

# Impact of COVID-19 on advice sought from the Scottish Citizens Advice network

Data to 24.05.20



## Introduction

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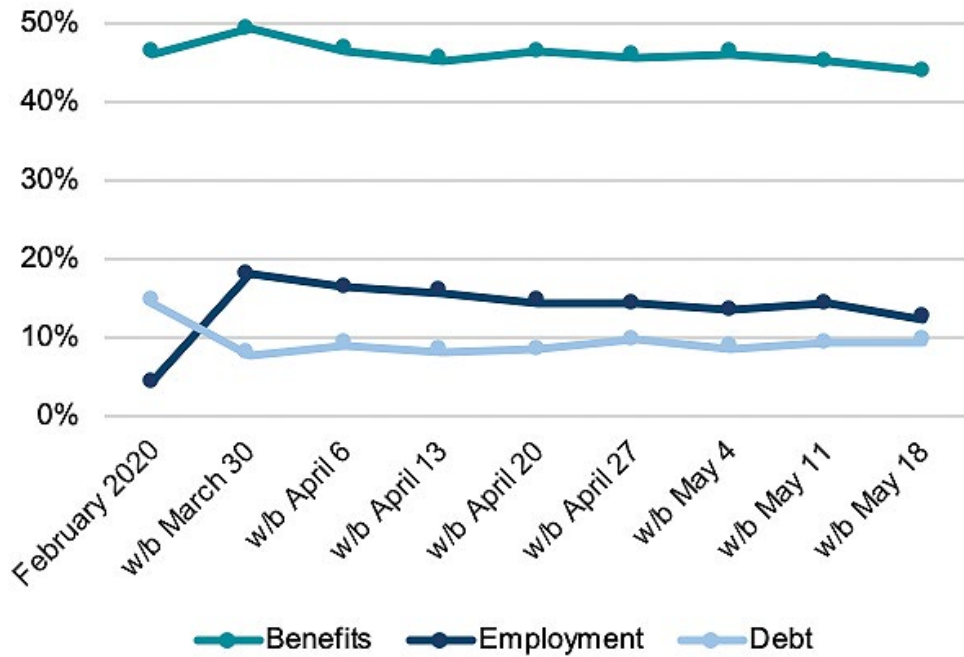
This is a weekly report that tracks changes in the type of advice people are seeking from the Citizens Advice network in Scotland. It includes data from Citizens Advice bureaux and from our public advice site.

As with every week since lockdown began, employment advice continues to be more sought after than debt advice. However, a small decline in the former and increase in the latter means the two are now closer. In terms of our public advice site, the main coronavirus [‘Coronavirus: what it means for you’](#) page was not the most viewed page on the website during the week beginning 18th May. This is the first week since lockdown began where it was not the most popular page.

## Advice from Citizens Advice Bureaux

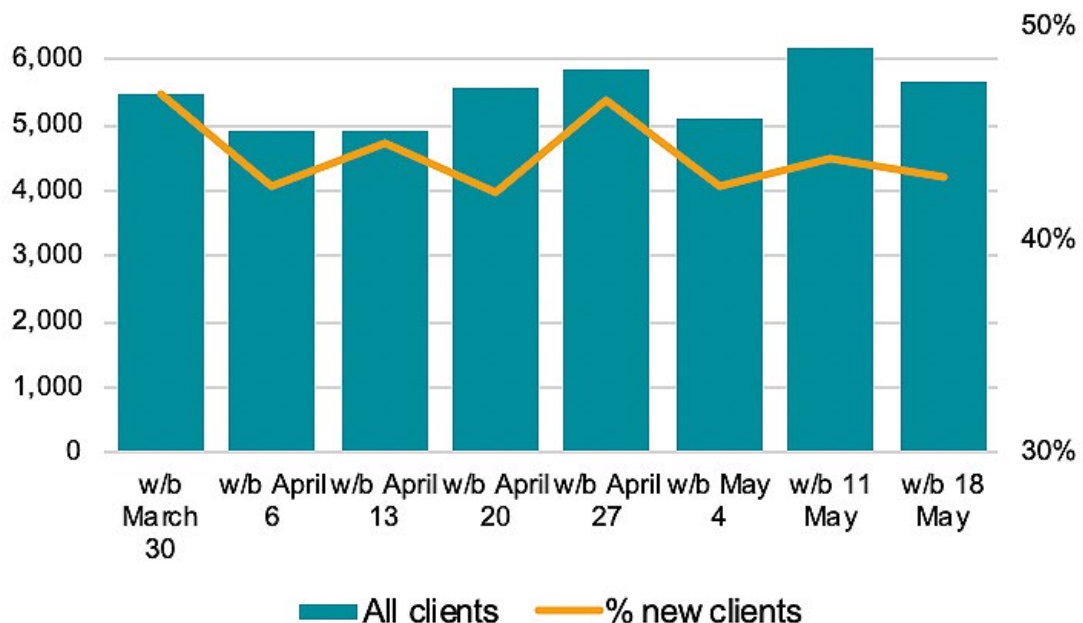
The top three advice areas remained the same during the week beginning 18 May. There was a small decline in social security and employment advice and an equally small increase in debt-related advice, in comparison to the previous week.

