

Supplier Liaison update

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advice

Leanne Dullard
Operations

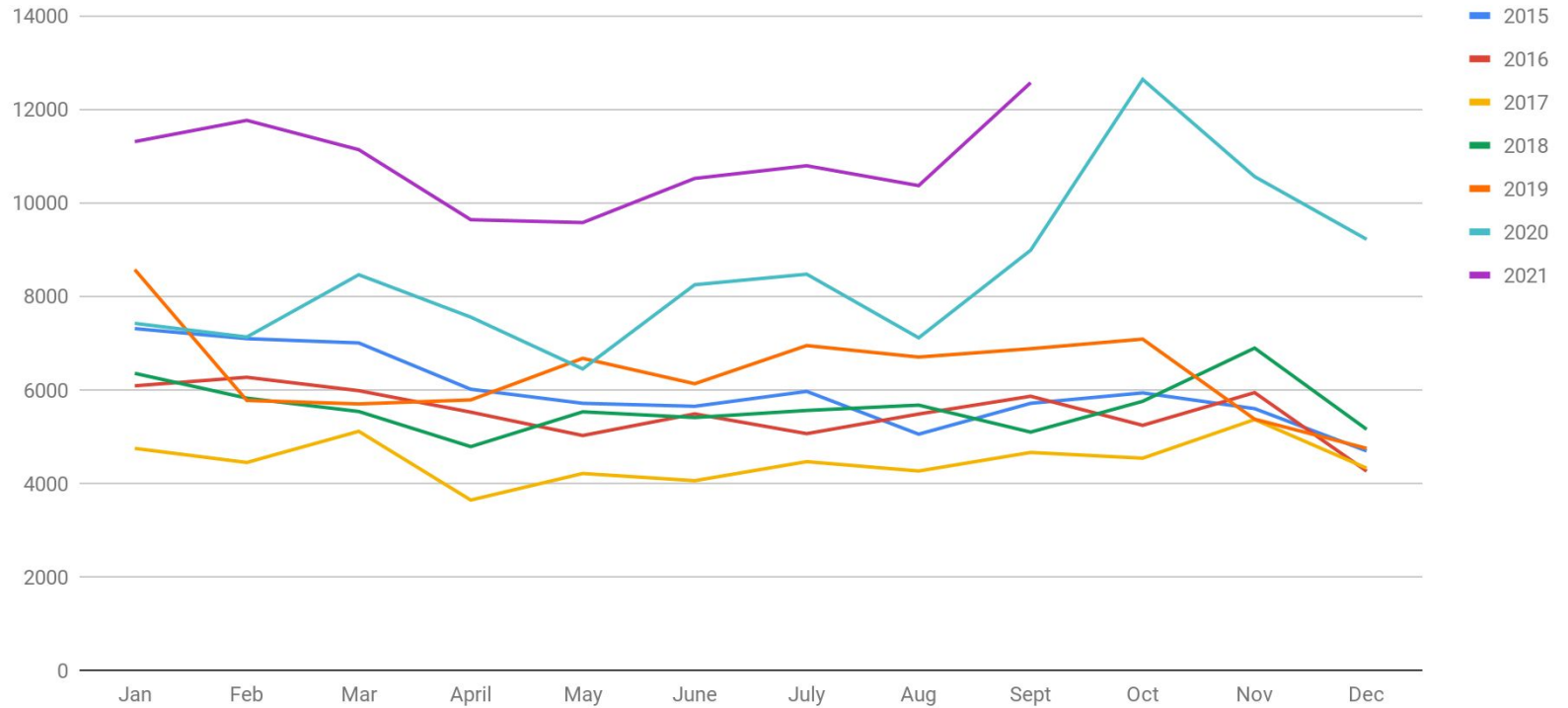
Performance and Operations Q2

- Key points from Q2 are:
 - We reviewed and re recorded our supplier of last resort information available to clients on our IVR, enabling us to ensure the information is more reflective of the current situation within the energy industry
 - We successfully launched energy webchat. This is currently operating with 4 FTE. Numbers are lower than anticipated, although we are seeing a week on week increase in the number of clients choosing to contact us via this channel

