

This is the latest monthly summary of data from the Citizens Advice network in Scotland since the COVID-19 outbreak and covers July 2021. It shows data from the 59 Citizens Advice Bureaux in Scotland and our online advice site.

## Key points

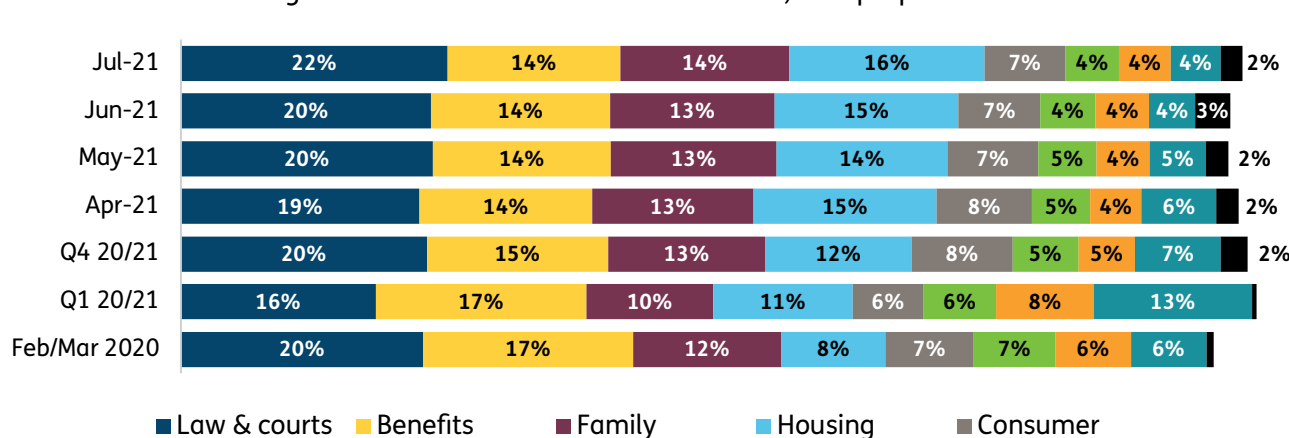
- > In July 2021 Citizens Advice Bureaux issued **80,951** pieces of advice.
- > In July 2021 pages on the website were viewed a total of **345,599** times.
- > There were **206,813** website users in July 2021
- > **76%** of these being new users.

## Web pages: July 2021

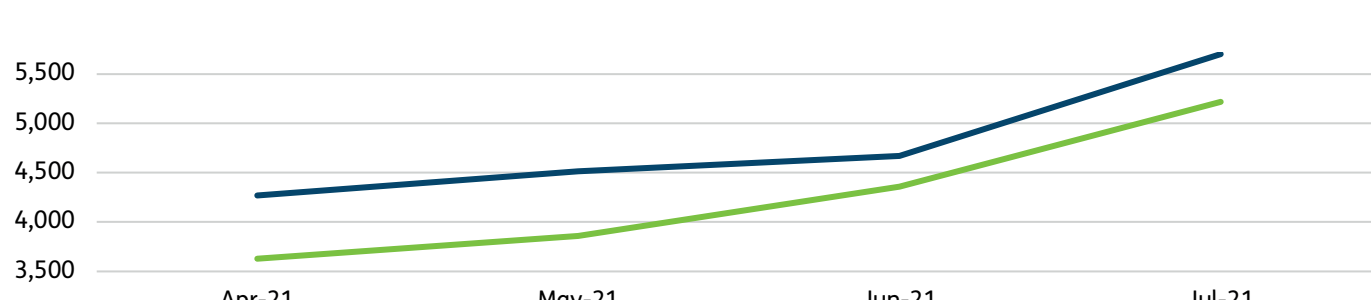
- > Number of unique page views (UPV) in July 2021: **346,599**
- > Number of website users in July 2021: **206,813**
- > **76%** of these being new users.

Trend data for visits to the Advice for Scotland website, as a proportion of all unique page views on the site, shows little variation between June and July 2021 other than increases in the unique page views of pages relating to relationship advice (up **5%**) and housing advice (up **8%**).

