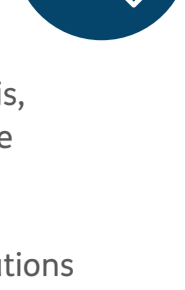


This is the latest monthly summary of data from the Citizens Advice network in Scotland and covers December 2022. It shows data from the 59 Citizens Advice Bureaux in Scotland and our online advice site.

Month in focus:



In December 2022, for the first time since CAS began publishing data on a monthly basis, energy was the single top area of advice, surpassing Universal Credit and all other single advice areas.

Advice in relation to regulated fuel made up **15%** of all advice. Utilities and Communications advice increased 70% from November, nearly doubling in terms of the amount of advice provided. This is a further increase of **98%** from the same time last year.

Food Bank related advice was at an all-time-high in December with over 700 more pieces of advice given compared to December 2021. Combined, Charities: Food Bank advice and Charities: Non-Food Bank advice ranked as the 3rd single top advice area in December 2022, an increase from 5th place in December 2021.

Online, water supply seemed to be a key concern of our website-users with the webpage 'Problems with Public Water Quality and Supply' increasing **296%** in views from November to December. The webpage 'Water Leaks and Pipes' increased **186%** from November to December.

People are also seeking advice around evictions. The webpage 'You're Facing Eviction Because Your Home Has Been Repossessed' peaked in December, increasing **30%** from November and **824%** from December 2021.

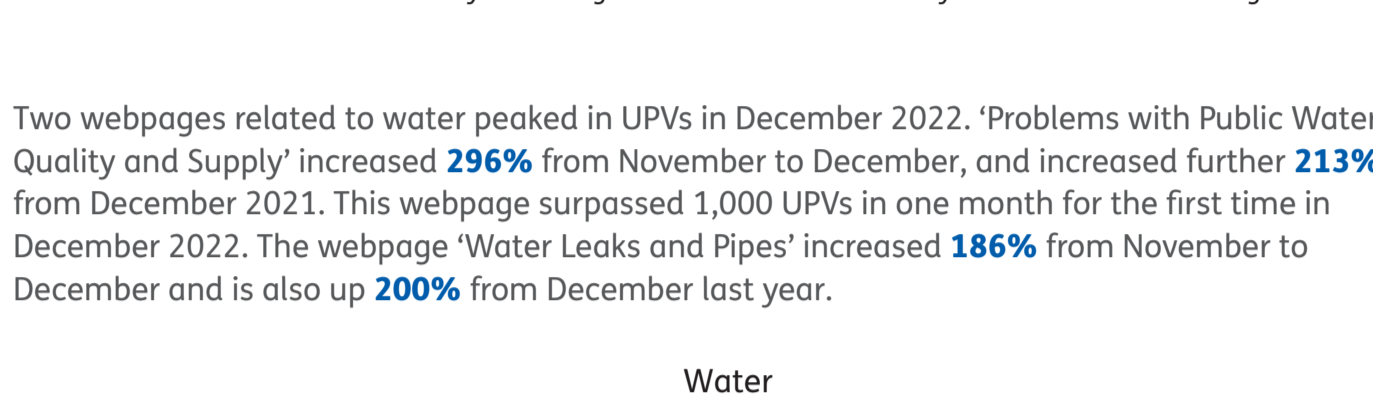
Key points

- > In December 2022 the CAB network gave **68,965** pieces of advice to **17,697** clients
- > Meanwhile there were over **294,167** views of the Advice for Scotland website from **183,498** users

