

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

Month in Focus

In August 2024, CABs helped almost 23,000 people, giving almost 93,000 pieces of advice. Meanwhile, online advice pages received over 417,000 page views – a 13% increase from last year.

Online, demand for advice on help available for those on a low income has been increasing steadily in recent months, with page views now 50% higher than they were in August 2023.

Meanwhile, demand for advice on rights at work for those under the age of 18 has risen by 60% compared to the same time last year.

Across the CAB Network, demand for Housing Benefit advice is at its highest level, increasing by 37% since August 2023.

Finally, advice on Pension Credit is at its second highest level has increased by 22% compared to last year. With the recent changes to the eligibility of the winter fuel payment, people are clearly worried about the support they will receive in the coming months.

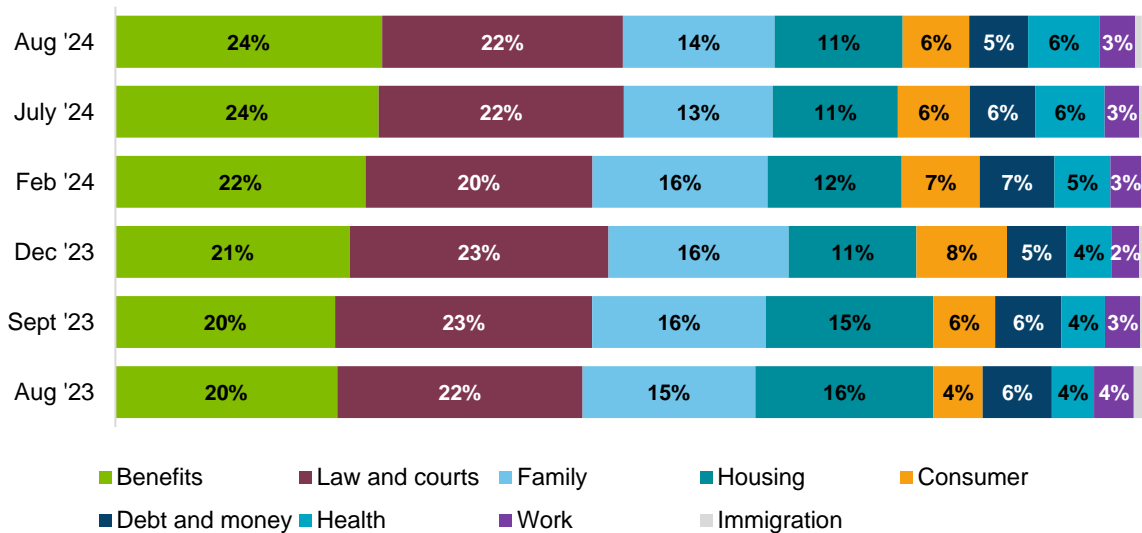


Webpages

417,764 views (13% increase from August 2023)

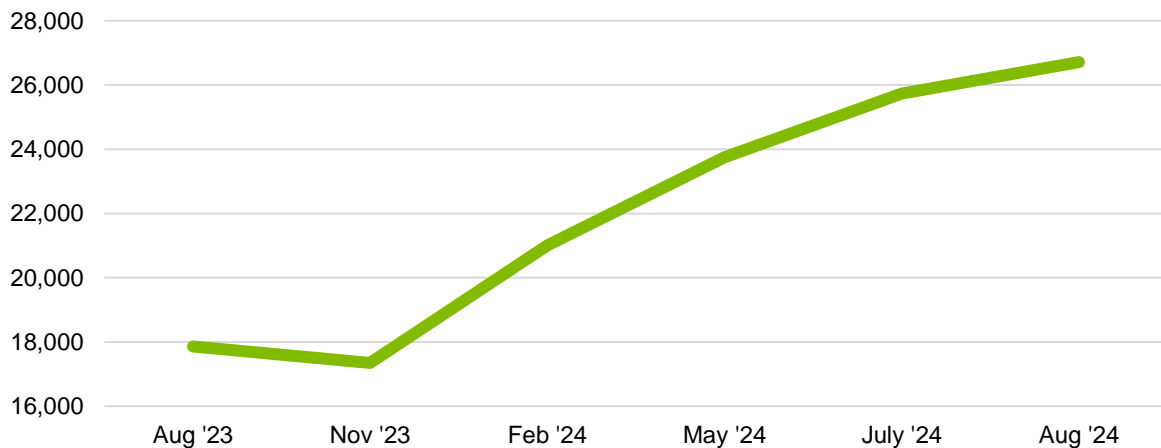
From July to August 2024 page views across all advice areas no notable changes. In the longer-term view, once again a considerable increase (69%) was evident in relation to advice on health issues while views of consumer-related pages increased by 35%. Views of pages related to benefits issues also increased by 20% from August 2023 to August 2024. The most notable long-term decrease could be seen in relation to housing advice, with a 28% decrease in page views. There was also a 14% decrease long-term in views of the pages offering advice on debt and money.

