

Insights from the frontline

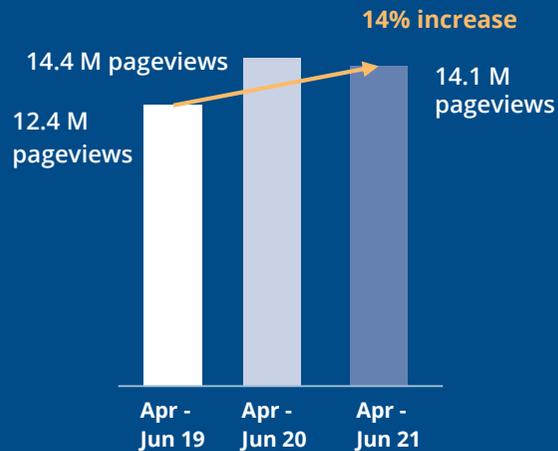
July 2021

citizens
advice

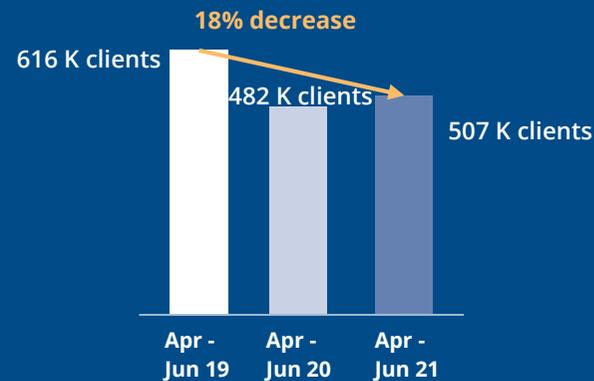


Key stats

Online pageviews



1-2-1 Advice given to clients



Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic we've seen a huge increase in visits to our advice pages. Our pageviews show, in real time, what problems people have been facing throughout the pandemic.

Pageviews have been gradually declining as lockdown measures have been eased. But, we're still seeing significantly more visits to our advice pages compared to before the pandemic. This shows that many people are still facing problems caused and exacerbated by the pandemic.

Overall, the number of people we've given 1-2-1 advice (including face-to-face, phone, email and webchat) fell at the start of the pandemic and is still below pre-pandemic levels. This is despite an increase in clients getting support through virtual channels, as we've seen a big fall in clients receiving face-to-face support. Demand for core areas of advice such as debt and benefits have decreased during the pandemic. We have seen a rise in demand for housing and financial advice, but this has not offset the decrease in other demand areas.