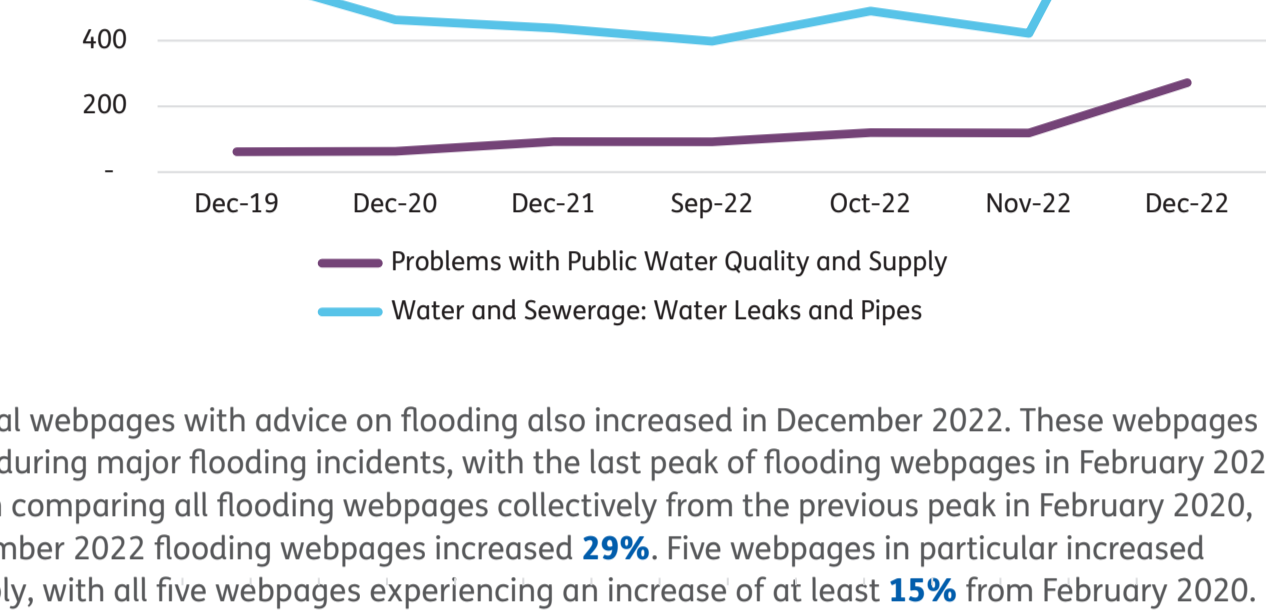
Online advice pages

- > **294,167 unique page views (UPVs)**
- > **183,498 users, 85% new**

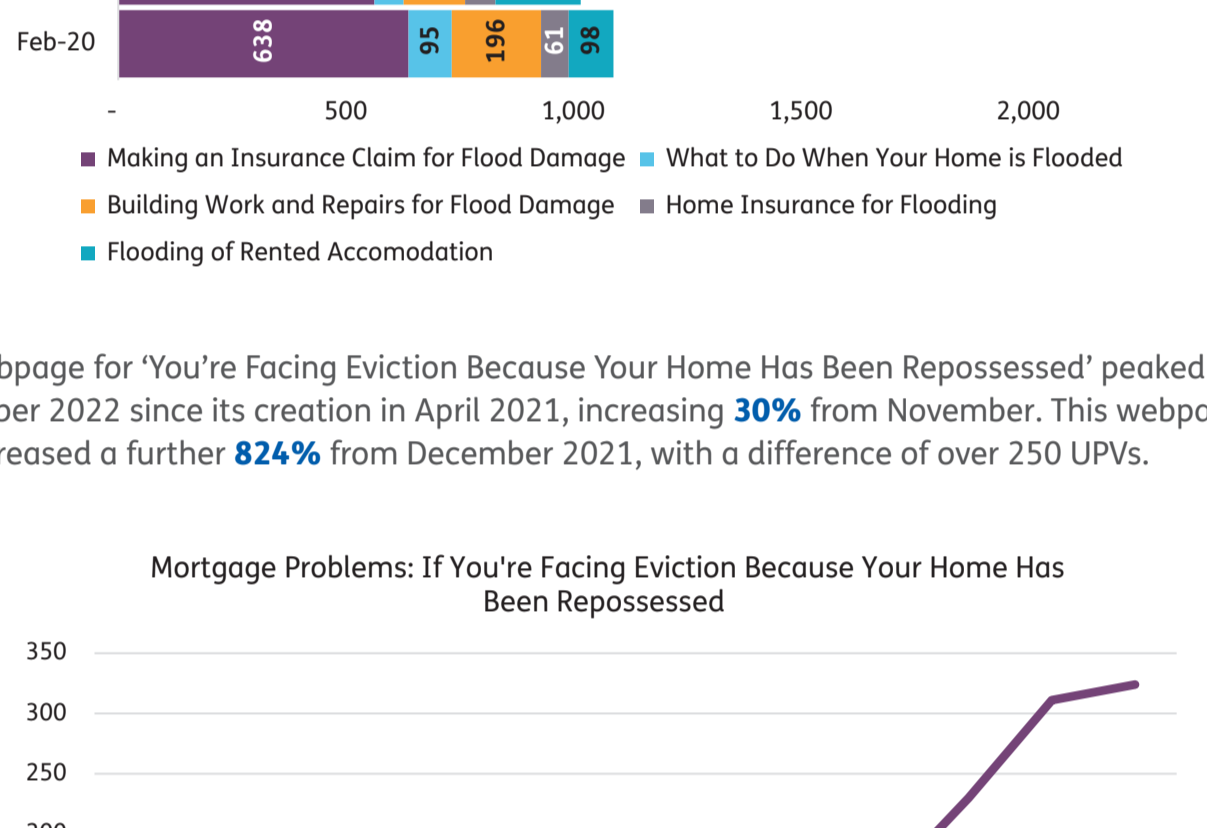
Two webpage advice areas changed notably from November to December 2022: Consumer (up **16%**); and Work (down **11%**). Work webpages in December 2022 also decreased from the same time last year (down **32%**). Other notable changes between December 2022 and December 2021 were webpages related to Benefits (up **24%**); Housing (up **13%**); Debt & Money (up **14%**); and Health (down **41%**).