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



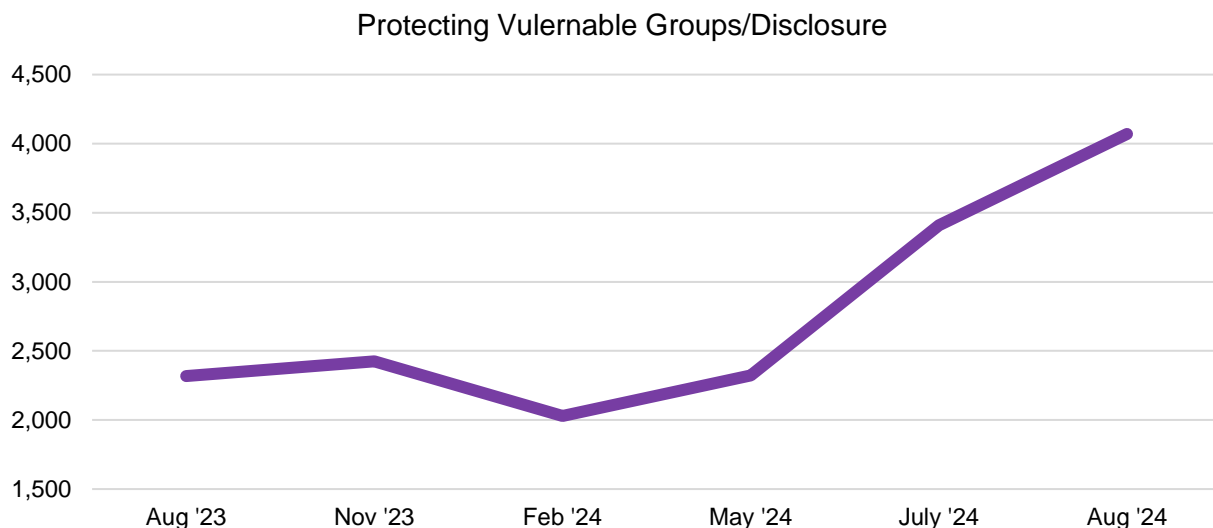
Views of the page providing advice on help if on a low income have been increasing steadily in recent months, with these now being 50% higher than they were in August 2023.