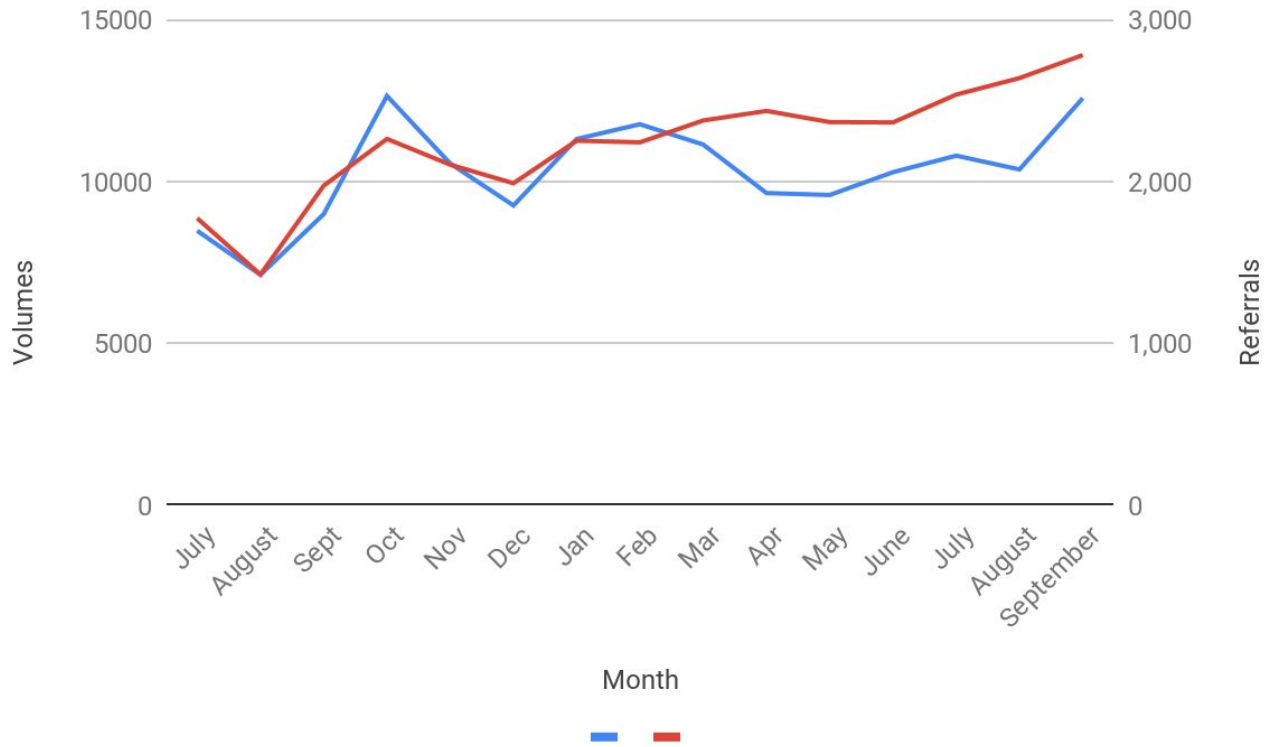
Contact volumes comparison

Month	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	7304	6080	4745	6357	8566	7416	11304
February	7089	6263	4440	5817	5768	7124	11758
March	6997	5976	5107	5531	5693	8456	11138
April	6007	5517	3612	4779	5779	7430	9633
May	5706	5017	4205	5524	6668	6234	9572
June	5642	5480	4051	5402	6125	8102	10516
July	5961	5057	4458	5553	6941	8348	10787
August	5046	5477	4283	5667	6695	7009	10362
September	5706	5857	4655	5090	6874	8820	12564
October	5929	5235	5261	5749	7079	12536	
November	5592	5935	5359	6887	5367	10546	
December	4687	4255	4319	5150	4743	9249	
Total	71,666	66,149	54,492	67,506	76,298	101,914	98,127