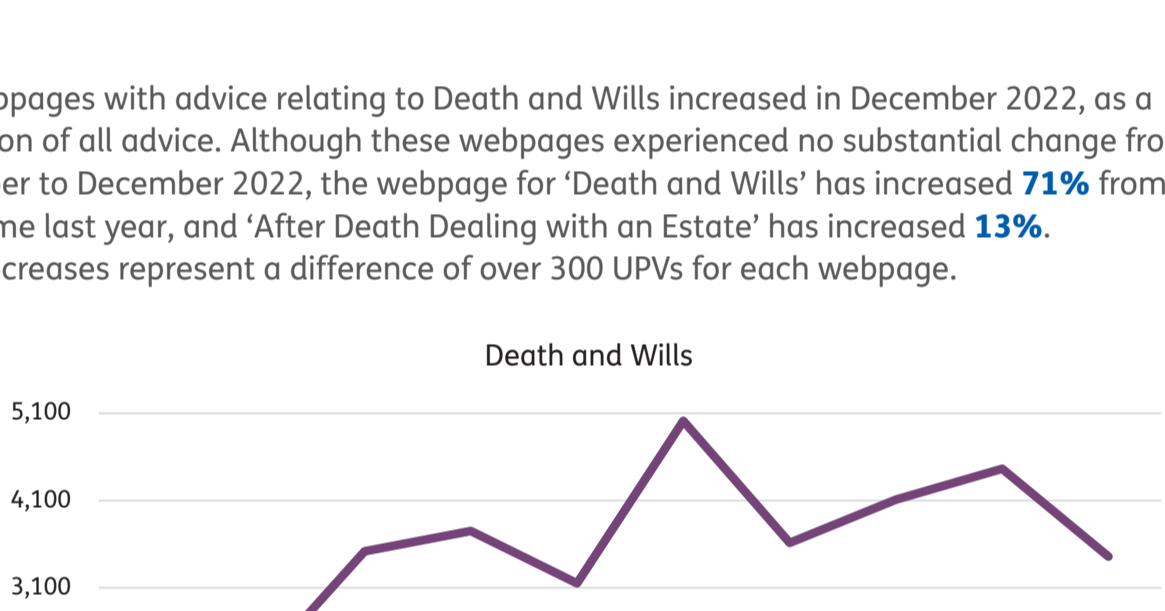
Two webpages related to water peaked in UPVs in December 2022. 'Problems with Public Water Quality and Supply' increased **296%** from November to December, and increased further **213%** from December 2021. This webpage surpassed 1,000 UPVs in one month for the first time in December 2022. The webpage 'Water Leaks and Pipes' increased **186%** from November to December and is also up **200%** from December last year.



