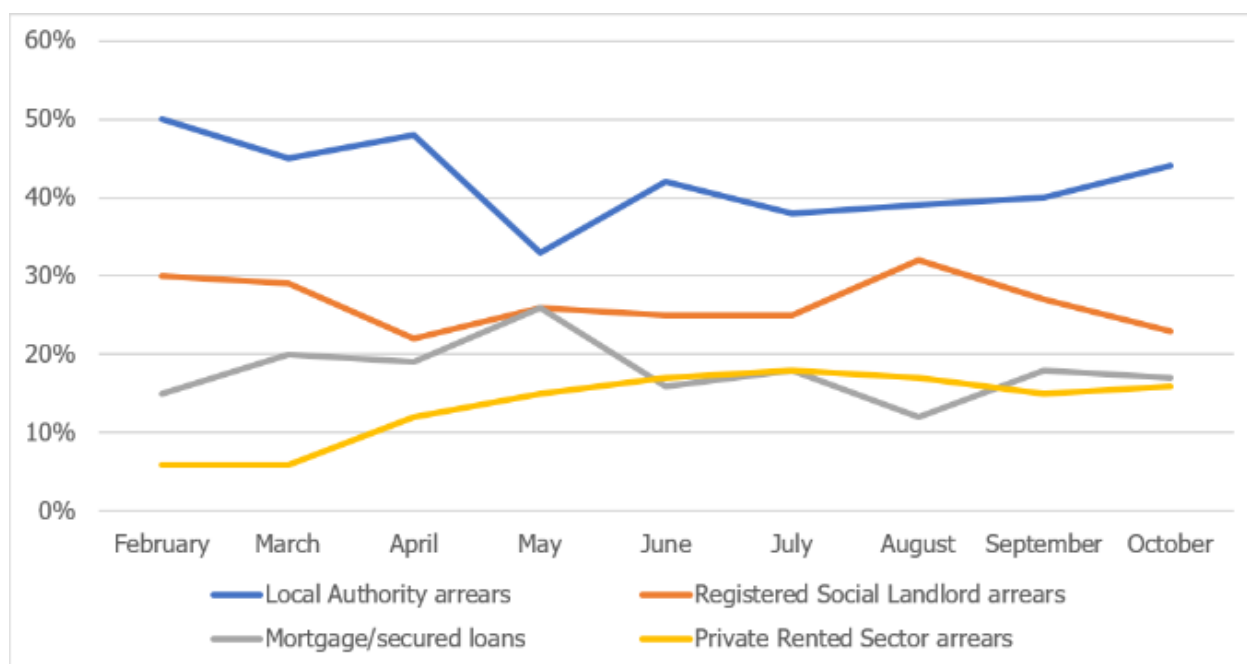
Chart 2. Most common types of housing advice (as a proportion of all housing advice)



Types of housing advice as a proportion of all housing advice	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Private sector rented property	17%	21%	33%	27%	25%	23%	23%	22%	28%
Environmental and neighbour issues	6%	7%	10%	15%	14%	13%	13%	11%	12%
Local Authority housing	17%	16%	13%	12%	12%	13%	13%	14%	12%
Owner occupier property	13%	14%	11%	12%	13%	14%	13%	11%	12%
Homelessness – local authority services	7%	7%	6%	7%	7%	6%	6%	7%	10%

In the last month “homelessness - local authority services” advice became more common than “access to and provision of accommodation” advice for the first time since February. The latter made up 8% of all housing advice, compared to the former making up 10% in October.