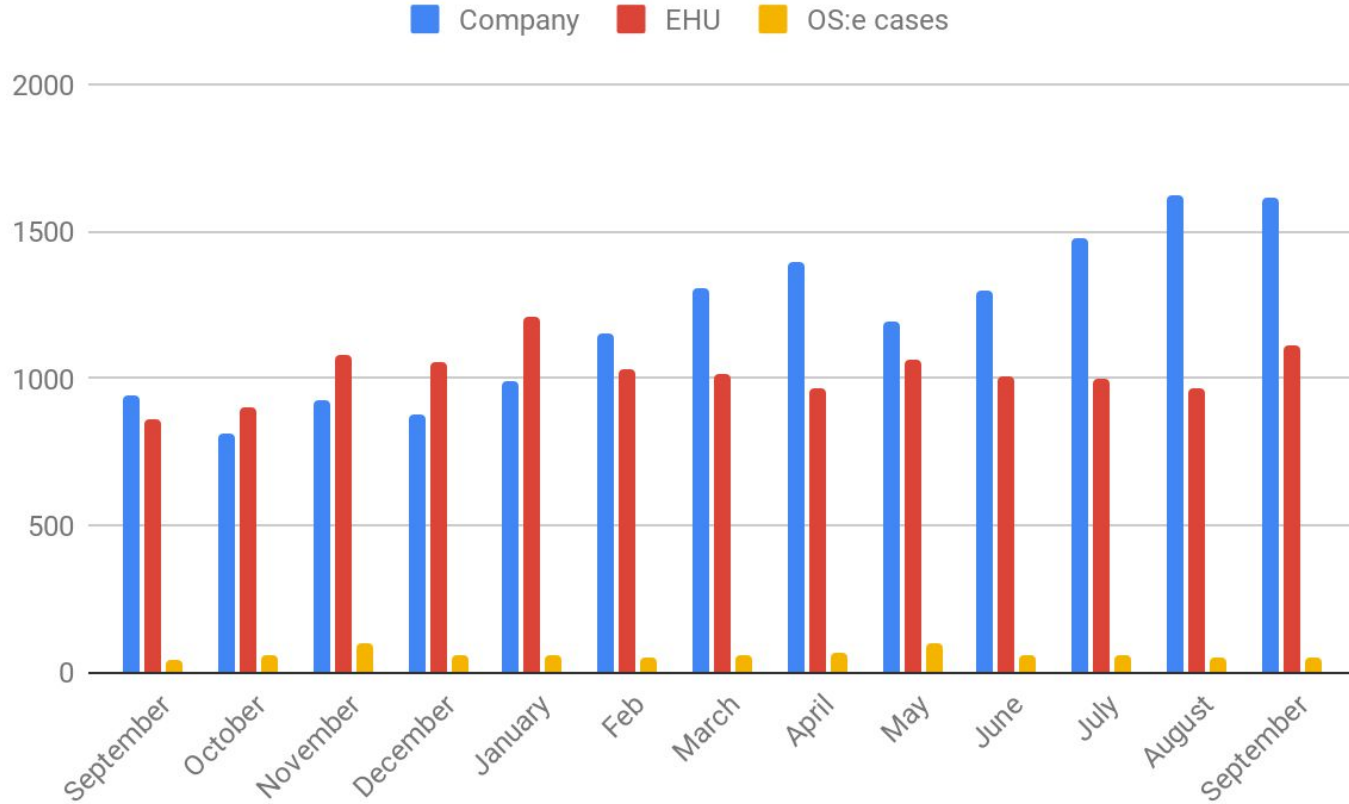
Contact volumes comparison 2015 - 2021



Referrals against volumes July 20 - Sept 2021



Referral proportions September 20 - present



Recorded information on the IVR

	Priority calls	Supplier switch & price increase	Coronavirus advice	Supplier of last resort
Jan	1226	1093	0	1857
Feb	1165	1511	0	2113
Mar	1293	2152	0	1878
Apr	1013	1153	0	1178
May	939	1057	82	1084
June	977	1095	70	1019
July	962	1010		1007
Aug	921	1051		1457
Sept	1142	1479		5344

Client by nation Q2

Nation	% split	Volume
Anon	2.40%	458
England	92.88%	17,714
Scotland	0.26%	50
Wales	4.46%	850



Trends

Quarter 1 Apr - June 21	Quarter 2 Jul - Sep 21	Quarter 3 Oct - Dec 20	Quarter 4 Jan - Mar 21
Inaccurate bill or inaccurate estimated bill (1405)	Inaccurate bill or inaccurate estimated bill (1848)	Disputed bill, customer not responsible (1840)	Disputed bill, customer not responsible (2177)
Final account reconciliation (1055)	Final account reconciliation (883)	Debt recovery practices (869)	Inaccurate bill or inaccurate estimated bill (874)
Disputed bill, customer not responsible (990)	Difficulty contacting supplier (805)	Final account reconciliation (851)	Final account reconciliation (862)
Debt Recovery Practices (765)	Credit Refund Issue (757)	Company contact details (non complaint purposes) (759)	Debt recovery practices (821)
Direct Debit Issues (695)	Debt recovery practices (736)	PPM self disconnection (unable to credit meter) (749)	PPM self disconnection (unable to credit meter) (761)
Catch up bill received (617))	Direct debit issues (715)	Direct debit issues (749)	Meter accuracy (746)
Meter Accuracy (617)	Price/tariff information (631)	Inaccurate bill or inaccurate estimated bill (611)	Direct debit issues (712)
PPM Self disconnection (unable to credit meter) (488)	Catch up bill received (570)	Meter Accuracy (595)	Company contact details (non complaint purposes) (705)
Difficulty contacting supplier (423)	Meter accuracy (533)	Warm Home Discount (513)	Price/tariff information (699)
Price/tariff information (421)	Company contact details (non complaint purposes) (530)	Price/tariff information (468)	Difficulty contacting supplier (612)

Q2 Trends split by nation

England	Scotland	Wales
Inaccurate bill or inaccurate estimated bill	Inaccurate bill or inaccurate estimated bill	Inaccurate bill or inaccurate estimated bill
Final account reconciliation	Meter accuracy	Final account reconciliation
Difficulty contacting supplier	Failure to credit/refund	Credit Refund Issue
Credit Refund Issue	Switching (Non-Smart)	Debt recovery practices
Debt recovery practices	Meter provision or exchange	Price/tariff information
Direct debit issues	Final account reconciliation	PPM self disconnection (unable to credit meter)
Price/tariff information	Supply Point Administration Query (MPRN/MPR)	Difficulty contacting supplier
Catch up bill received	Breach of Erroneous Transfer Charter	Direct debit issues
Meter accuracy	Disputed bill, customer not responsible	Meter accuracy
Disputed bill, customer not responsible	New account issue	Meter reading/data collection

Looking ahead

- **Christmas opening hours** - The consumer service will close at **1pm** on Christmas Eve, opening back up on 29 December. We will then close at **1pm** New Years Eve, reopening on 04 January
- Northumbria Energy are looking to voluntarily join the referral pathway and discussions are underway