Help if on a low income

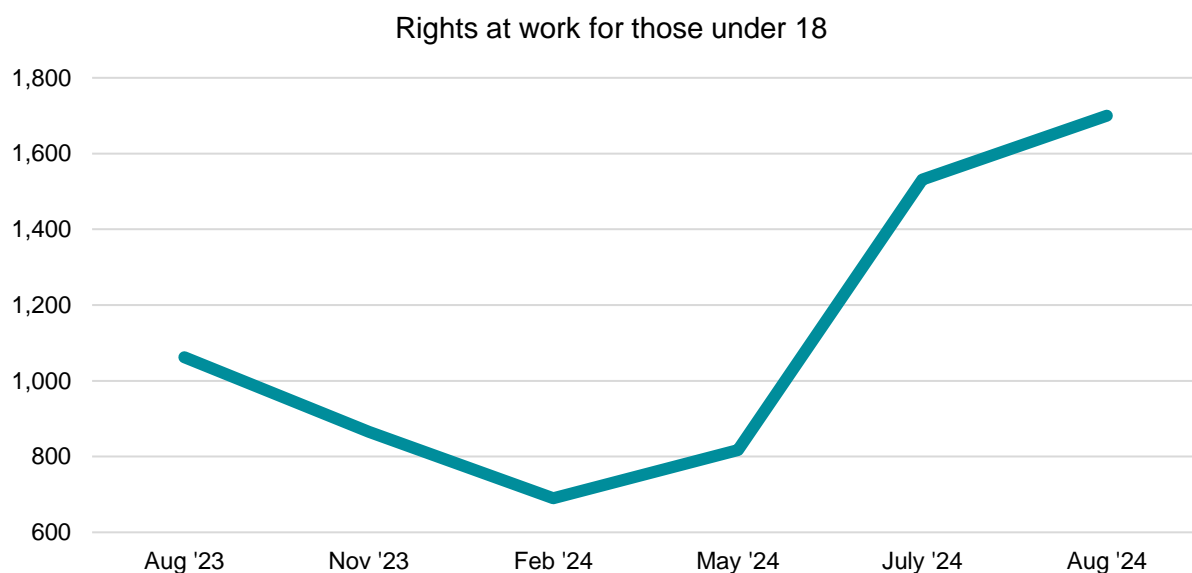




The numbers seeking advice on disclosure of criminal convictions and the 'Protecting Vulnerable Groups' scheme has also seen an increase, with page views in August 2024 higher by 76% than they were in August 2023.



Rights at work for those under the age of 18 has seen increased interest from those visiting the advice website, with page views having risen by 60% from August 2023 to August 2024.