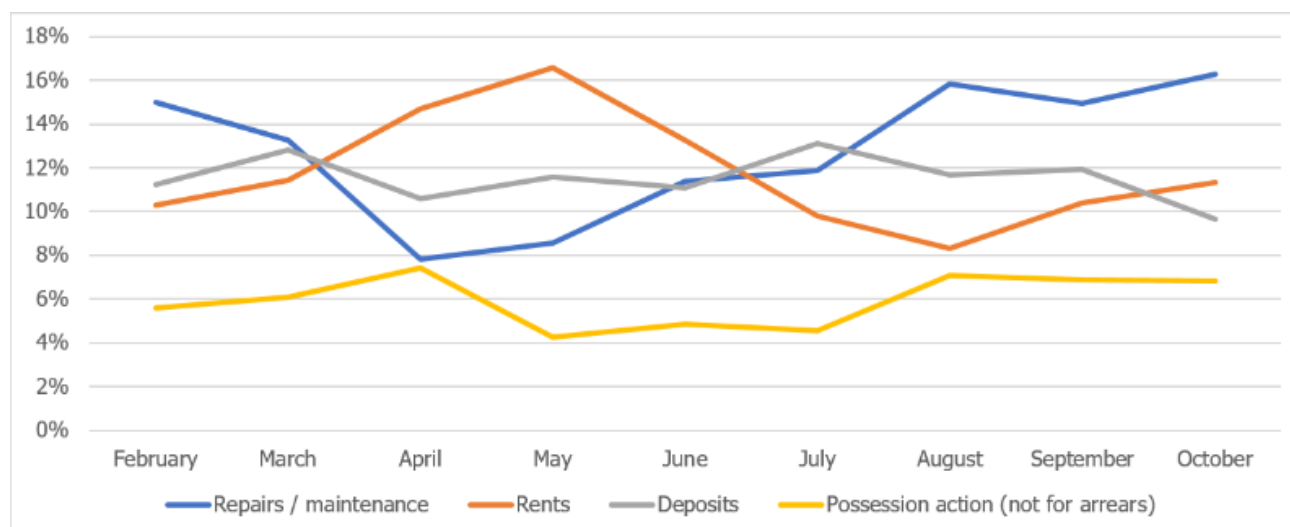
Chart 3. Changes in proportion of advice on housing cost arrears



Type of housing cost arrears	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Local Authority arrears	50%	45%	48%	33%	42%	38%	39%	40%	44%
Registered Social Landlord arrears	30%	29%	22%	26%	25%	25%	32%	27%	23%
Mortgage / secured loans	15%	20%	19%	26%	16%	18%	12%	18%	17%
Private Rented Sector arrears	6%	6%	12%	15%	17%	18%	17%	15%	16%

LA arrears advice continues to make up the most common type of housing cost arrears advice, and PRS arrears advice least. However, we can see that LA arrears advice remains lower than February by 10% whereas PRS arrears advice makes up more than two and half times more of all housing cost arrears advice than it did in February.

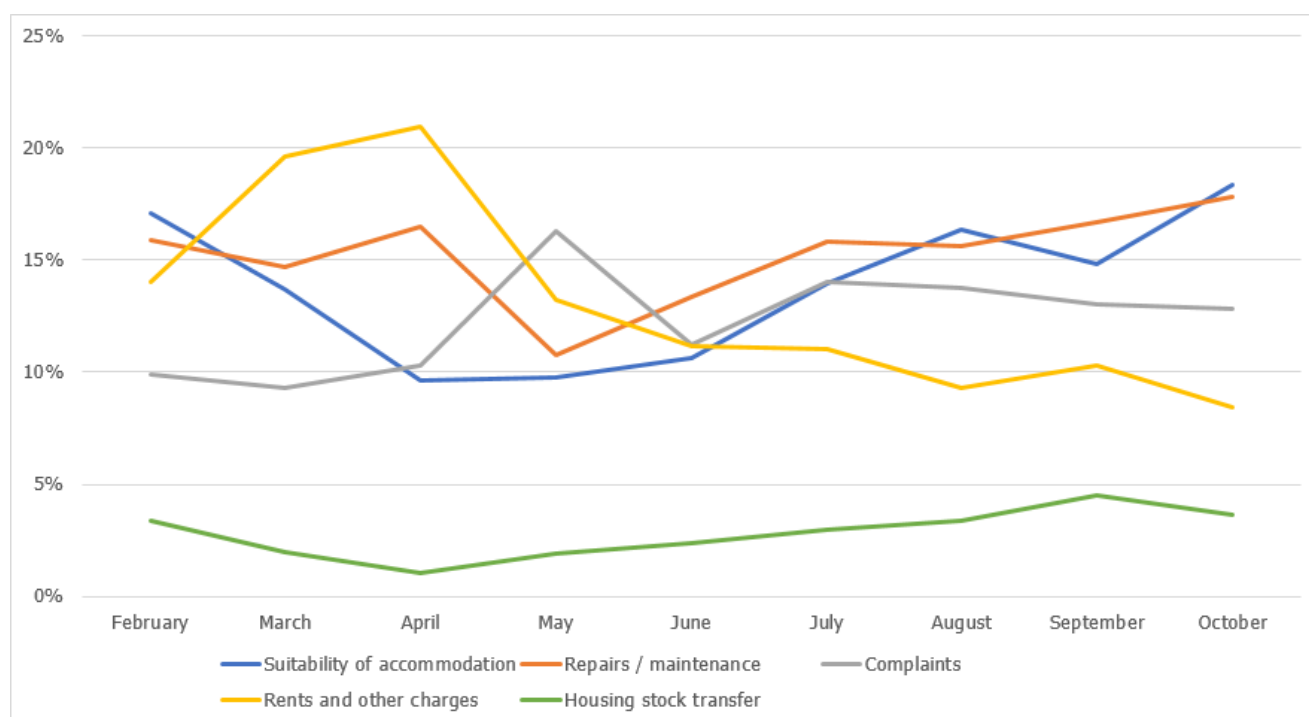
Chart 4. Most common types of PRS advice (as proportion of all PRS advice)