Chart 1: Top three advice areas (as a proportion of all advice)



In the week beginning 18 May the proportion of new clients decreased slightly on the previous week. This may indicate this proportion is returning to pre-pandemic levels of between 30% and 35%.

Chart 2: Weekly client numbers



## Online advice

Overall there was less traffic to the public advice website during the week beginning 18 May than in previous weeks, although the average number of daily page views remained above the pre-COVID-19 level.

Chart 3: Unique page views per day

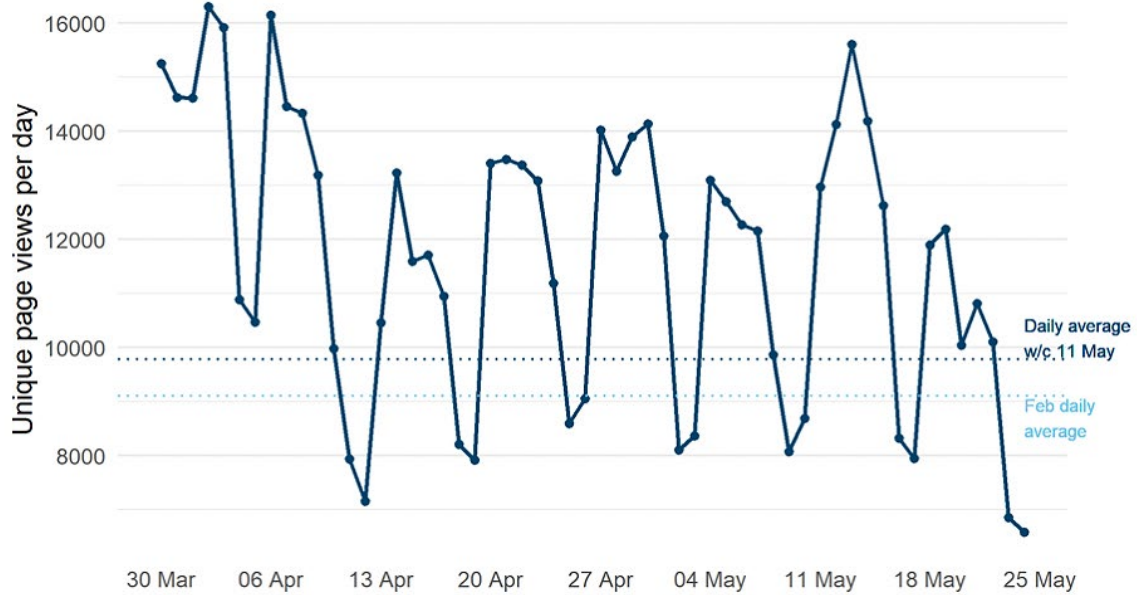
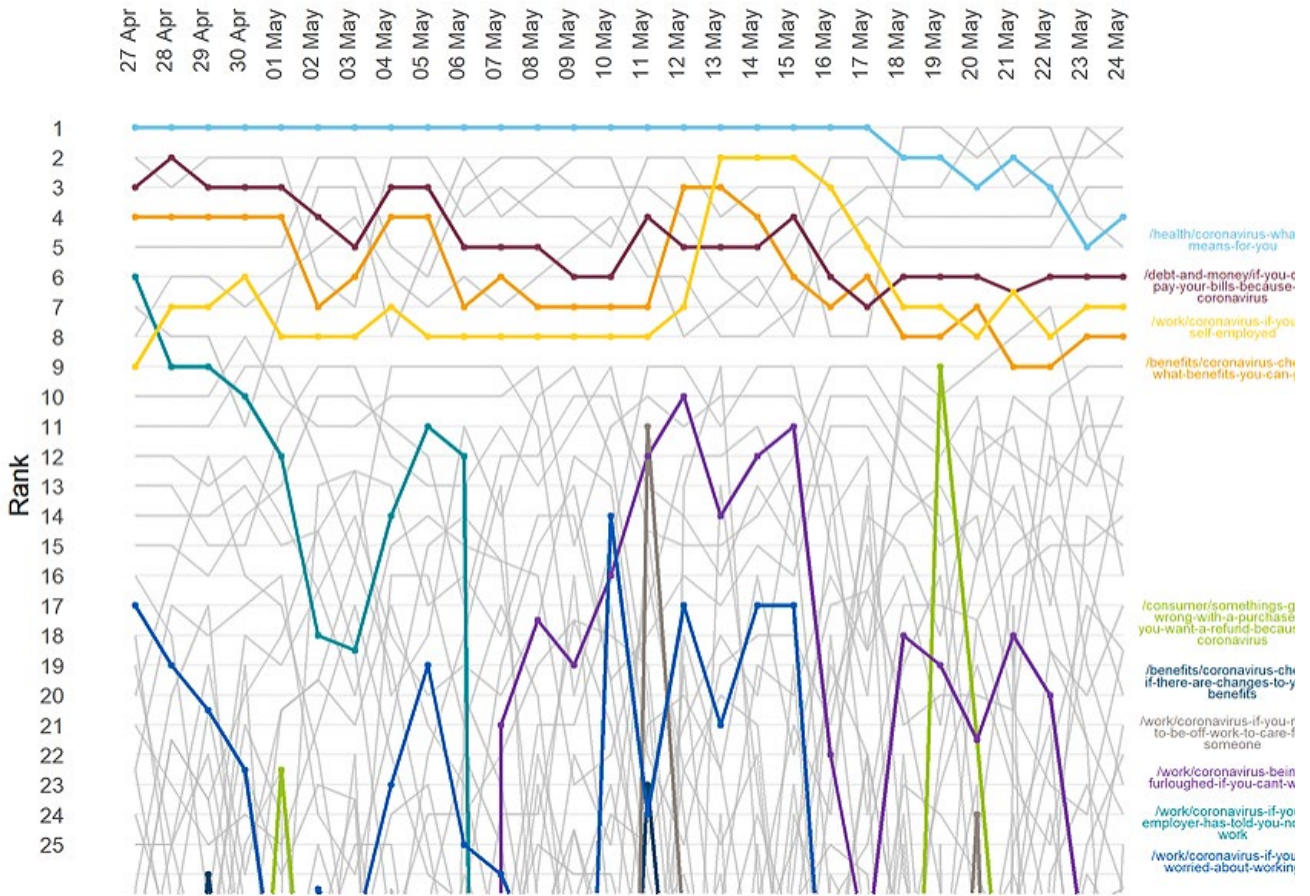
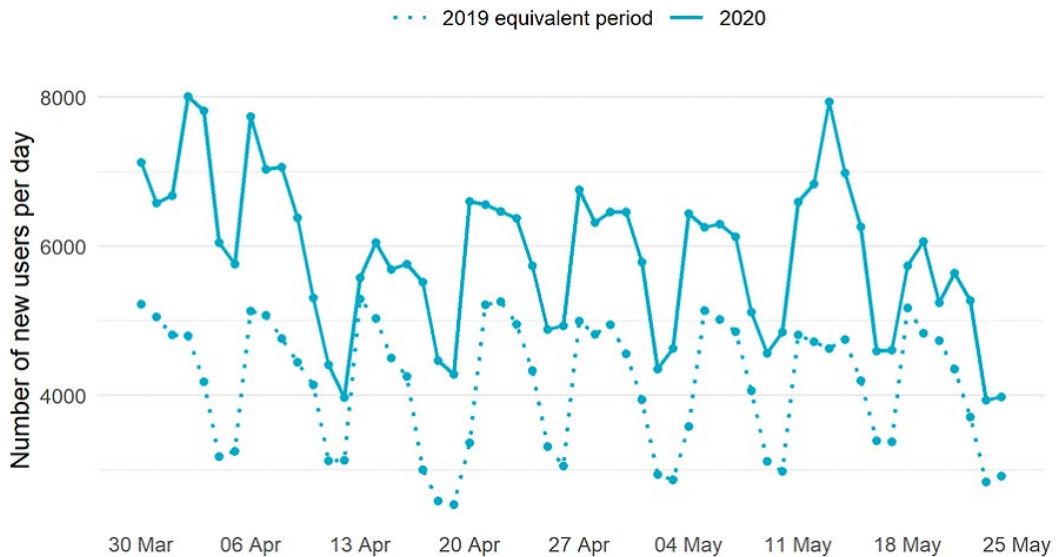