Presented by: **Leanne Dullard**
Date: **3 November 21**

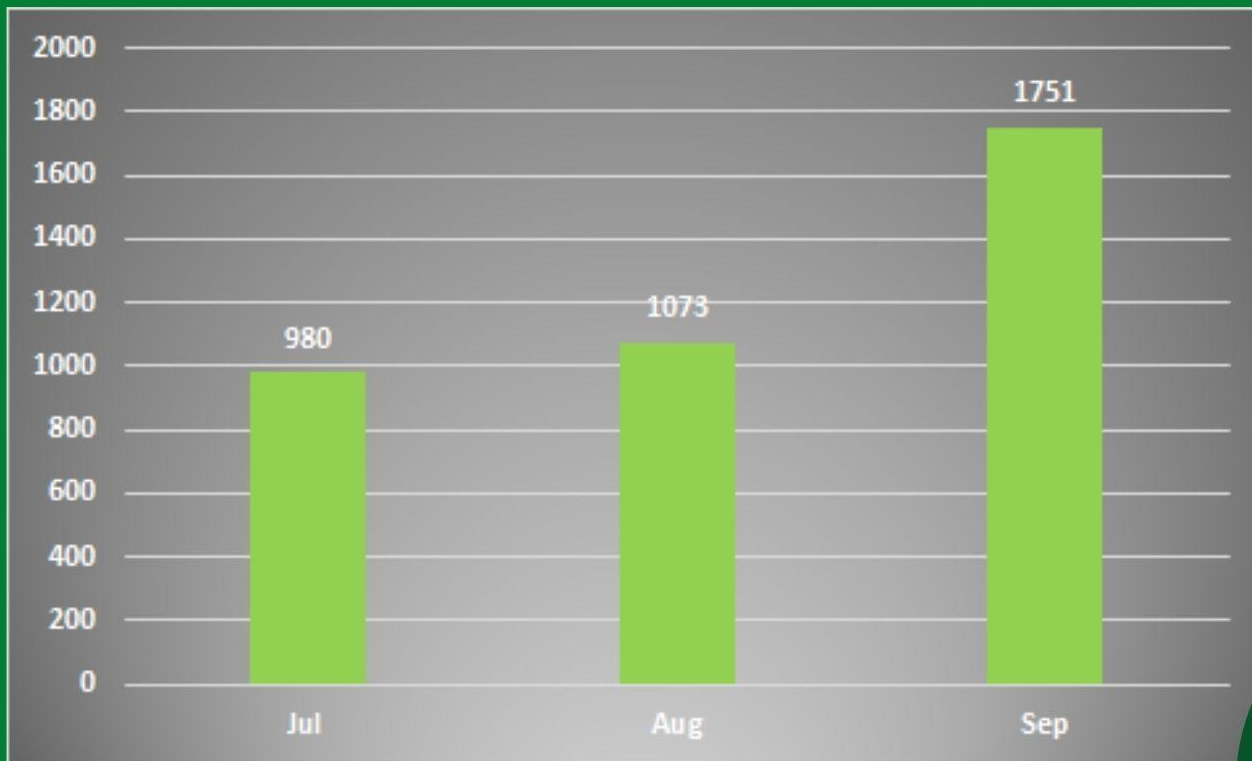
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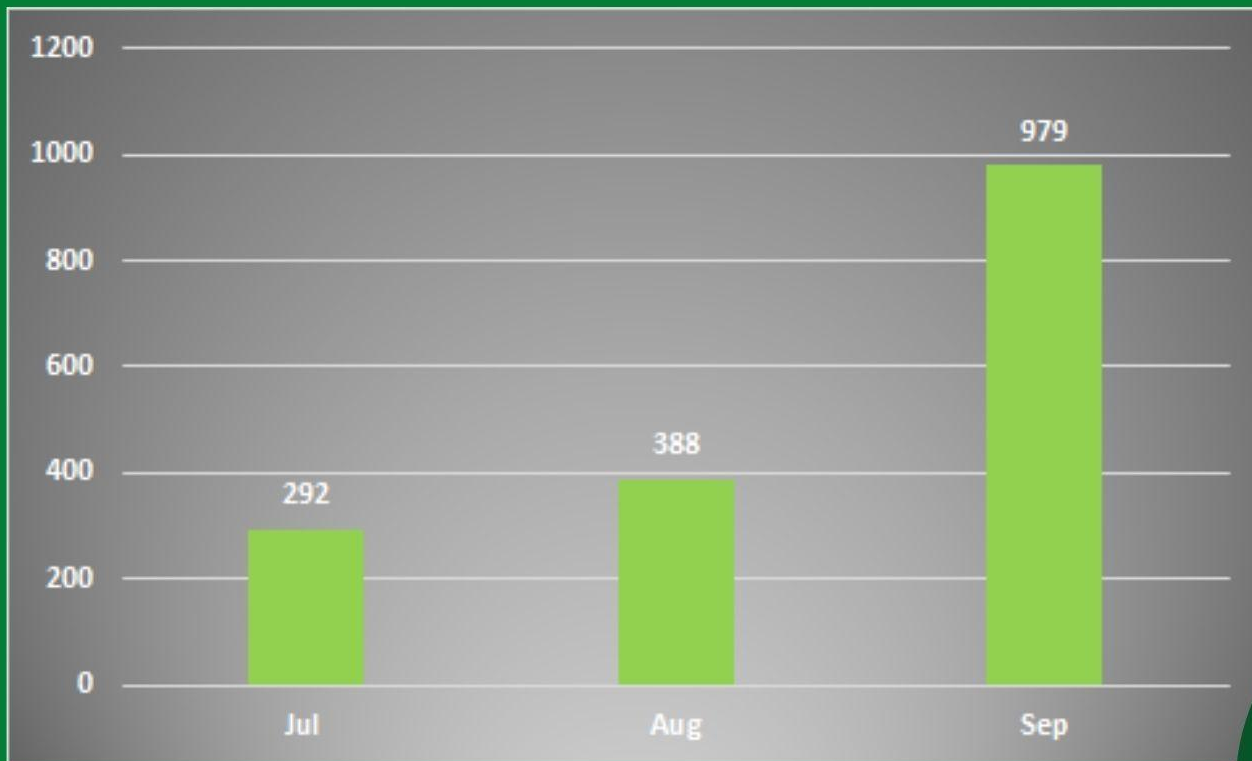