CAB network statistics

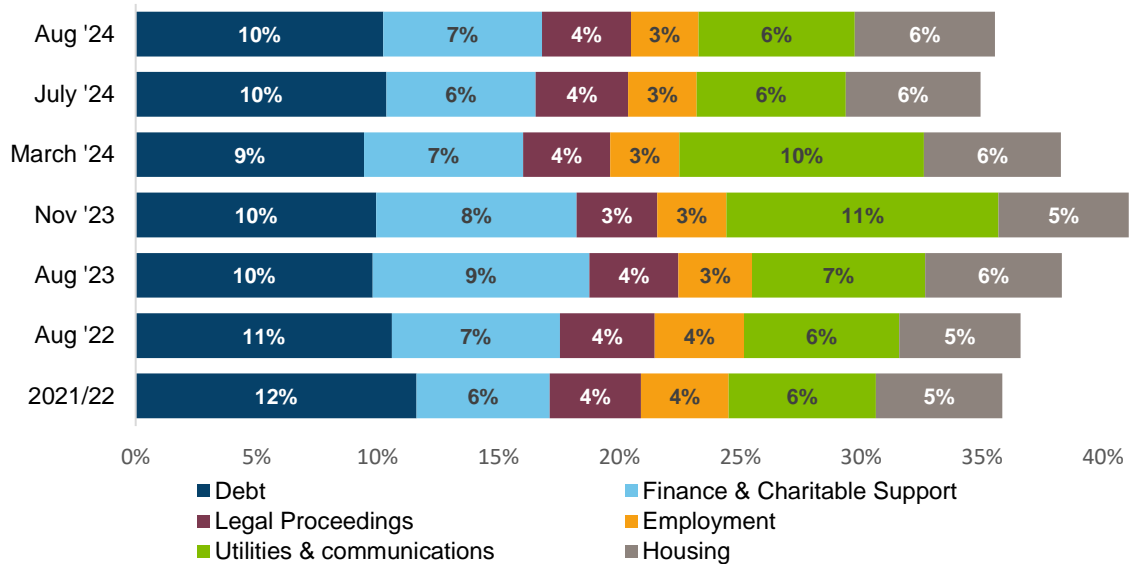
92,902 pieces of advice

22,795 clients

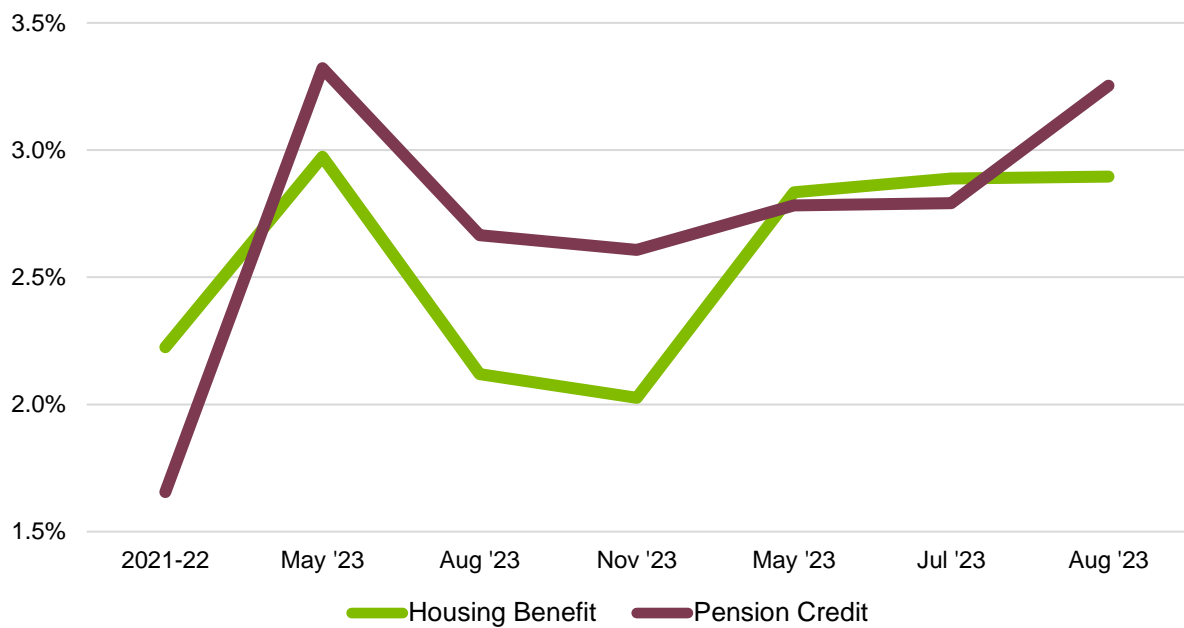
There were no notable changes from July to August 2024 in the top advice areas. In the longer-term view, however, a 27% decrease in advice relating to finance and charitable support was evident, along with a 10% decrease in utilities advice.

Outside of the top advice areas a 28% increase in education-related advice could be seen from July to August 2024, no doubt as a result of the new school term starting; there was also an increase in the longer-term, with advice relating to education having risen by 24% from August 2023 to August 2024. Other notable long-term changes were an 18% increase in both immigration and travel/transport related advice.

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

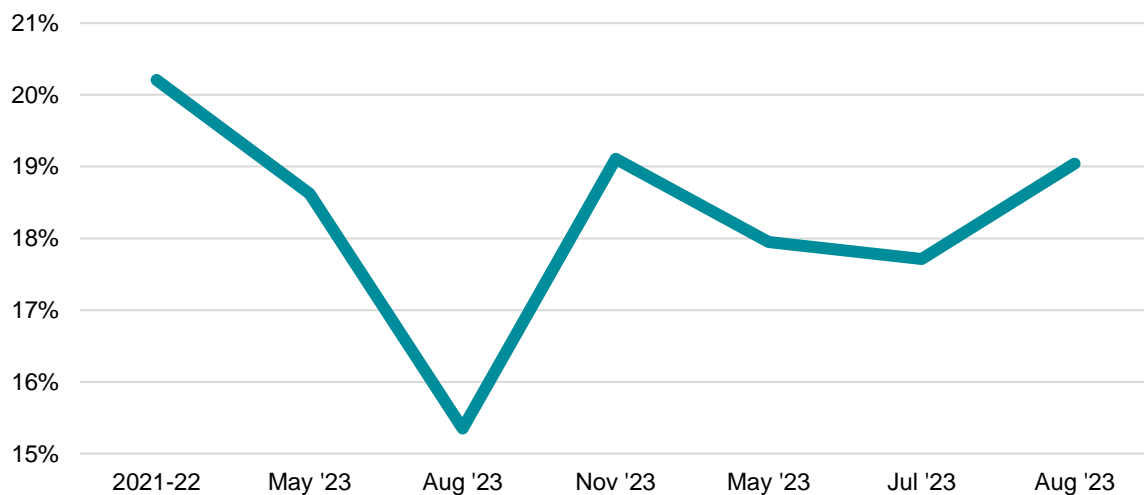


Although very different in nature, advice in relation to both Housing Benefit and Pension Credit have seen increases. In regard to Housing Benefit, advice is at its highest level and has increased by 37% since August 2023. Advice in relation to Pension Credit is at its second highest level (with the highest being during May 2023) and has increased by 22% since August 2023.



Advice in relation to issues affecting children, such as parental contact and residence issues, is currently at its highest level since November 2023. A small increase of 8% was evident from July to August 2024, and a larger 24% rise from August 2023.

Children (e.g. parental contact; residence issues; etc.)



www.cas.org.uk

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