



## Uttlesford Citizens Advice Stats for Quarter 1, 2021/22

(April to June 2021)

Saffron Walden Residents

Over the period we helped 231 unique clients with a new or existing issue. 189 of these clients came to us for help with a new issue. Many clients have complex problems and use our service multiple times for help with different issues over the course of the quarter.

### Update on our service in Q1

From the middle of April we invited a limited number of volunteers and members of staff to return to the office each day. Our priority has been those members of our team that need training, have practical reasons to be in the office or who need to get back into the office to keep motivated and happy.

Benefits remains our top advice area - we supported 112 unique clients from Saffron Walden with benefit issues over the quarter.

Compared with Q1 last year, (encompassing the early months of the pandemic), we are now dealing with fewer employment issues (down 31%), but are seeing large increases in requests for help with problem debt (60% increase), budgeting and financial services (93% increase). We have also seen an increase in the number of clients threatened with homelessness, which reflects the withdrawal of protections put in place in April last year, such as the suspension of bailiff activity. Requests for food bank referrals have fallen slightly compared to Q1 last year, but remain high. We processed 121 requests for local families over the quarter.

### Summary

|                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Clients</b>               | <b>231</b>   |
| <b>Quick client contacts</b> |              |
| <b>Issues</b>                | <b>630</b>   |
| <b>Activities</b>            | <b>1,132</b> |
| <b>Cases</b>                 | <b>189</b>   |

### Definitions

**Clients** – a count of the number of unique clients use our service one or more times during the period

**Quick client contacts** - client required information rather than advice –full write-up not required

**Issues** – Relates to the type of enquiry. Clients usually need help with more than one issue over the course of an enquiry. This figure gives an indication of the complexity of our clients' needs.

**Activities** includes client contact via face to face meeting, telephone call, letter or email; third party contacts and administrative tasks carried out on behalf of clients.

**Cases** - new cases opened in the period, i.e. a new enquiry area has been opened on behalf of a client

The table below shows the 12 wards with the highest number of unique clients helped during the period

| Local Authority Ward                   | Local Authority |    |
|--|-----------------|----|
| Saffron Walden Shire                   | Uttlesford      | 93 |
| Saffron Walden Castle                  | Uttlesford      | 85 |
| Great Dunmow South & Barnston          | Uttlesford      | 62 |
| Takeley                                | Uttlesford      | 60 |
| Saffron Walden Audley                  | Uttlesford      | 53 |
| Thaxted & the Eastons                  | Uttlesford      | 48 |
| Stansted South & Birchanger            | Uttlesford      | 45 |
| Great Dunmow North                     | Uttlesford      | 39 |
| Newport                                | Uttlesford      | 38 |
| Elsenham & Henham                      | Uttlesford      | 33 |
| Stansted North                         | Uttlesford      | 33 |
| Littlebury, Chesterford & Wenden Lofts | Uttlesford      | 30 |

## Client Profile

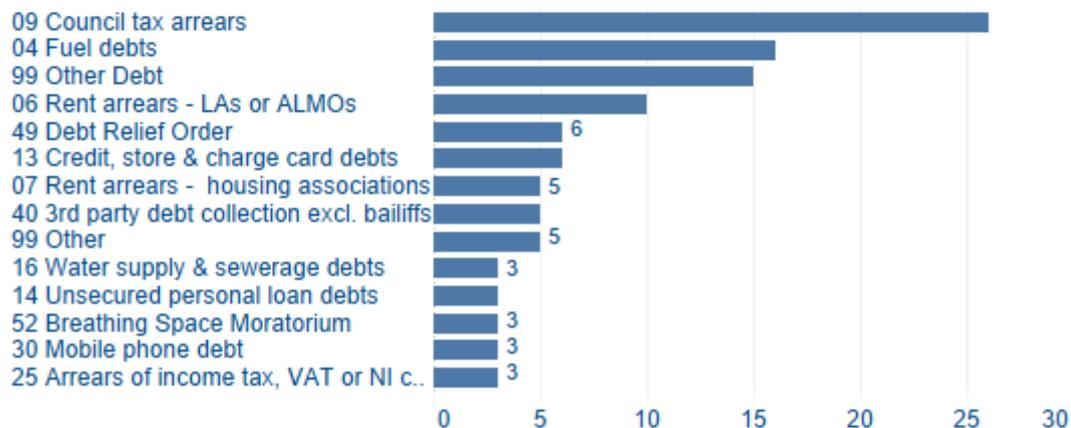
### Issues

|                                 | Issues     | Clients |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------|
| Benefits & tax credits          | 205        | 75      |
| Benefits Universal Credit       | 63         | 37      |
| Consumer goods & services       | 14         | 11      |
| Debt                            | 121        | 43      |
| Education                       | 1          | 1       |
| Employment                      | 22         | 14      |
| Financial services & capability | 14         | 11      |
| Health & community care         | 13         | 9       |
| Housing                         | 47         | 32      |
| Immigration & asylum            | 2          | 2       |
| Legal                           | 19         | 13      |
| Other                           | 51         | 32      |
| Relationships & family          | 23         | 21      |
| Tax                             | 5          | 4       |
| Travel & transport              | 8          | 7       |
| Utilities & communications      | 22         | 11      |
| <b>Grand Total</b>              | <b>630</b> |         |

