

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 May 2024. It shows data from the 59 Citizens Advice Bureaux in Scotland and our online advice site.

Month in Focus

In May 2024, CABs helped almost 23,000 people, giving over 91,000 pieces of advice. Meanwhile, online advice pages received over 384,000 page views.

Across the CAB network, demand for housing advice continues to increase, with **a 14% increase in housing advice compared to May 2023.**

At the same time the Scottish Government have declared a 'Housing Emergency' our data demonstrates more people are struggling with the affordability of housing and more people are falling into housing debt. Demand for advice on local authority rent arrears **increased by 51% compared to last year, while advice on registered social landlord rent arrears increased by 56%.**

Meanwhile, we also saw notable increases under the health and community care category. Demand for advice on information about services saw a 48% increase compared to April 2024 and a 56% increase compared to May 2023.

Online, we also saw an increase in this area, with a 55% increase in demand for advice on health issues compared to last year. In particular, page views on the protection of adults at risk of harm increased 49%.

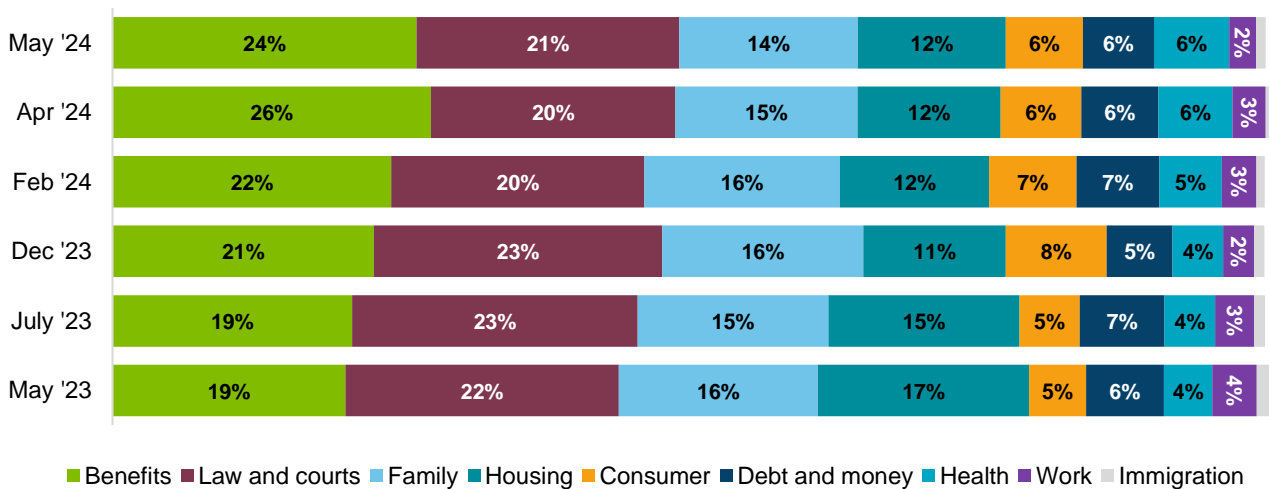


Webpages

384,100 views

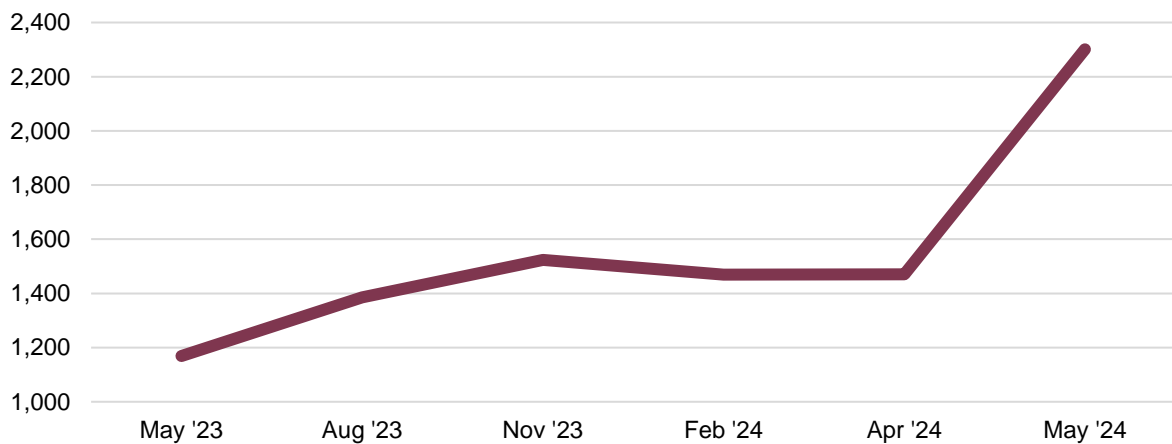
From April to May 2024 page views across all advice areas showed few changes, with a 20% increase in views of immigration-related pages and a 20% decrease in relation to work-related advice. In the longer-term view a 55% increase was evident in relation to advice on health issues while views of law-related pages increased by 31%. In contrast to the short-term increase in views relating to immigration issues, a long-term (May 2023 to May 2024) decrease of 23% was evident, with a similar pattern evident in relation to work advice (down 40%). Page views in relation to family issues also decreased by 10%.