Supplier Liaison Meeting

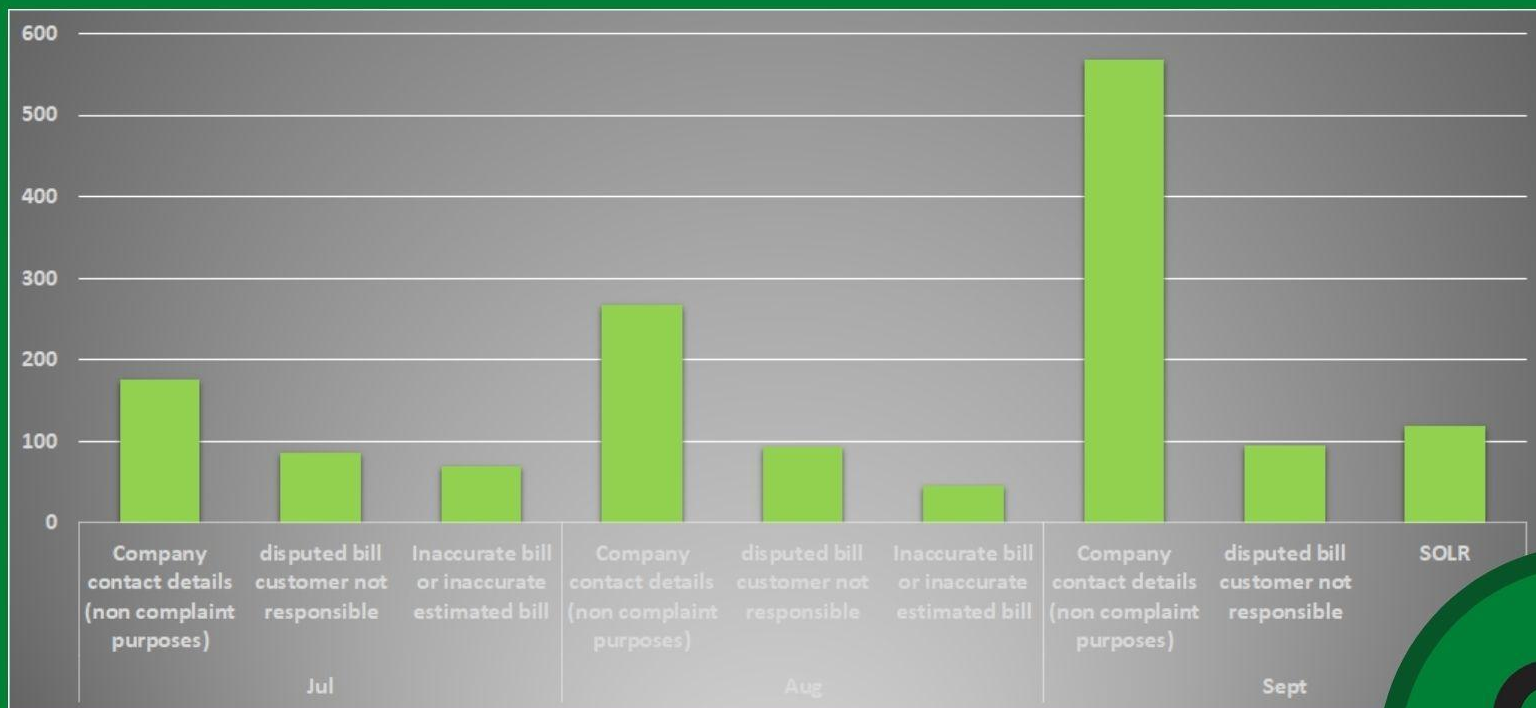
Total Cases Per Month



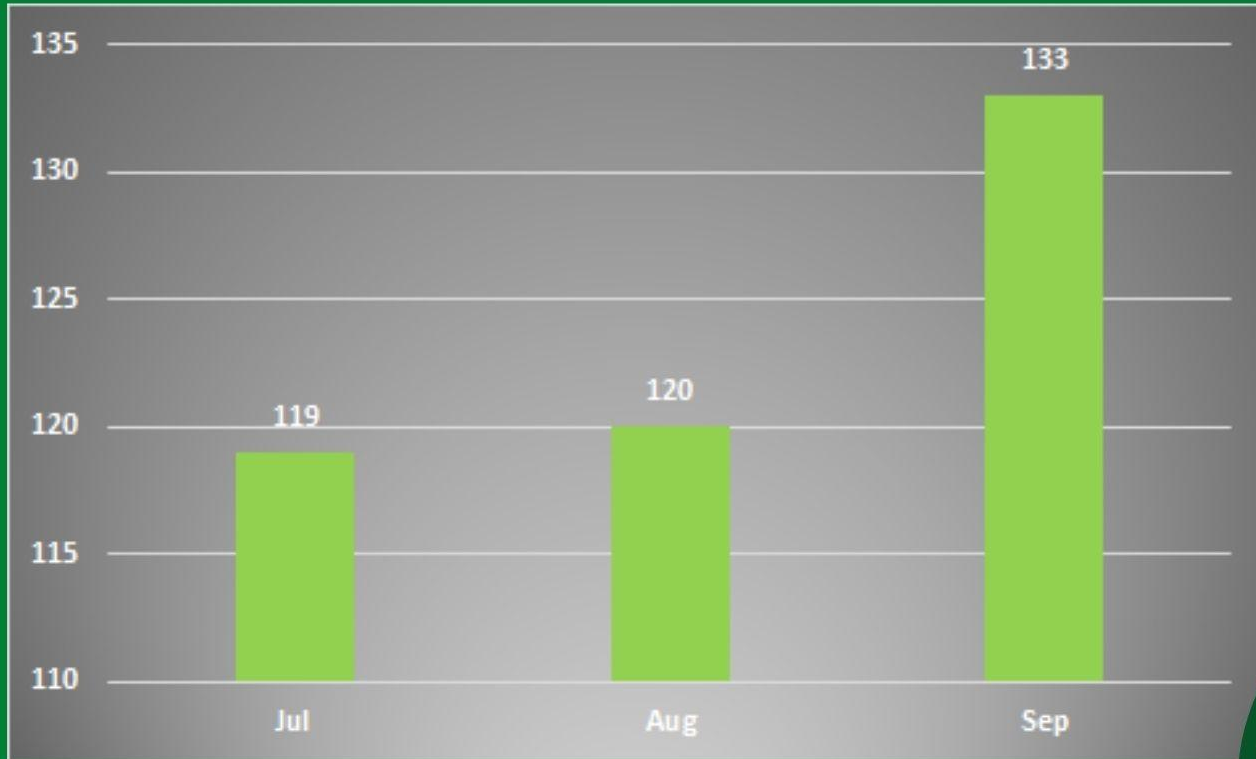
Advice Only Cases Per Month



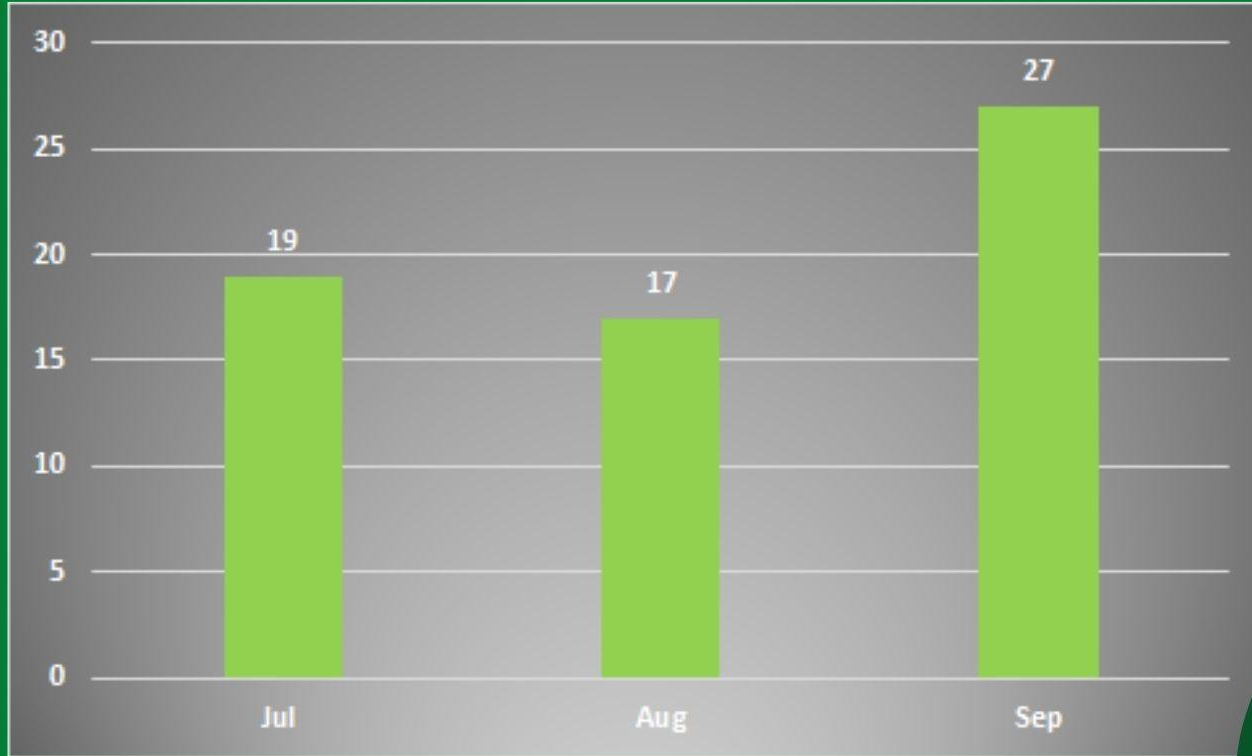