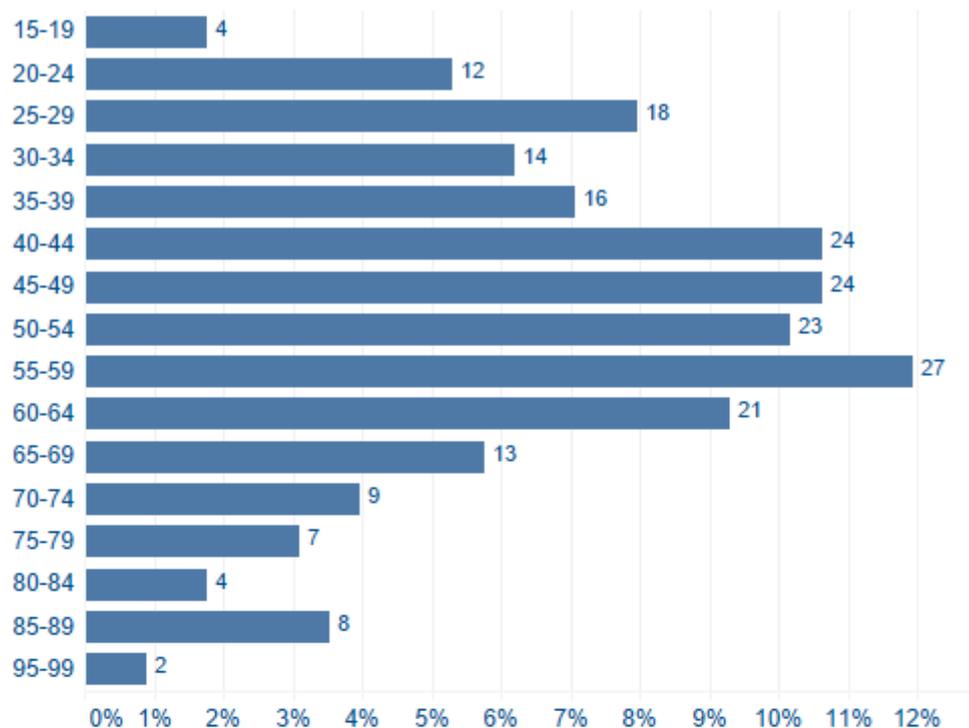
### Top benefit issues



### Top debt issues



## Age



## Gender



- Female
- Male

## Disability / Long-term health



- Disabled
- Long-term health condition
- Not disabled/no health problems

## Ethnicity



- White
- Black
- Mixed
- Other

## **Specialist Support**

Over the period our disability benefits team were helping 56 residents of Saffron Walden with applications, appeals and advice in connection with disability benefits.

If a disability benefit claim is successful we ask clients to indicate how they will use the extra income; comments over the quarter have included:

- Help with daily needs and cleaning
- Food and utility bills
- Adaptations to the home
- Travel to hospital appointments
- Help to pay essential bills

## **Client satisfaction**

These comments are collected independently by calling and emailing a random sample of our clients each quarter.

*The adviser was brilliant @ Saffron Walden. Very calm, personable, clear instructions and good advice. Definitely helped working out my financial problems with a human who understood. He went out of his way to give me all the direction that I needed. Extremely appreciated. I also was awarded some charity help with rental arrears due to job/income losses. Without him I would be struggling hugely still. Right now I can just about manage living on a low/poverty wage/UC. Hopefully I will be able to find suitable adult paid work soon.*

*I would be lost without you guys I have mental health issues, u have guided me through bankruptcy and all my pip assessments I'm very thankful and thank you for the excellent service you provide*

*The staff at CA Saffron Walden, supported me a great deal. I was referred to them through a social worker at my GPS. They stayed in touch with me every step of the way, they reassured me and helped me. I am very grateful they were there for me.*

*I've recommended CA to all my family and friends. It's an understated underused under advertised free source of help !!! Why wouldn't more people use this service I hope I'll not need this service in the future but if I need any answers I usually look up CA to see what options I have ! Well done team!*

## **Emergency Assistance in Q1**

With the help of local charities and Government support schemes for people struggling financially due to the pandemic, £1,255 was given out to Uttlesford residents in emergency funds for food, transport and medical supplies. During the period we also helped clients access Covid specific support funding that is currently available, which enabled them to buy or replace white goods and heat their homes.

A further £4,994.52 was secured from local charities to support our most vulnerable clients by helping fund bankruptcy payments, fees for debt relief orders and to pay off rent arrears and fuel debts which prevent them from switching to more affordable tariffs.

Furthermore, during the pandemic we have had access to fuel vouchers, funded by Energy Redress. Over the quarter our team secured over £45,000 in vouchers, benefits and grant funding to help Uttlesford clients heat their homes and make them more energy efficient.