Chart 4: Overall top 25 ranked page (by unique views)



The number of website users remains above what we would expect, although lower than in previous weeks.

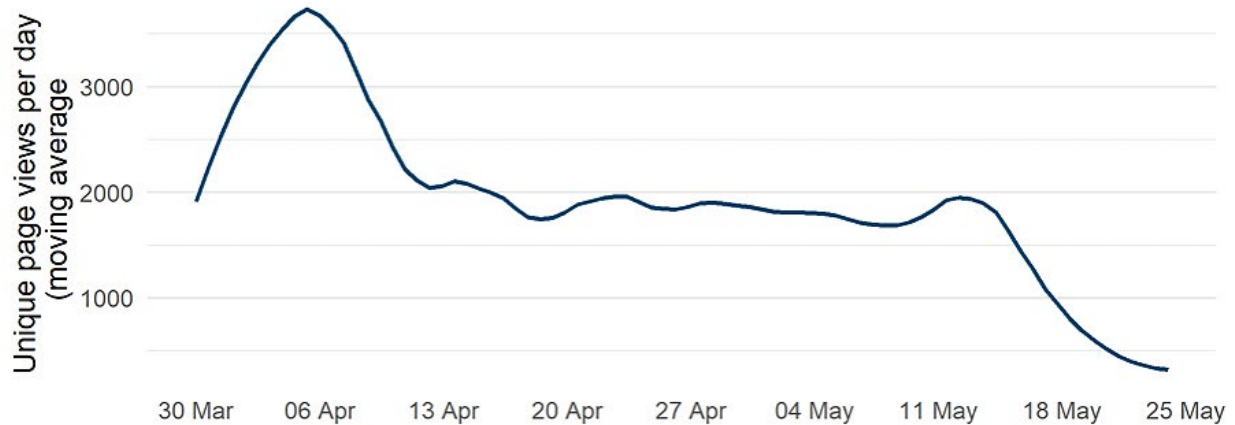
Chart 5: New website users per day



For the first time since lockdown measures were announced, the main coronavirus page – [Coronavirus: what it means for you](#) - was not the most viewed page on the website during the week beginning 18 May.