Top 3 Categories Per Month



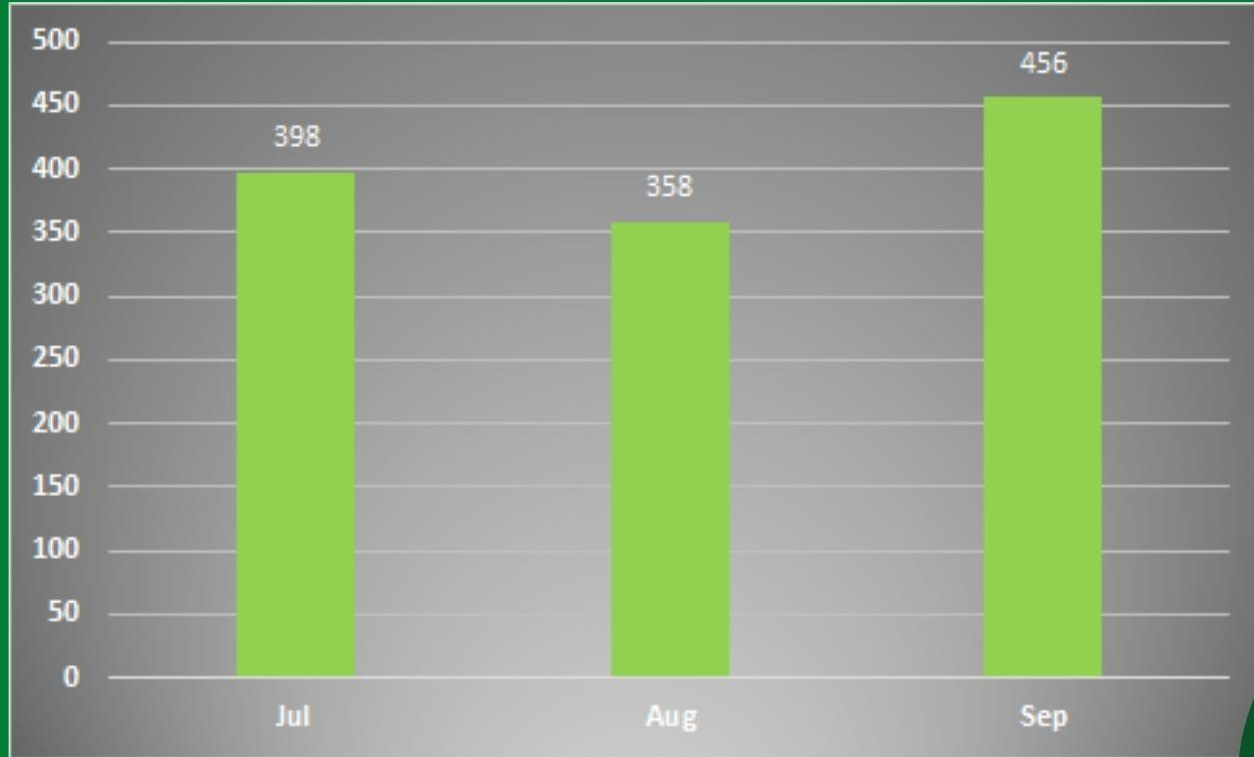
EHU Referrals Per Month



Ombudsman Referrals Per Month



Supplier Referrals Per Month



Domestic Supplier Liaison Meeting

