

Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS), our 59-member Citizen Advice Bureaux (CAB) and the Extra Help Unit (EHU), form Scotland's largest independent advice network. Scotland's Citizens Advice Network is an essential community service that empowers people through our local bureaux and national services by providing free, confidential and independent advice.

We use people's real-life experiences to influence policy and drive positive change. We are on the side of people in Scotland who need help and we change lives for the better. During 2022-23, the Citizens Advice network provided advice and assistance to over 187,000 people. The network putting over £142 million back into people's pockets during this time, with every £1 invested in core advice funding returning £14 in gains for people.

This is the latest monthly summary of data from the Citizens Advice network in Scotland and covers January 2024. It shows data from the 59 Citizens Advice Bureaux in Scotland and our online advice site.

Month in Focus

In January 2024, CABs helped over 23,000 people, giving over 96,000 pieces of advice. Meanwhile, online advice pages received over 362,000 unique page views (UPVs), an increase of 30% compared to December 2023.

Online, we saw several notable longer-term changes. From January 2023 to January 2024, there was a 21% increase in page views relating to Benefits.

Over the same time period, views on pages providing Redundancy advice saw a significant increase of 67%. Advice pages on Pay saw a 32% increase in views.

Meanwhile, views relating to pages on Debt and Money increased by 30% from December 2023 to January 2024.

Across the CAB network, food insecurity and debt continue to be growing issues as the cost of living crisis persists.

Advice relating to Registered Social Landlord Rent Arrears increased by 28% from January 2023 to January 2024

Finally, there continues to be an increase in demands for advice on Food Banks, which saw a 16% increase over the past year.



Webpages

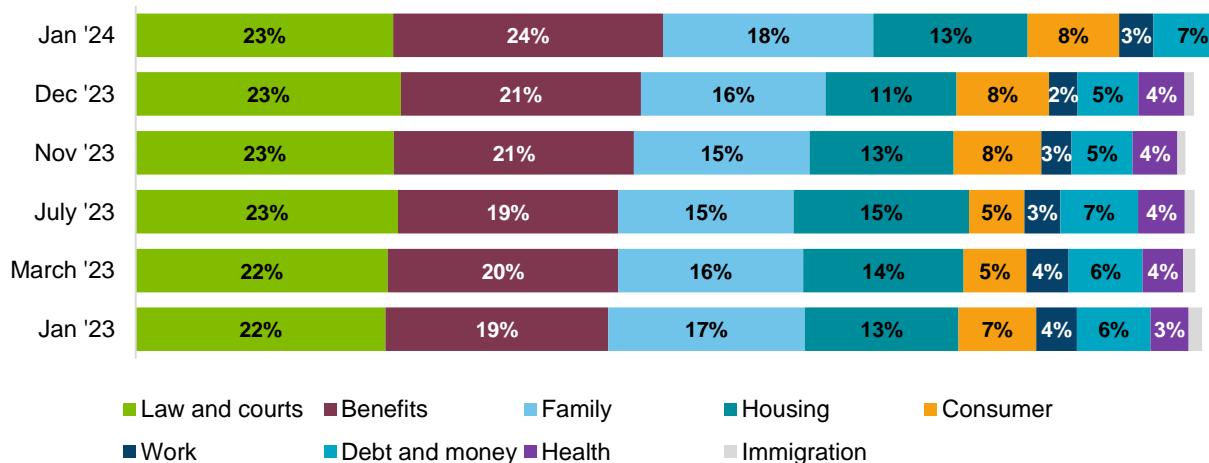
362,354 views (up 30% from December 2023)

From December 2023 to January 2024, views in relation to pages on Benefits increased by 12%, with views on pages pertaining to Family increasing by 14% during the same period. Other notable changes include views relating to pages providing advice on Housing increasing by 18% from December 2023 to January 2024, and views on pages in relation to work increasing by 20% during the same period.