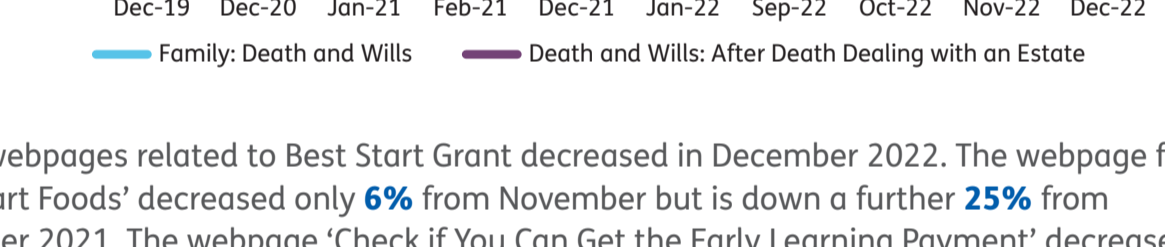
Several webpages with advice on flooding also increased in December 2022. These webpages peak during major flooding incidents, with the last peak of flooding webpages in February 2020. When comparing all flooding webpages collectively from the previous peak in February 2020, December 2022 flooding webpages increased **29%**. Five webpages in particular increased notably, with all five webpages experiencing an increase of at least **15%** from February 2020. In particular, the webpage 'What to Do When Your Home is Flooded' increased **952%** from the last peak. Flooding webpages experienced the most unique pageviews between the 15th and 22nd of December, as well as the 30th. The substantial increase in UPVs in December may be due in part to the added cost of floods on top of energy costs and the holiday season, however this may also be a trend that continues due to climate change.



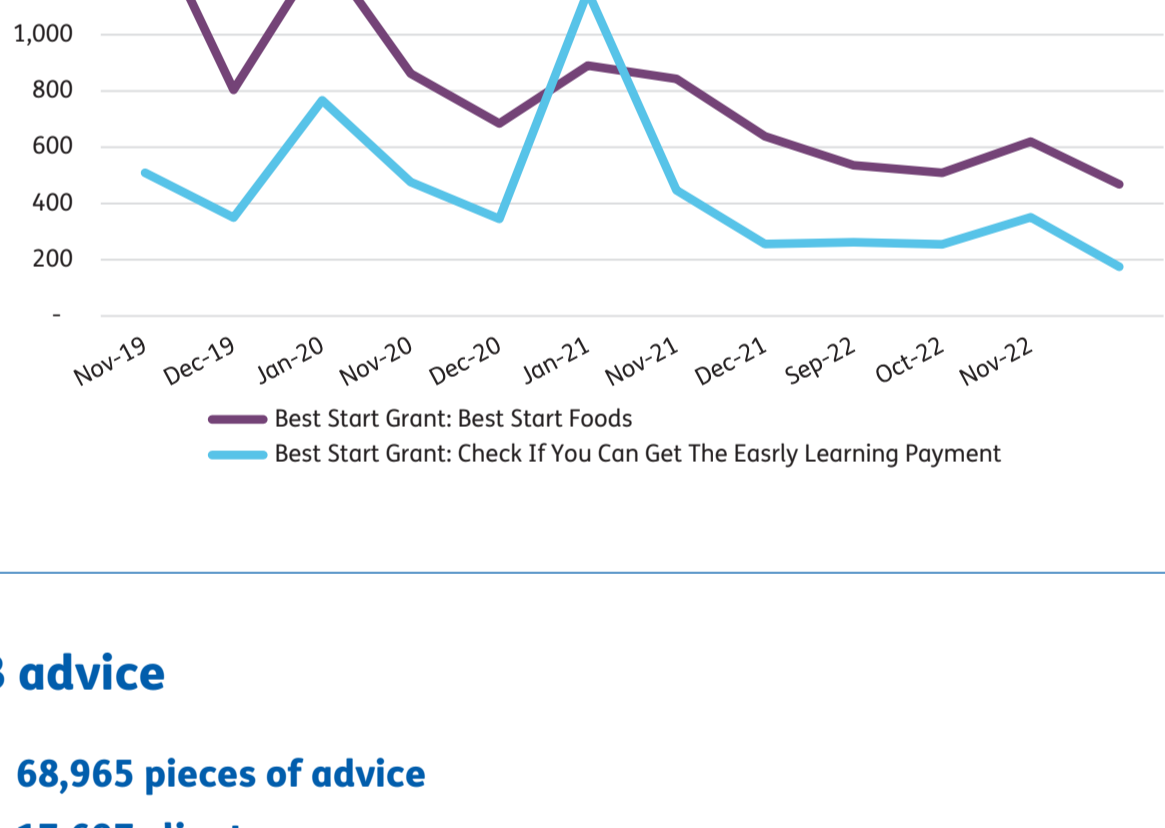
The webpage for 'You're Facing Eviction Because Your Home Has Been Repossessed' peaked in December 2022 since its creation in April 2021, increasing **30%** from November. This webpage has increased a further **824%** from December 2021, with a difference of over 250 UPVs.