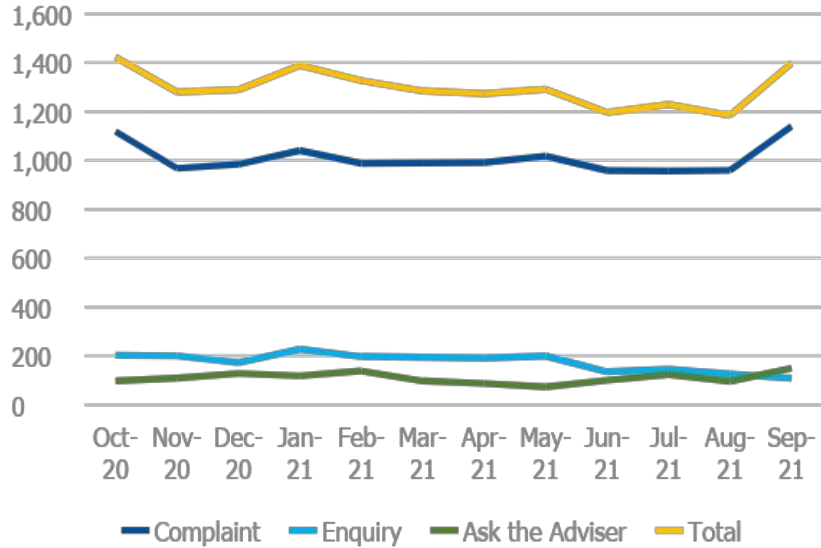


Quarter 2 – July to September
2021

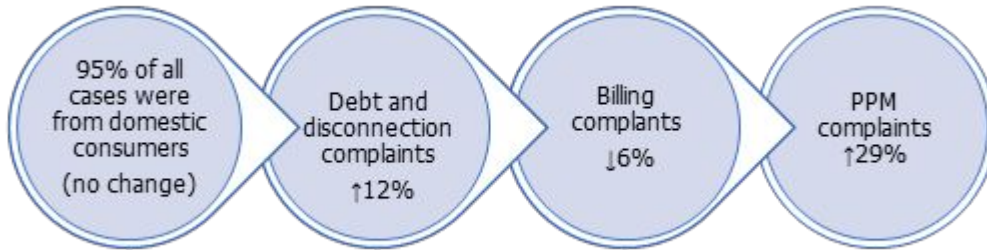
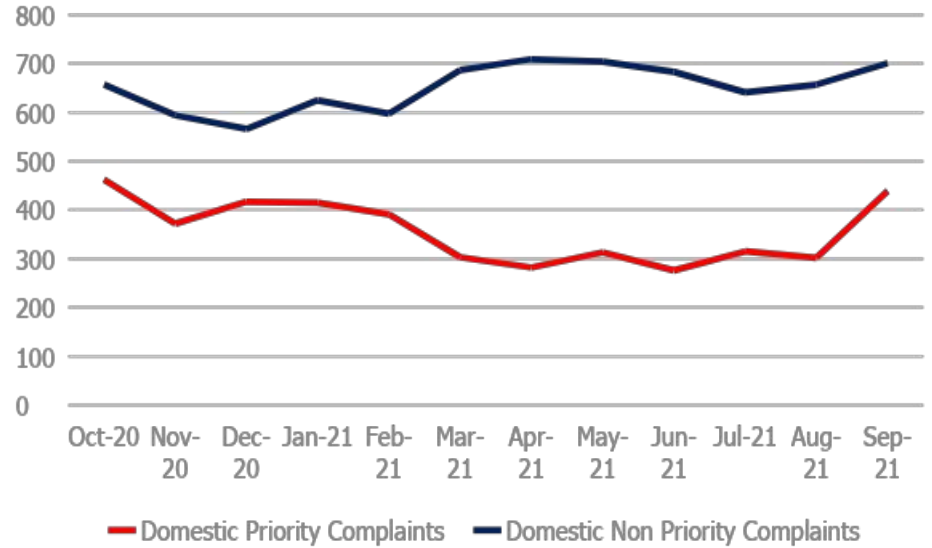
www.ehu.org.uk

Casework Volumes