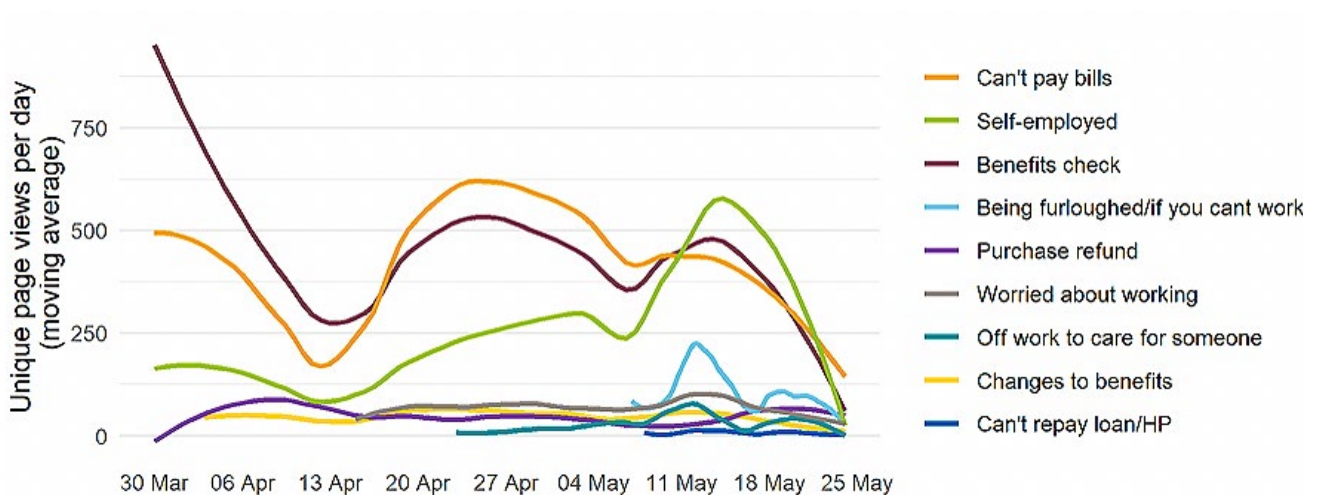
Aside from the search page, the most viewed page relates to problems with a neighbour’s tree or hedge blocking light to the home

Chart 6: Page view trend for the main coronavirus page: [‘Coronavirus: what it means for you’](#)



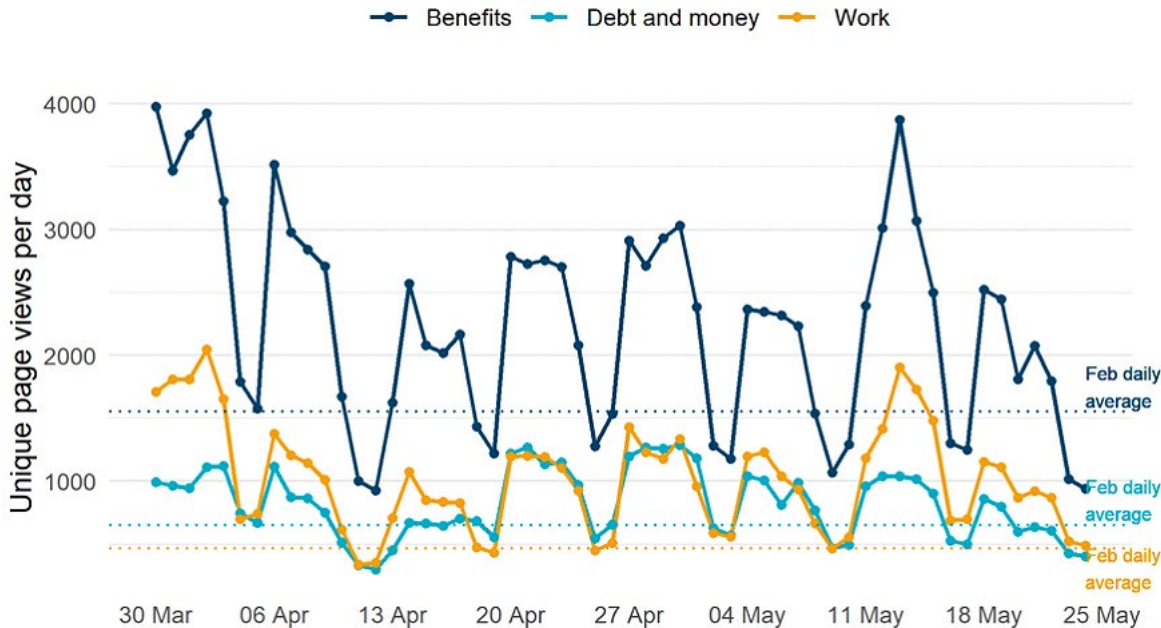
Similarly, views of the other coronavirus specific pages have fallen in the last week.