Two webpages with advice relating to Death and Wills increased in December 2022, as a proportion of all advice. Although these webpages experienced no substantial change from November to December 2022, the webpage for 'Death and Wills' has increased **71%** from the same time last year, and 'After Death Dealing with an Estate' has increased **13%**. These increases represent a difference of over 300 UPVs for each webpage.



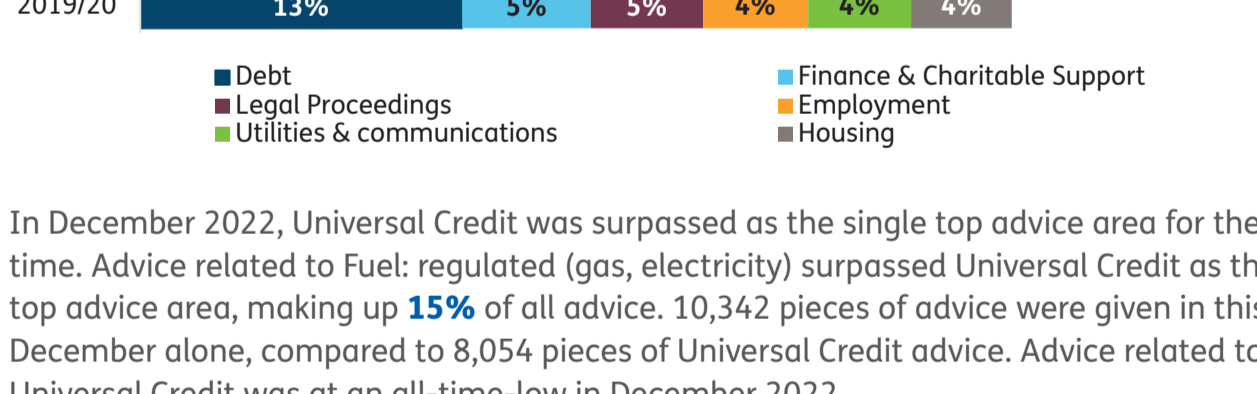
Lastly, webpages related to Best Start Grant decreased in December 2022. The webpage for 'Best Start Foods' decreased only **6%** from November but is down a further **25%** from December 2021. The webpage 'Check if You Can Get the Early Learning Payment' decreased **38%** from November and is down a further **30%** from December 2021.