Private sector rented property	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Repairs / maintenance	15%	13%	8%	9%	11%	12%	9%	15%	16%
Rents	10%	11%	15%	17%	13%	10%	10%	11%	11%
Deposits	11%	13%	11%	12%	11%	13%	10%	12%	10%
Possession action (not for arrears)	8%	9%	10%	10%	8%	9%	7%	7%	7%

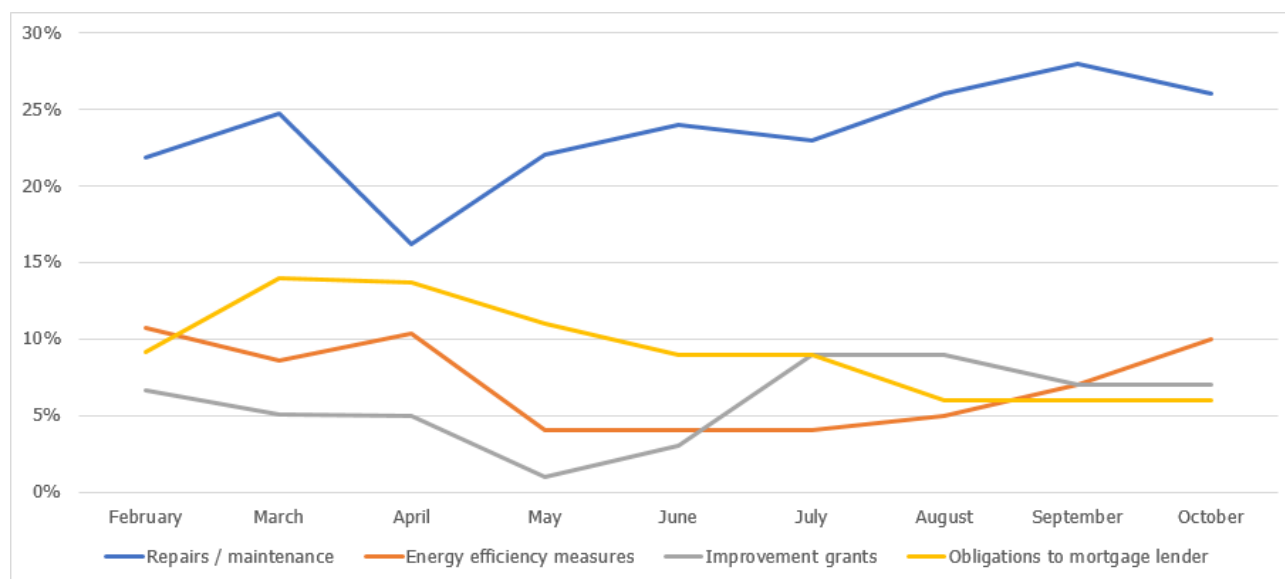
In the two months, there has been some movement in the most common kinds of PRS advice. Possession action (not for arrears), security of tenure and problems of letting agents have all overtaken “tenancy termination” advice as a proportion of all PRS advice in October. The latter made up 5% of all advice last month, whereas possession action (not for arrears) as above made up 7%, and security of tenure advice and problems with letting agents advice made up 6% each.