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



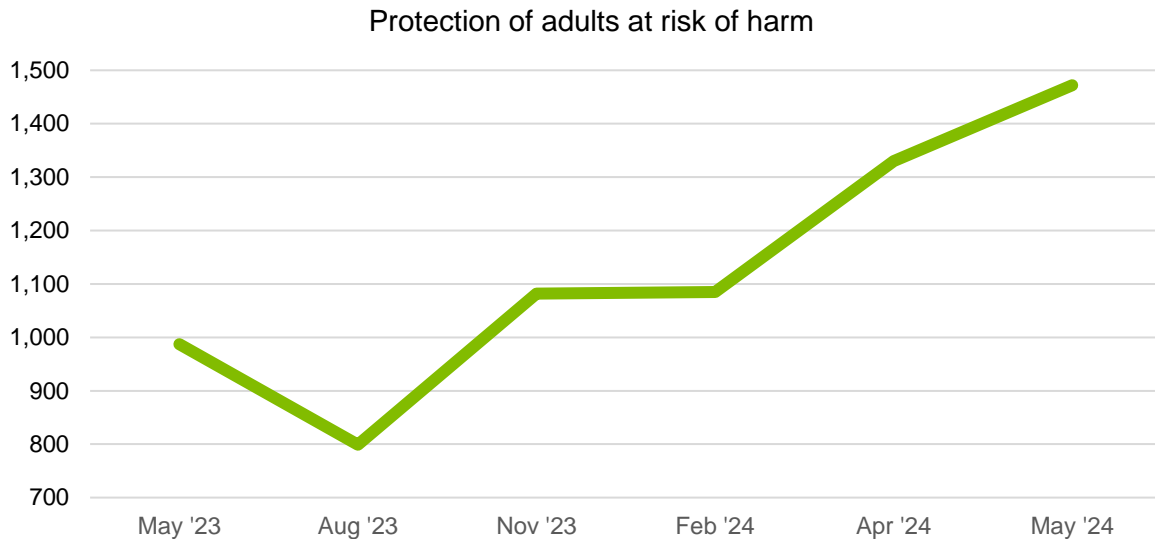
A sharp increase in views of the page providing advice in relation to charge notices for driving in a bus lane is evident from April to May 2024, with figures having risen by 56%. An increase from May 2023 is also clear, with figures having almost doubled in this time (up 97%).

Charge notices for driving in a bus lane





Within the sphere of health and community care, there has also been a notable increase in views of the page providing advice on protection of adults at risk of harm. Although the change from April to May 2024 is relatively small at 11%, over the longer term since May 2023 there is a much larger increase of 49%.



CAB network statistics

91,681 pieces of advice

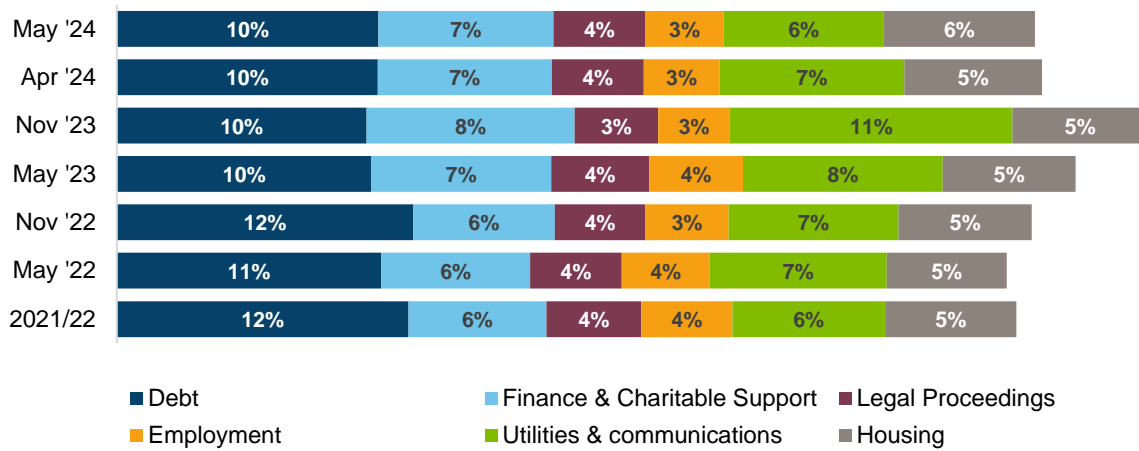
22,988 clients

The only notable short-term changes in the top advice areas from April to May 2024 were an increase in the provision of housing advice (up 10%) and a decrease in utilities advice (down 13%). The longer-term view, however, shows a 14% increase in housing-related advice from May 2023 to May 2024.

