



Citizens Advice Bureaux ADVICE TRENDS IN SCOTLAND



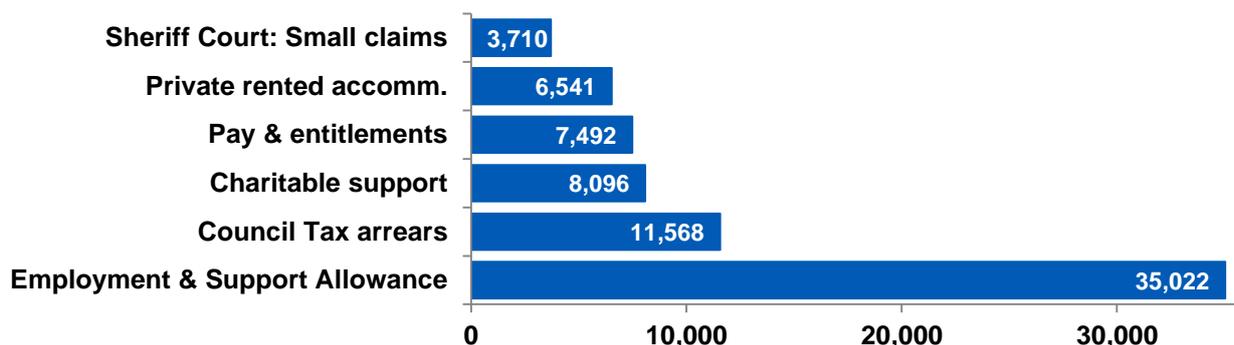
During the period April to December 2016 Citizens Advice Bureaux serving Scotland provided advice on over 470,000 occasions. The most common areas on which advice was sought were:



All other advice categories are reported below, with even the smallest – advice relating to education – accounting for over 2,000 instances of advice being provided.



The individual issue raised most often within each of the most common advice categories can be seen below:





A Voice for Scotland

Thanks to the efforts of Citizens Advice Bureaux staff and volunteers, as well as through the commissioning of research, the Citizens Advice Network is able to provide a voice for the people of Scotland whether they are a consumer with issues about faulty goods; a business owner having trouble with utilities; or anyone experiencing some kind of change from relationships to employment, or from finances to housing. The process of providing advice and the evidence collected around these experiences allows us to ensure that more individuals know their rights, and that fewer are damaged by their abuse in the future.



Citizens Advice Scotland ('CAS'), our 61 member bureaux and the Citizen Advice Consumer helpline form Scotland's largest independent advice network. Advice provided by the Scottish Citizens Advice service is free, independent, confidential, impartial and available to everyone. Our Citizens Advice Bureaux deliver frontline advice services through almost 300 service points across the country, from the city centres of Glasgow and Edinburgh to the Highlands, Islands and rural Borders communities.

In 2015/16 our dedicated CAB network of almost 1,000 paid staff and more than 2,350 volunteers helped over **300,000 people** deal with more than **900,000 advice issues**; this equates to more than one piece of advice being provided every 19 seconds. In this year, CAB had a financial gain for clients of over **£120 million**. Support from the CAB service not only helps clients to achieve financial gains, but supports them in avoiding negative outcomes such as homelessness, unemployment, bankruptcy, and mental health problems.



CAB record the advice issues that clients present with when they seek support. This gives the Scottish CAB service a unique insight into how policies, practices, and processes are impacting on the people in local communities across the country.

Citizens Advice Scotland use the information gathered on advice issues brought by clients of the Service to advocate for consumer and citizen rights. The partnership working between bureaux and CAS helps to provide a strong voice for both CAB clients and the people of Scotland as a whole, whether it is responding to government consultations; collaborating with stakeholders and other partners in wider pieces of work; or helping to raise awareness of issues through the media. The policy and research teams also work closely with the Community Action Team who not only provide a direct link between CAS and the bureaux, but also much of the practical support and resources required for localised campaigns, research and policy work.