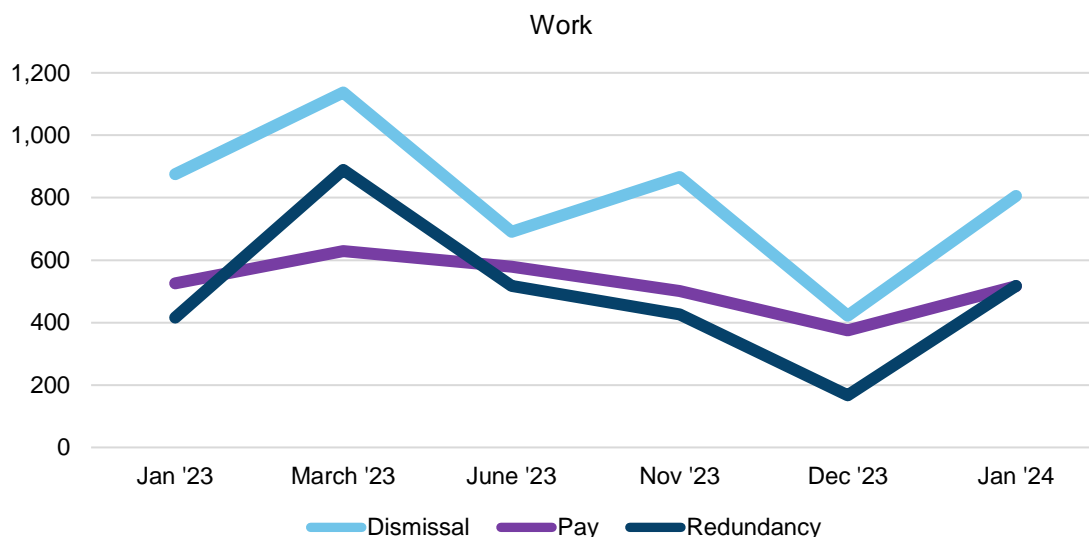
Views relating to pages on Debt and Money increased by 30% from December 2023 to January 2024. The other notable changes from this period are a 14% increase in views on pages relating to Immigration, and a 32% decrease in views on pages offering advice around Health.

Longer-term notable changes include a 21% increase in views on pages relating to Benefits, from January 2023 to January 2024, with views relating to pages with Consumer advice increasing by 18% during the same period. Other long-term changes from January 2023 to January 2024 include views on pages relating to Work advice decreasing by 16%; views on pages relating to Health decreasing by 18%; and views on pages in relation to Immigration advice decreasing by 19%.

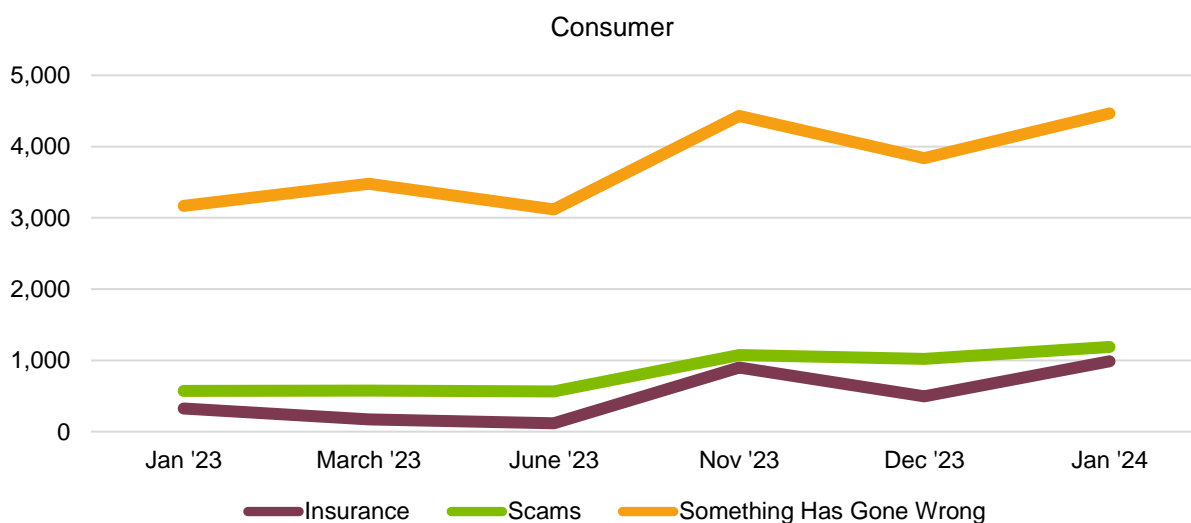
Advice sought on the 'Advice for Scotland' website, as a proportion of all advice



Views relating to pages providing Redundancy advice increased by 99% from December 2023 to January 2024, and by 67% from January 2023 to January 2024. Views relating to pages offering advice on Pay decreased by 12% from December 2023 to January 2024, however, views have increased by 32% in the longer-term, from January 2023 to January 2024. Views relating to Dismissal increased by 22% from December 2023 to January 2024, and by 24% from January 2023 to January 2024.