Top pages April 21 - June 21

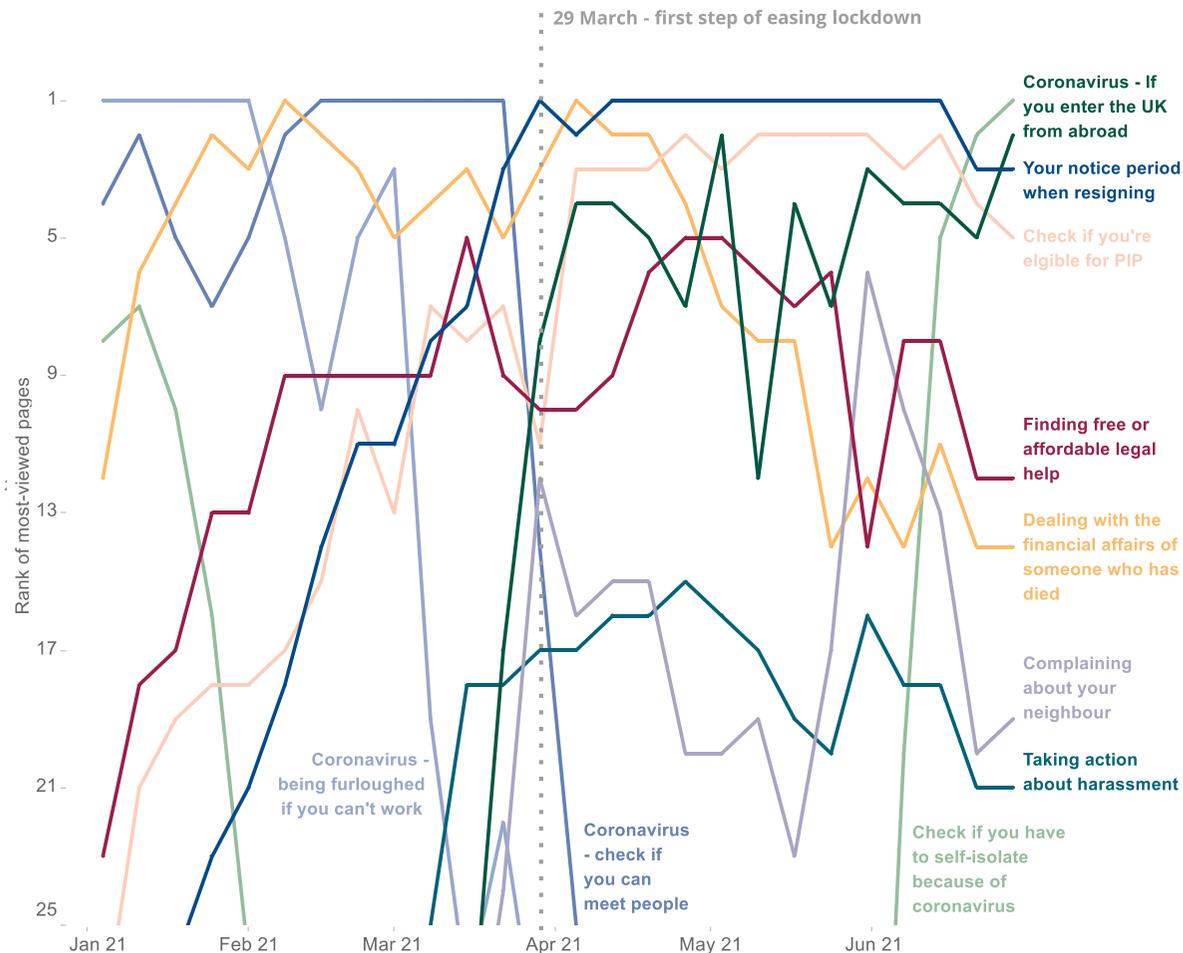
- ① Your notice period when resigning
- ② Check if you're eligible for PIP
- ③ Coronavirus - if you enter the UK from abroad
- ④ Help filling in your PIP claim form

Top issues April 21 - June 21

- ① Benefits (excluding Universal Credit) and tax credits
- ② Universal Credit
- ③ Debt
- ④ Housing

Top advice pages on the Citizens Advice website

Weekly top advice pages (January 2021 - June 2021)