Outside of the top advice areas, although still small, the most notable change is a short-term change in consumer related advice (up 12%) and a longer-term increase of 13% in immigration advice. The largest change was a decrease in NHS related advice from April to May 2024.

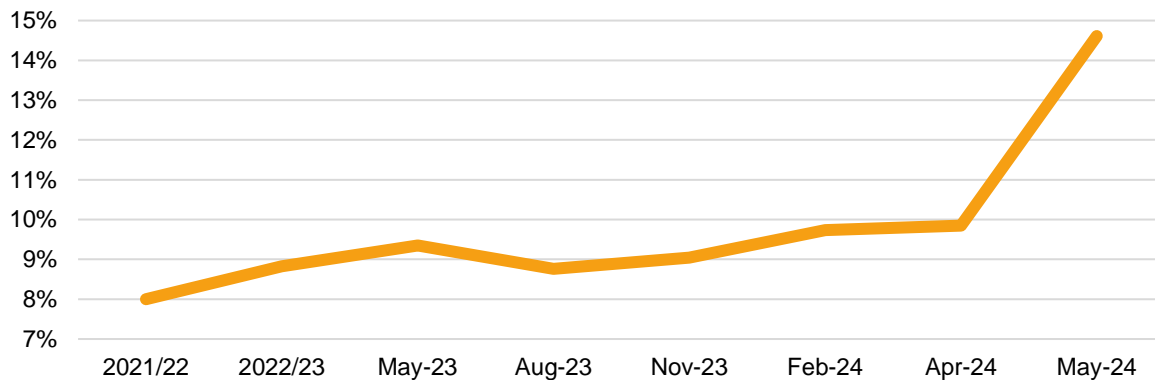


Top advice areas, as a proportion of all advice (excluding benefits)



Somewhat allied to the increase in page views regarding advice on protection of adults at risk of harm, under the health and community care category there were also notable increases in advice provided around information about services. From April to May 2024 this increase was 48%, while the longer-term view showed an increase of 56%.

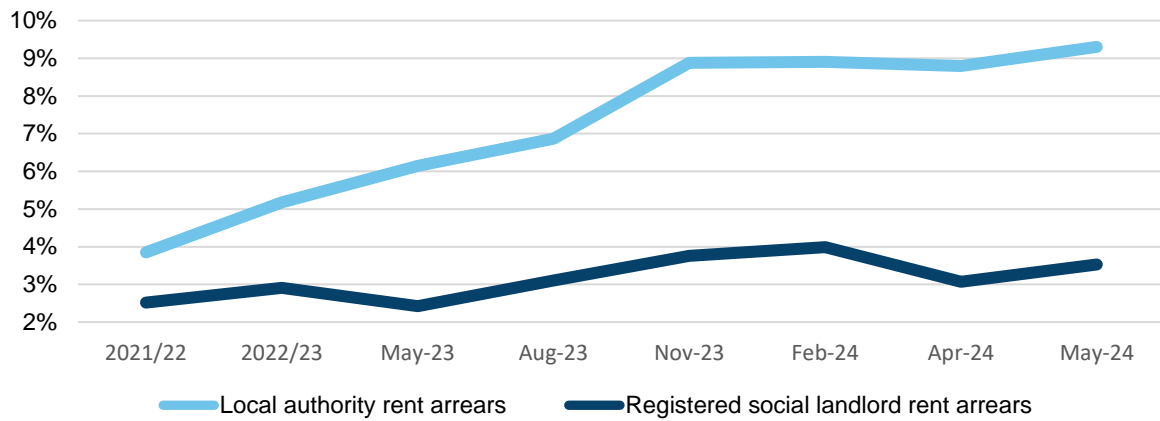
Health/Community Care: Information about services



While the short-term picture differed between advice on local authority rent arrears (up 6%) and registered social landlord rent arrears (up 15%), the longer-term view showed more notable changes. Advice relating to local authority rent arrears increased by 51% from May 2023 to May 2024, while that relating to registered social landlord rent arrears increased by 56%.



Rent arrears



www.cas.org.uk

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