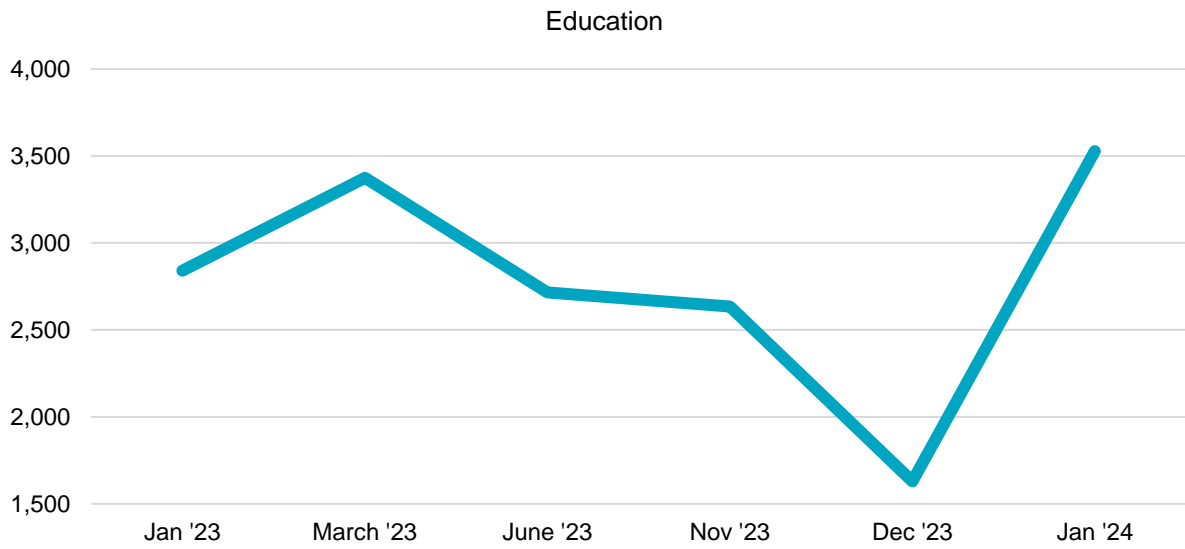


Views on pages regarding Insurance advice increased by 56% from December 2023 to January 2024, and by 194% from January 2023 to January 2024. Views on pages relating to Scams advice decreased by 9% December 2023 to January 2024, however, views increased by 100% in the longer-term outlook, from January 2023 to January 2024. Views on pages pertaining to Something Has Gone Wrong advice decreased by 9% from December 2023 to January 2024, however, views increased by 36% from January 2023 to January 2024.