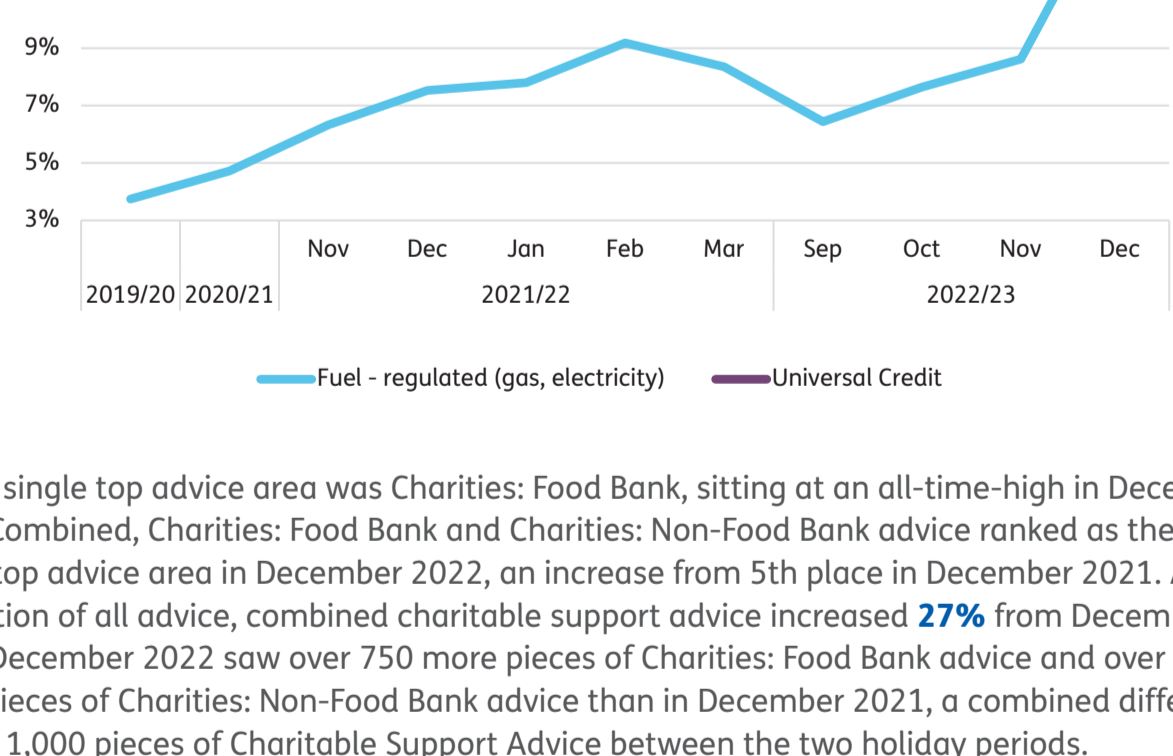
CAB advice

- > **68,965 pieces of advice**
- > **17,697 clients**

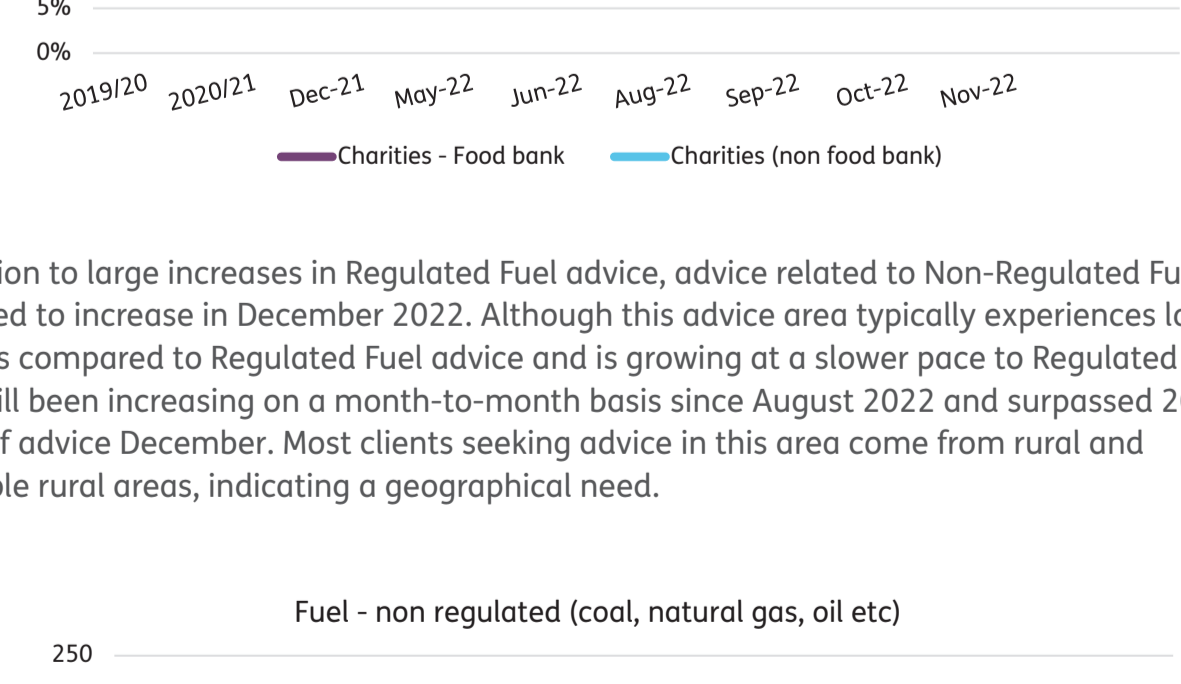
Benefits remained the top advice area in December 2022 at **42%** of all advice. Two advice areas increased notably from November 2022: Utilities and Communications advice continued to increase in December, nearly doubling in the amount of advice provided (up **70%**); this is a further increase of **98%** from the same time last year. Finance and Charitable Support advice also continued to increase (up **20%**) from November to December 2022; a further increase of **19%** from December 2021. Other advice areas that increased between December 2022 and December 2021, were Employment (up **12%**) and Housing (up **10%**).



In December 2022, Universal Credit was surpassed as the single top advice area for the first time. Advice related to Fuel: regulated (gas, electricity) surpassed Universal Credit as the single top advice area, making up **15%** of all advice. 10,342 pieces of advice were given in this area in December alone, compared to 8,054 pieces of Universal Credit advice. Advice related to Universal Credit was at an all-time-low in December 2022.