Chart 7: Page view trends for the other coronavirus-specific pages



The social security category of pages remained the most viewed pages on the public website (normally this would be the ‘Law and Courts’ pages by a substantial margin). The ‘Work’ category of pages were still viewed more regularly than in February (before coronavirus lockdown) but views of the ‘debt and money’ pages were in line with pre-COVID-19 levels.

**Chart 8:** Daily page views for social security, debt and money, and work categories



The most viewed non-coronavirus pages are shown in chart 9. Views of the Scottish Welfare Fund crisis grant pages decreased over the last eight weeks but were still higher than normal. Similarly views of the ‘Wills’ pages dropped from a high level in late March. Some of these pages – for example, those related to police powers and neighbour disputes – would normally be popular.

**Chart 9:** Page view trends for the top 10 non-COVID-19 pages (during w/c 18 May)

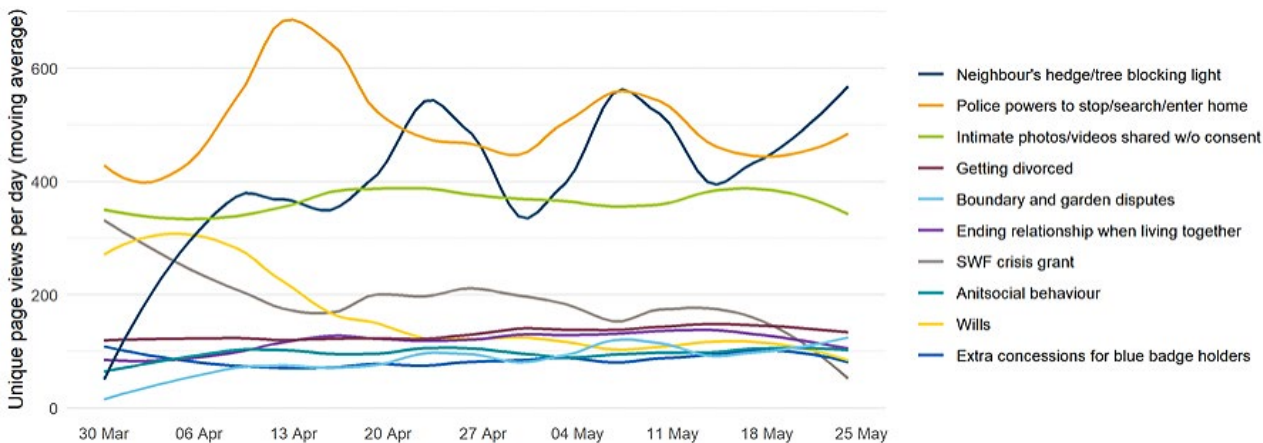
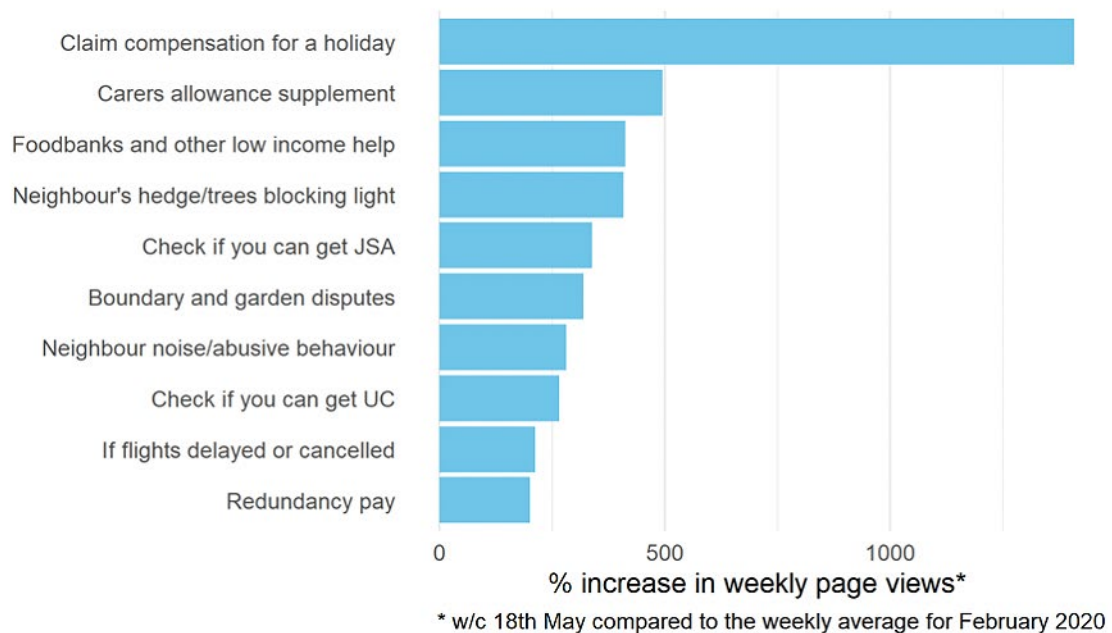