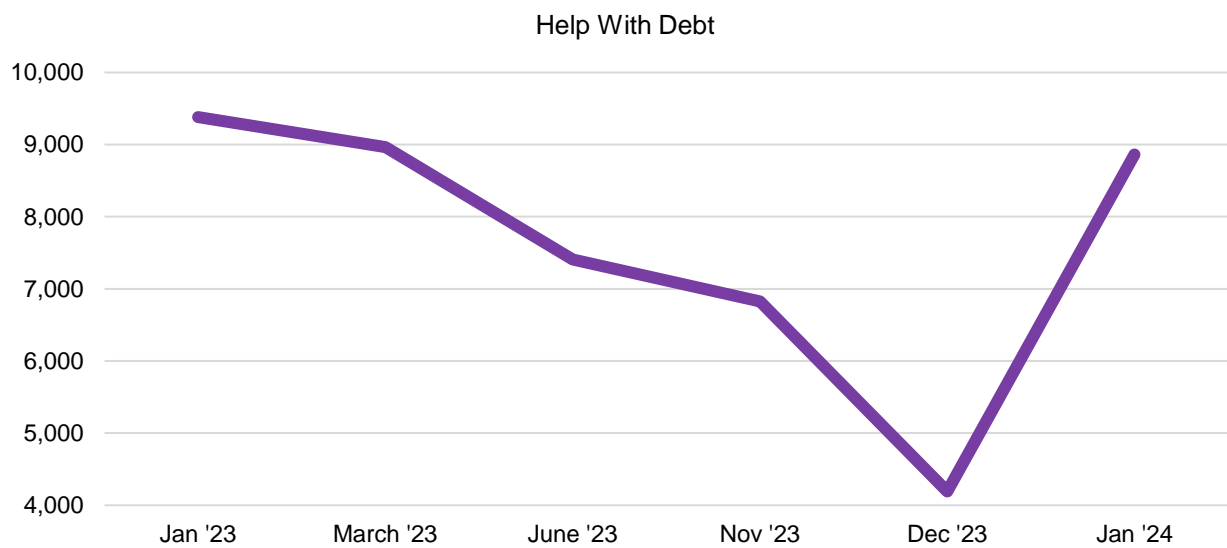




Views on pages relating to Education advice increased by 47% from December 2023 to January 2024 and by 32% from January 2023 to January 2024.



Views on pages relating to Help with Debt advice increased by 25% from December 2023 to January 2024.





CAB network statistics

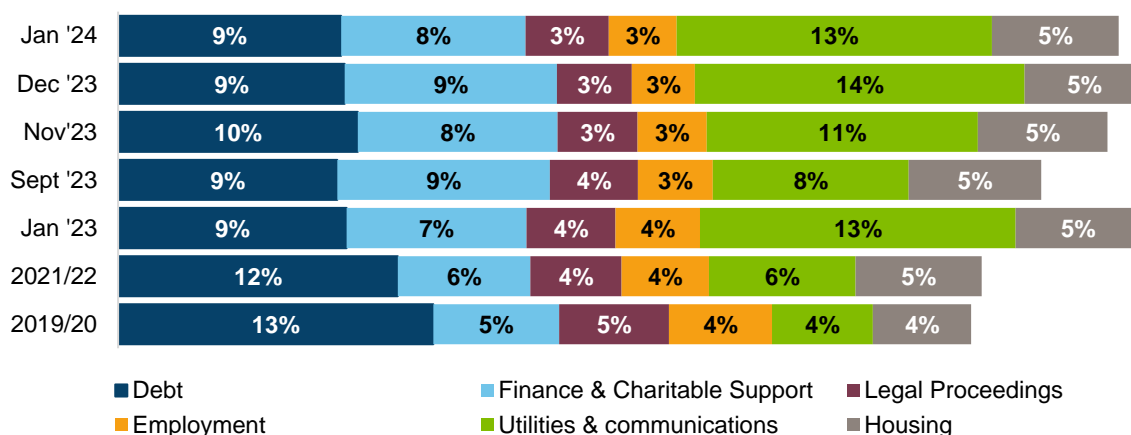
96,385 pieces of advice (up 4% from January 2023)

23,520 clients (up 5% from January 2023)

The top advice area in January 2024 continued to be benefits, remaining stable at 45% of all advice provided. Advice provided on Utilities and Communications accounted for 13% of all advice. Debt consisted of 9% of all advice provided in January 2024, with advice on Debt remaining relatively stable from December 2023 to January 2024, with a small 2% decrease. Furthermore, advice in relation to Housing increased by 6% from December 2023 to January 2024, and advice relating to Employment increased by 8% from December 2023 to January 2024, down 20% from January 2023 to January 2024.

The other notable changes in the top advice areas were advice in relation to Legal Proceedings increasing by 12% from December 2023 to January 2024 and advice pertaining to Finance & Charitable Support decreasing by 13% from December 2023 to January 2024.