Chart 5. Most common types of LA housing advice (as proportion of all LA housing advice)



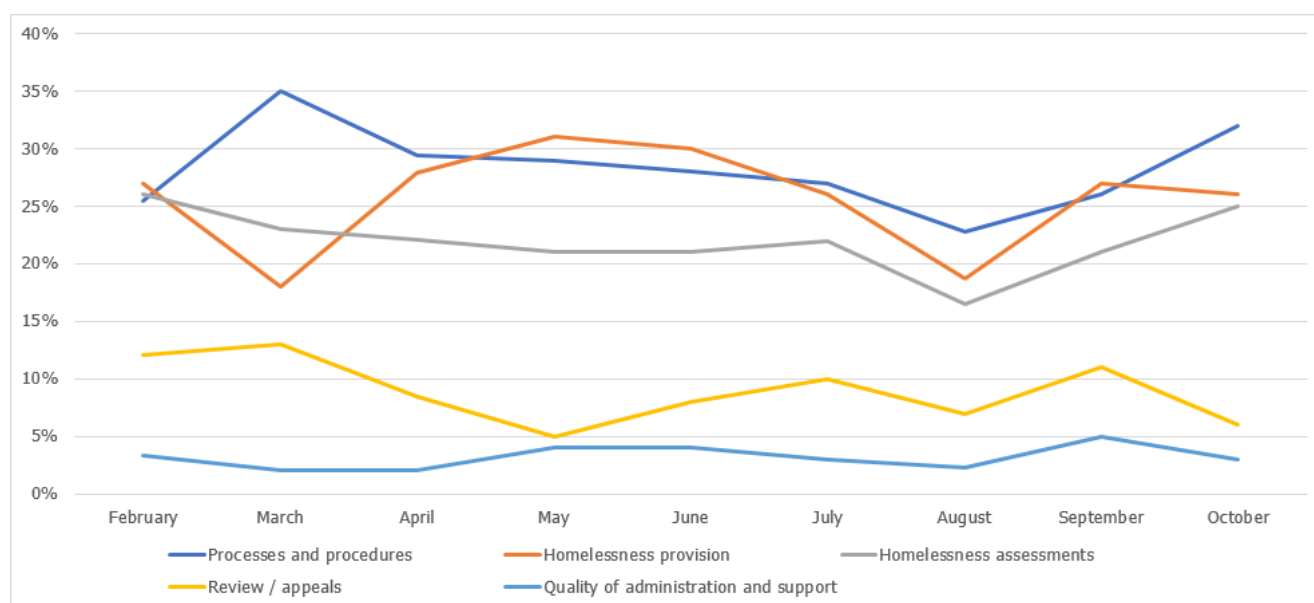
Types of LA housing advice	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Suitability of accommodation	17%	14%	10%	10%	11%	14%	16%	15%	18%
Repairs / maintenance	16%	15%	16%	11%	13%	16%	16%	17%	18%
Complaints	10%	9%	10%	16%	11%	14%	14%	13%	13%
Rents and other charges	14%	20%	21%	13%	11%	11%	9%	10%	8%
Housing stock transfer	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	3%	3%	5%	4%

Chart 6. Most common types of owner-occupier advice (as proportion of all owner-occupier advice)