The 4th single top advice area was Charities: Food Bank, sitting at an all-time-high in December 2022. Combined, Charities: Food Bank and Charities: Non-Food Bank advice ranked as the 3rd single top advice area in December 2022, an increase from 5th place in December 2021. As a proportion of all advice, combined charitable support advice increased **27%** from December 2021. December 2022 saw over 750 more pieces of Charities: Food Bank advice and over 300 more pieces of Charities: Non-Food Bank advice than in December 2021, a combined difference of over 1,000 pieces of Charitable Support Advice between the two holiday periods.



In addition to large increases in Regulated Fuel advice, advice related to Non-Regulated Fuel continued to increase in December 2022. Although this advice area typically experiences low numbers compared to Regulated Fuel advice and is growing at a slower pace to Regulated Fuel, it has still been increasing on a month-to-month basis since August 2022 and surpassed 200 pieces of advice December. Most clients seeking advice in this area come from rural and accessible rural areas, indicating a geographical need.



Advice related to Debt Arrears: Registered Social Landlords increased **38%** from November to December 2022; from the same time last year, this advice area has increased a further 68%. Housing advice for Registered Social Landlords also increased **18%** from November to December 2022, and a further **13%** from the same time last year; additionally, this advice area increased **41%** from 2019/20. Combined, 630 pieces of advice on Registered Social Landlords was given in December 2022.