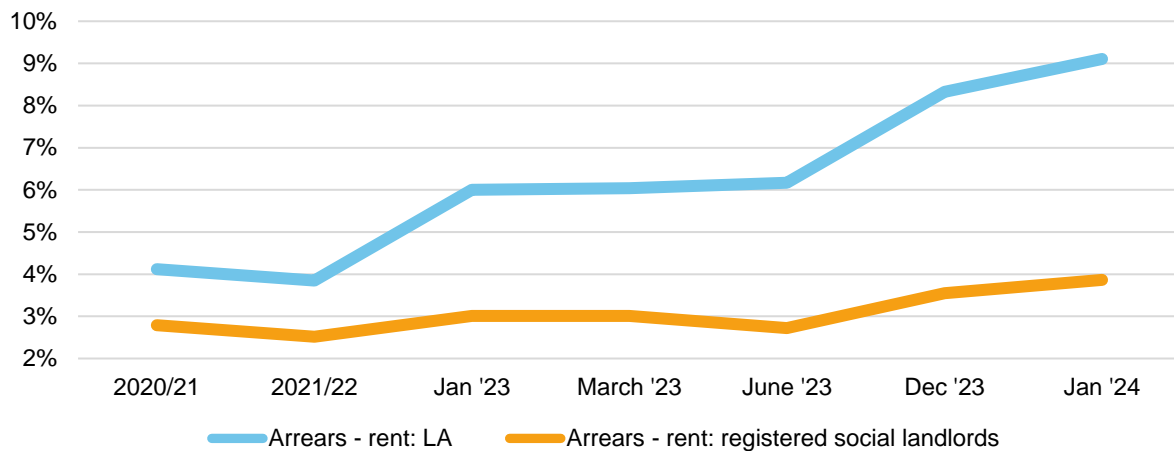
Top advice areas, as a proportion of all advice (excluding benefits)



Advice relating to Local Authority Rent Arrears increased by 9% from December 2023 to January 2024, having increased by 52% from January 2023 to January 2024. Advice relating to Registered Social Landlord Rent Arrears increased by 9% from December 2023 to January 2024, having increased by 28% from January 2023 to January 2024. This reflects the continued rent crisis felt by renters across Scotland, particularly after the end of the rent cap for social tenants.