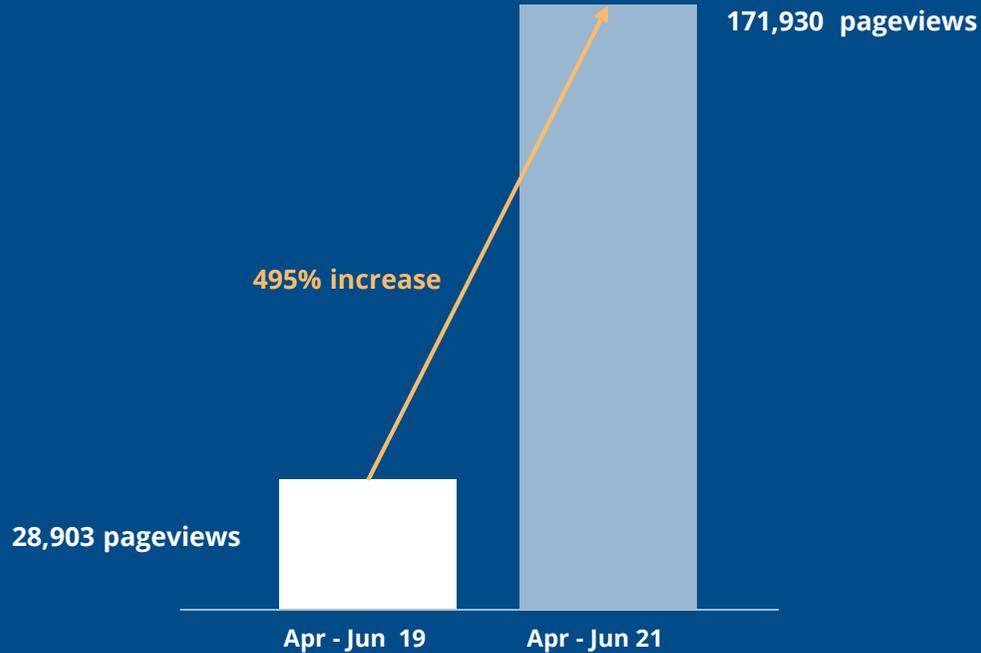
There has been a big change in the most-viewed advice pages over the past few months. The 'Your notice period when resigning' page was the most-viewed page on the website from April till mid June. The 'Finding free or affordable legal help' page has been in the top 10 viewed pages since March. Both these pages have never been viewed as much as they are now.

With the easing of lockdown and meeting restrictions, we have seen a resurgence in demand for advice on PIP and taking action about harassment - these were some of the most-viewed pages before the pandemic.

The recent increase in coronavirus cases has led to a sharp increase in views to our self-isolation advice page. On the other hand, views to our furlough and meeting with people pages have decreased dramatically. Views to our pages on wills have decreased gradually.

Spotlight on scams

Pageviews of scams advice

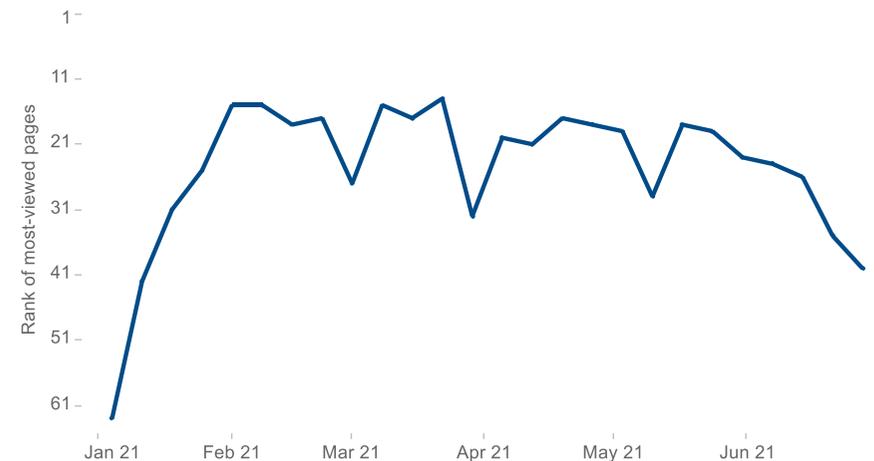


Views to our online scam pages are still much higher compared to before the pandemic and show no signs of returning to pre-pandemic levels. People are mainly seeking advice about reporting a scam or checking whether they could get their money back.

Citizens Advice research shows that 36 million people have been targeted by a scammer since January. To tackle this problem, we run a Scams Awareness campaign each year. It aims to help people spot scams and to get help from Citizens Advice Scams Action.