Advice sought on the 'Advice for Scotland' website, as a proportion of all advice

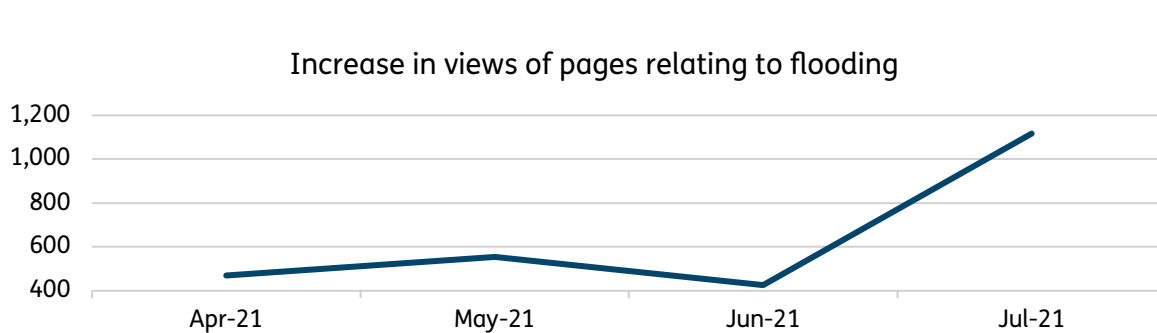


The pages providing advice on ending a relationship when living together, and anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhood, have increased steadily since April 2021 and currently exceed pre-pandemic views by a considerable amount. The former recorded **2,105** unique page views in March 2020 and the later **1,858**.



There has also been a sharp increase in traffic to pages covering advice on flooding also increased considerably during July 2021, no doubt as a result of adverse weather conditions.