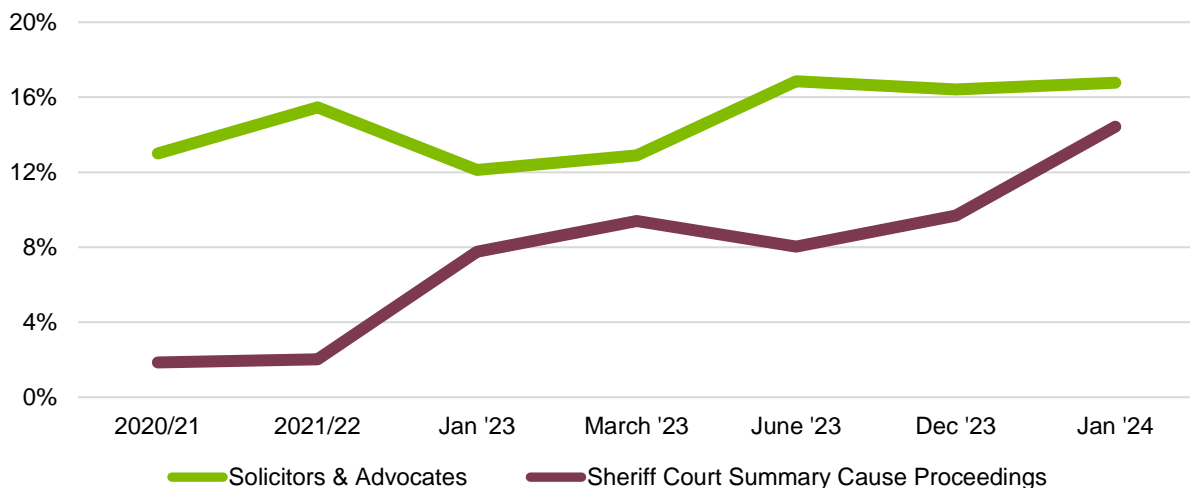


Rent Arrears as a percentage of all Debt Advice

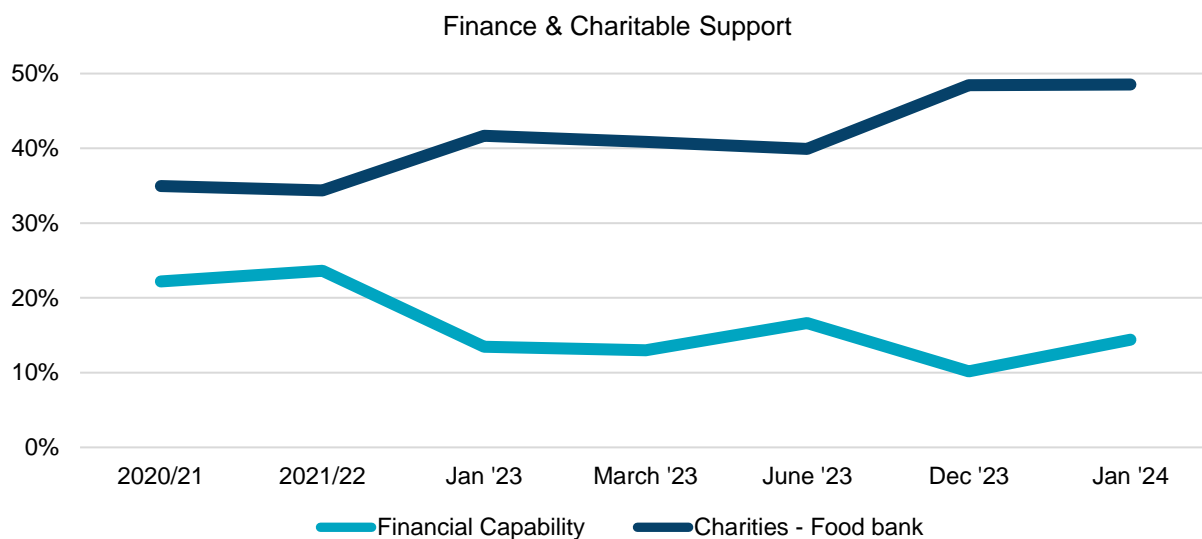


Advice provided in relation to Solicitors and Advocates increased by 38% from January 2023 to January 2024, remaining stable from December 2023 to January 2024 with a 2% increase. Advice relating to Sheriff Court Summary Cause Proceedings has increased by 49% from December 2023 to January 2024, and by 86% from January 2023 to January 2024.

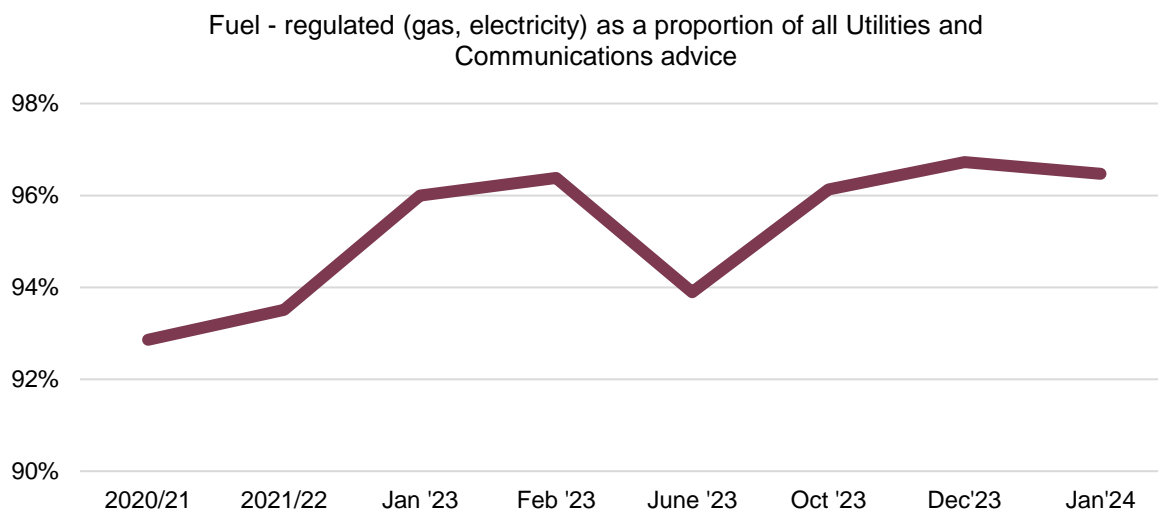
Legal Proceedings



Advice relating to Financial Capability increased by 42% from December 2023 to January 2024 and by 7% from January 2023 to January 2024. Moreover, advice in relation to Food Banks has remained stable from December 2023 to January 2024, with a 16% increase from January 2023 to January 2024. Thereby indicating people are continuing to struggle with the ongoing cost of living crisis.



As we are in the coldest months of the year, advice in relation to Fuel – regulated (Gas, Electricity) remains stable from December 2023 to January 2024, having peaked in December at its highest level since February 2023.



www.cas.org.uk

The Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux - Citizens Advice Scotland. Scottish charity (SC016637) and company limited by guarantee (89892)