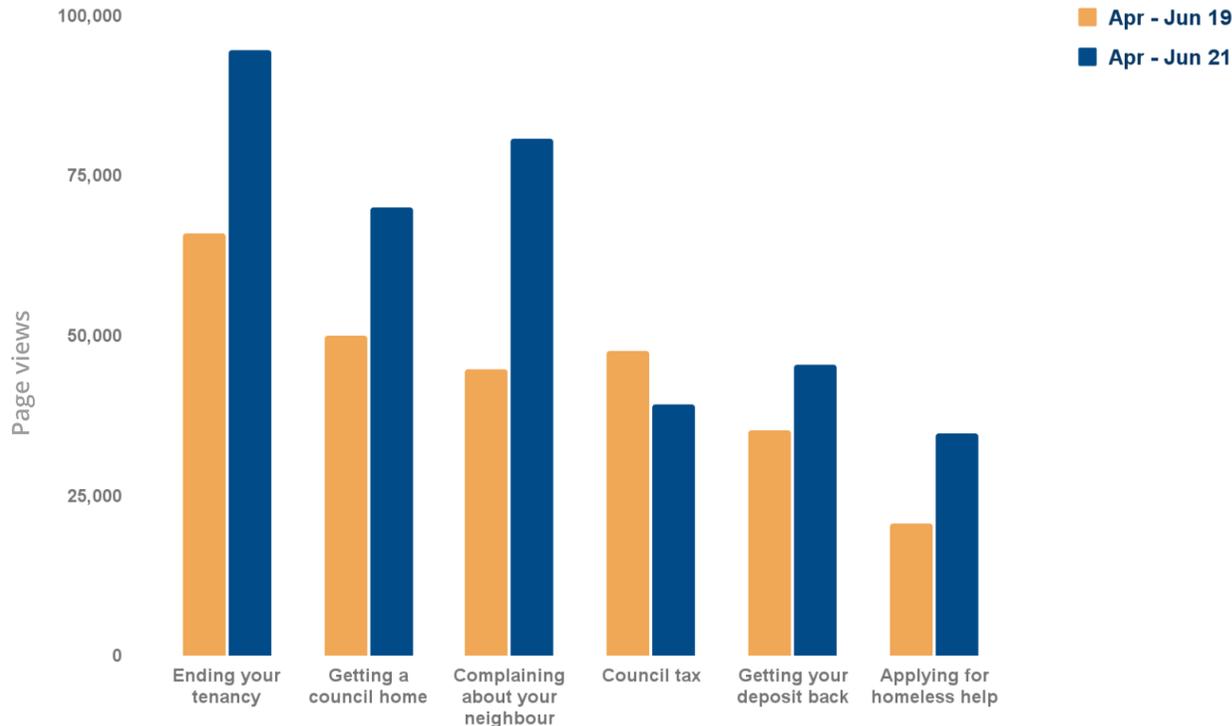
Our 'Stop getting nuisance calls and texts' page has also seen a big increase in page views. This shows one of the main ways scammers have been trying to exploit people through the pandemic.

The 'Stop getting nuisance calls and texts' page has consistently been in the weekly top-viewed advice pages since February 2021



Spotlight on housing

Top housing pages



Our data shows that many more people are seeking advice about housing issues than before the pandemic. This suggests that people are still having trouble with housing problems caused by the pandemic. For example, we've seen an almost doubling in the number of views to our 'Complaining about your neighbour' page. This could be driven by the increased time people are spending at home during the pandemic.

There have also been more visits to advice pages about renting and getting a council home. We're still seeing a worryingly high number of visits to our advice page about applying for homeless help. We'll be analysing this data closely to see if the recent decision to end the eviction ban leads to an increase in people seeking out this advice.

Spotlight on health

The 'NHS patients' rights' page has been steadily climbing in rank, breaking into the top 25 most-viewed pages at the start of June



Views to our page on NHS patients' rights have rapidly increased since January. People accessing this page from Google have mainly been looking for advice about changing their GP practice.

Clicks to this page from Google searches about changing GP (for example: 'how to change my gp' or 'how to change gp surgery') have increased by 300% since the first of week of March till the first week of June. They are responsible for 70% of the traffic increase to this page during this time period.

These searches now make up around half of the overall traffic to the page, up from 20% in March 2021.