Chart 10 shows the pages that, during week beginning 18 May, were viewed substantially more than in the period before COVID-19 restrictions. Some of these pages have been consistently more popular – importantly, those related to financial hardship. On 19 May news outlets covered a CAS press release related to difficulties people have had getting refunds for cancelled flights, holidays or events. This is likely to be the reasons for the increase in views of the page related to holiday compensation. Others, such as those related to neighbour disputes, have a seasonal element.

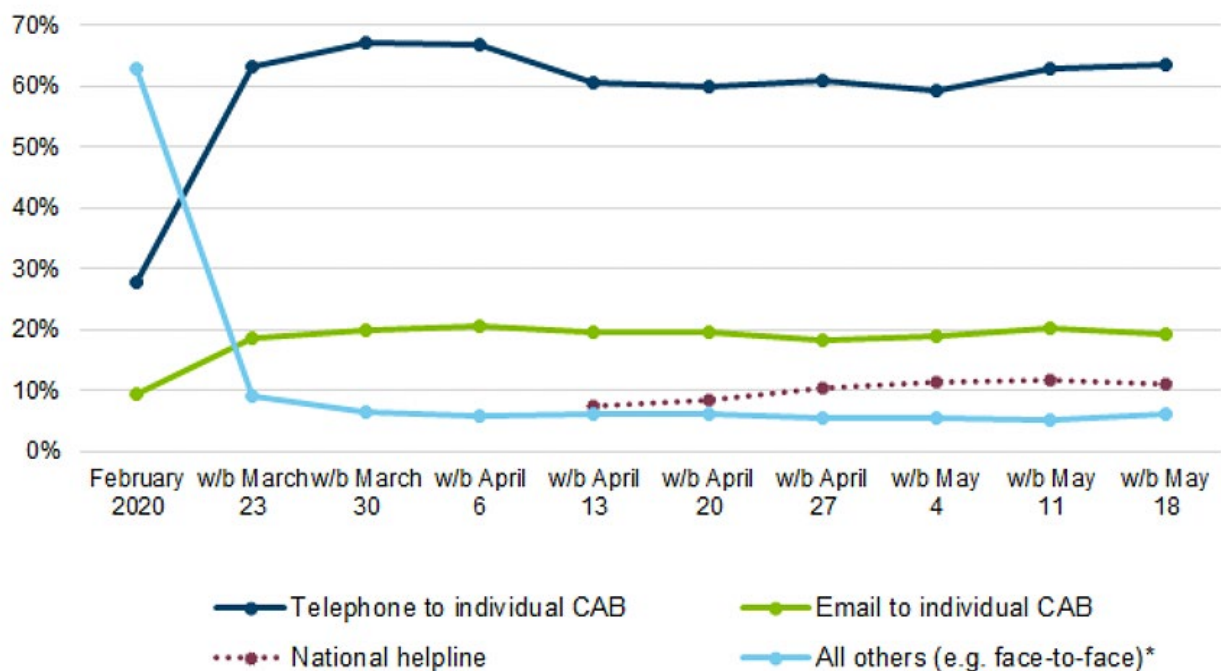
**Chart 10:** Pages that are notably more popular than usual



## Contact method

While telephone contact direct with bureaux increased a little (1%) from the previous week, 'other' contact methods increased by 15%. This appeared to be the result of a rise in contacts made by letter and webform.

Chart 11: Method of contact with the Citizens Advice network



\*Includes letter and webform

[www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)

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