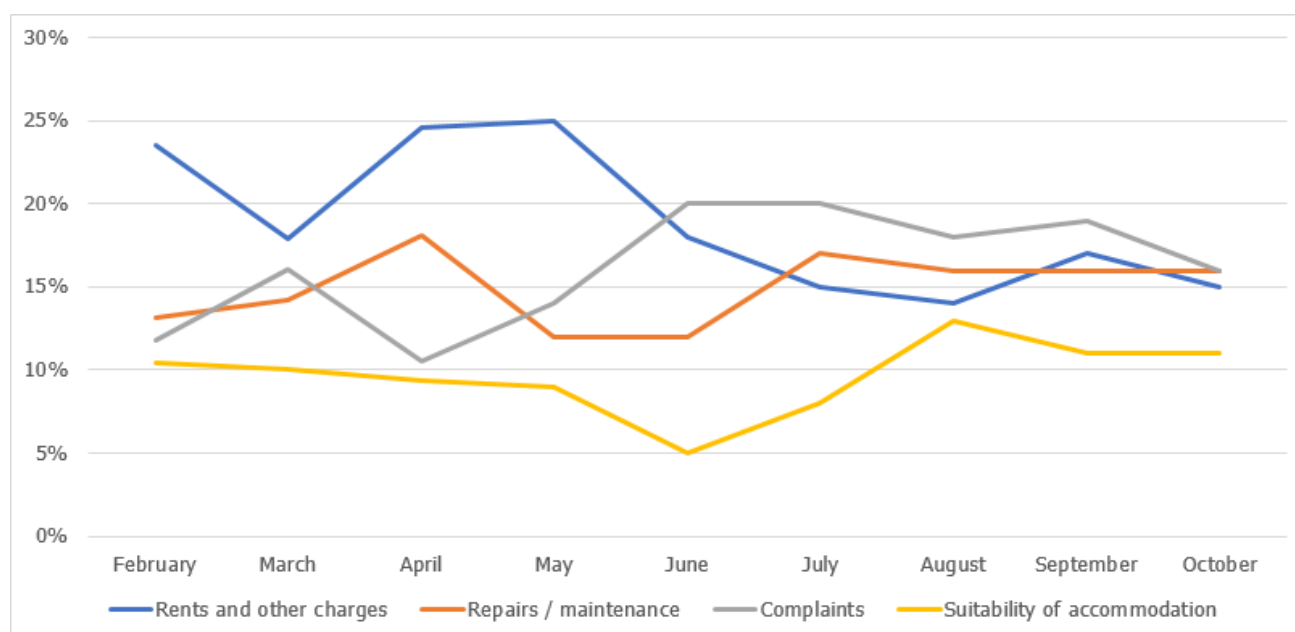
Owner-occupier property	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Repairs / maintenance	22%	25%	16%	22%	24%	23%	26%	28%	26%
Energy efficiency measures	11%	9%	10%	4%	4%	4%	5%	7%	10%
Improvement grants	7%	5%	5%	1%	3%	9%	9%	7%	7%
Obligations to mortgage lender	9%	14%	14%	11%	9%	9%	6%	6%	6%

Chart 7. Most common types of homelessness – local authority services advice (as proportion of all homelessness – LA services advice)



Homelessness - local authority service	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Processes and procedures	25%	35%	29%	29%	28%	27%	23%	26%	32%
Homelessness provision	27%	18%	28%	31%	30%	26%	19%	27%	26%
Homelessness assessments	26%	23%	22%	21%	21%	22%	17%	21%	25%
Review / appeals	12%	13%	8%	5%	8%	10%	7%	11%	6%
Quality of administration and support	3%	2%	2%	4%	4%	3%	2%	5%	3%

Chart 8. Most common types of RSL housing advice (as proportion of all RSL housing advice)



Registered social landlord property	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Rents and other charges	24%	18%	25%	25%	18%	15%	14%	17%	15%
Repairs / maintenance	13%	14%	18%	12%	12%	17%	16%	16%	16%
Complaints	12%	16%	11%	14%	20%	20%	18%	19%	16%
Suitability of accommodation	10%	10%	9%	9%	5%	8%	13%	11%	11%

Advice on landlord harassment and illegal evictions in the PRS

These figures are not expressed as a percentage of their “parent” advice code category (e.g. private rented sector property advice) as they make only 5-8% of all PRS advice and trends in terms of proportion of advice are masked. Instead they are shown below in total numbers of pieces of advice, and against the total numbers of PRS advice and the percentage increase since February in those numbers.

You can see that even where advice on harassment stayed the same or decreased compared to February it mostly did so at a disproportionately lower rate than the parent advice code numbers. If there was no change in people's advice needs overall we'd expect to see the percentages look very similar but the first two rows here show very different % increases and decreases to the bottom two (% change from February in brackets).

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
Harassment / illegal evictions	18	18	39	18	25	36	33	40	29
		(=0%)	(+117%)	(=0%)	(+39%)	(+100%)	(+83%)	(+122%)	(+61%)
Complaints / harassment by landlord	36	33	38	33	49	52	56	54	47
		(-8%)	(-6%)	(-8%)	(+36%)	(+44%)	(+56%)	(+50%)	(+31%)
All PRS advice	767	656	945	844	1052	1034	1178	1294	906
		(-14%)	(+23%)	(+10%)	(+37%)	(+35%)	(+54%)	(+69%)	(18%)
All housing advice	2395	1849	1477	1773	2315	2233	2736	3283	3259
		(-23%)	(-38%)	(-26%)	(-3%)	(-7%)	(+14%)	(+37%)	(+36%)

For any queries on these statistics, please contact nina.ballantyne@cas.org.uk