Increase in views of pages relating to flooding

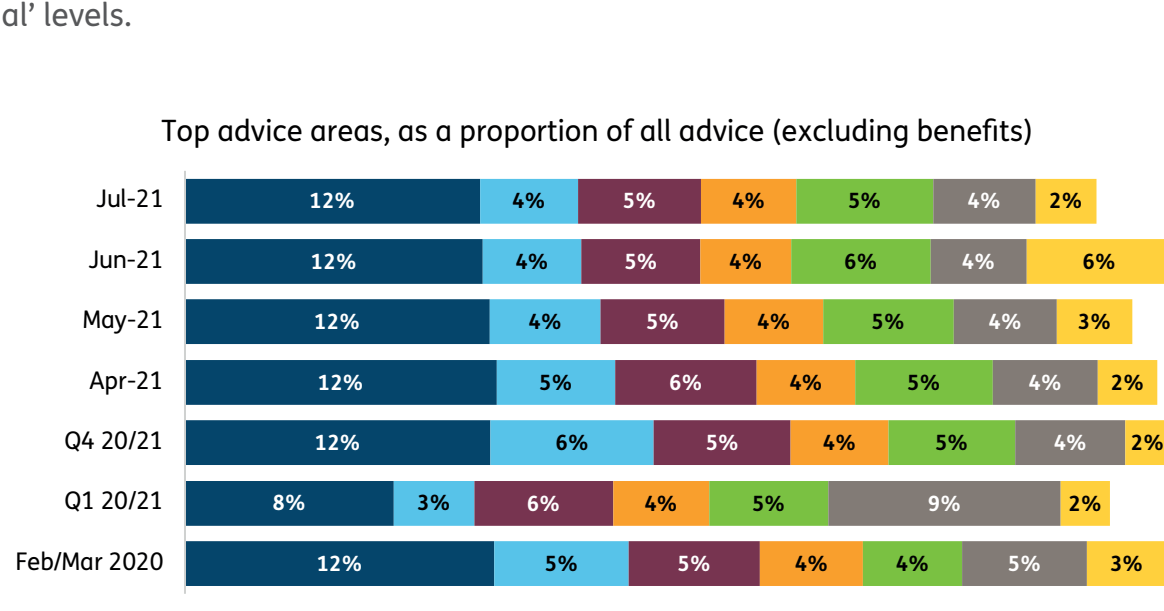


## Citizens Advice Bureaux

- > **19,690** clients
- > **80,951** pieces of advice

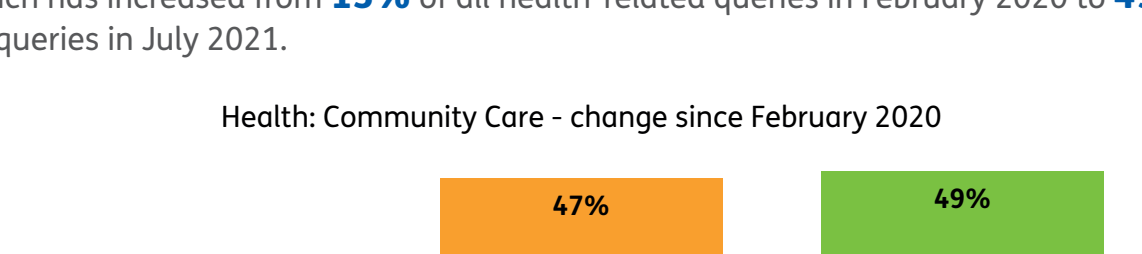
Benefits remained the top advice area in July 2021 at **50%** of all advice, this represents an increase of **5%** from the previous month and is the highest proportion seen since Quarter 1 of 2020/21. Trend data continues to show a return to 'business as usual' for bureaux in terms of advice needs, particularly with immigration-related advice returning to what can be considered 'normal' levels.

Top advice areas, as a proportion of all advice (excluding benefits)



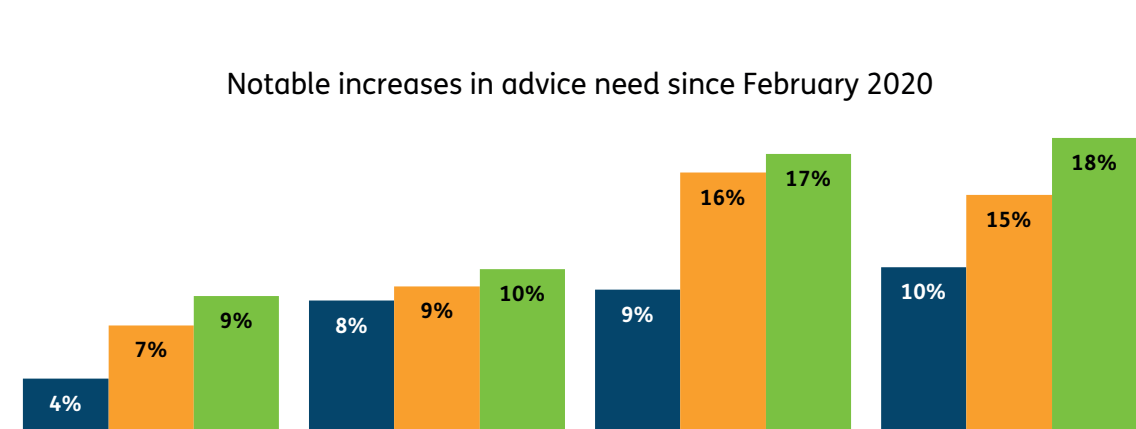
A number of advice subcategories have demonstrated a continued increase since the start of the pandemic. One of the most notable of these is in relation to advice sought on community care, which has increased from **13%** of all health-related queries in February 2020 to **49%** of all such queries in July 2021.

Health: Community Care - change since February 2020



Similarly, steady increases have been seen in relation to advice need around access to GPs and dentists; access to accommodation; scams; and solicitors. These increases range from **23%** for access to accommodation to **142%** for access to GPs/dentists.

Notable increases in advice need since February 2020



## During July 2021:

Although the proportion of face-to-face contacts increased by only **4%** between June and July 2021, this varied considerably across the categories with relationship issues (up by **64%**); consumer issues (up by **51%**); and utilities (up by **32%**) showing the greatest increase. The most common avenue for seeking benefits advice also shifted to face-to-face in July 2021.

Advice most commonly sought via **SCAH**:

Consumer Issues

Employment

Housing

Immigration

Advice most commonly sought **face-to-face**:

Benefits

Finance/  
charitable support

Travel

Advice most commonly sought through **direct contact with bureaux (telephone or email)**:

Debt

**Advice sought on relationship issues was up 64%.**

**Advice on access to GPs and dentists was up by 142%.**

## Month in focus:

July's figures highlight the continued growth in demand for advice relating to **accessing front line medical services** such as GPs, dentists and community care. This trend has been emerging over the course of the pandemic period and shows increased pressures on these services along with a rising need for support in accessing them.

The increased demand for advice **relating to flooding** is almost certainly a response to rising experiences of adverse weather conditions. Tracking this data provides an insight not only into instances of adverse or extreme weather but can also act as an indicator as to how much such weather is creating material issues for citizens. With the expectation that instances of extreme weather will increase as a result of climate change we will continue to monitor advice demand in this area in the build up to COP26 and beyond.