Domestic Casework Volumes

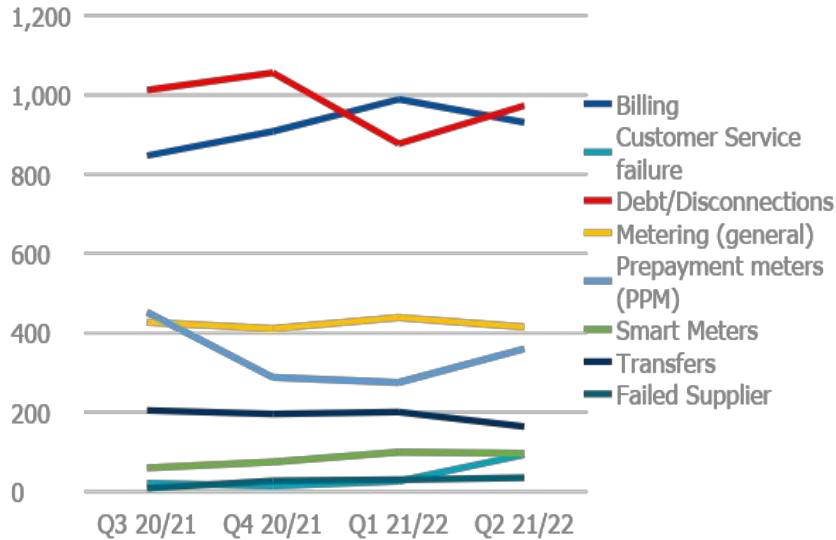


Composition of Complaints

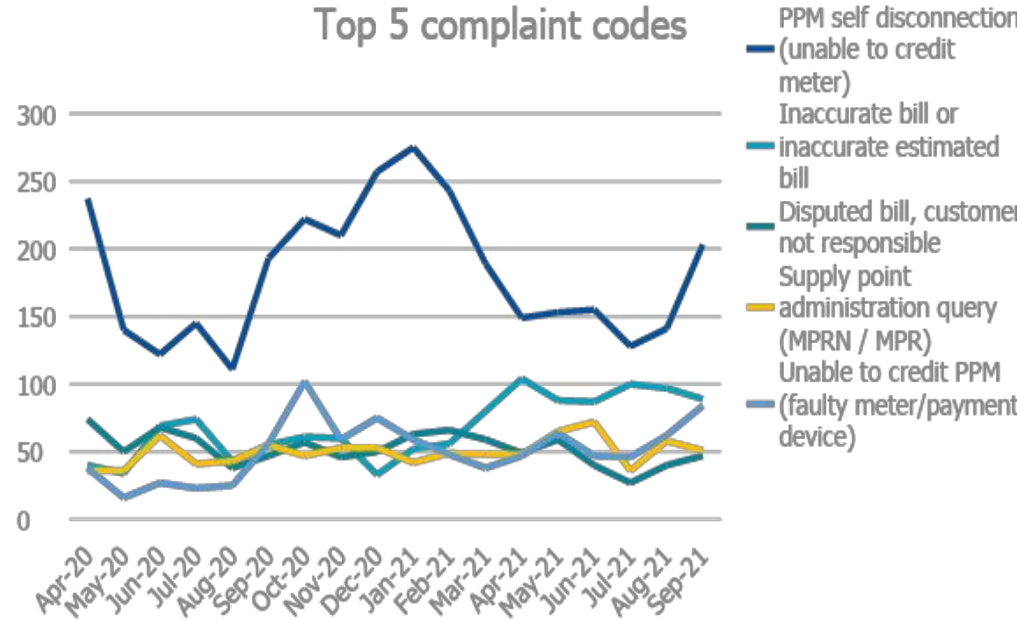


Casework Themes

High level complaint themes



Top 5 complaint codes

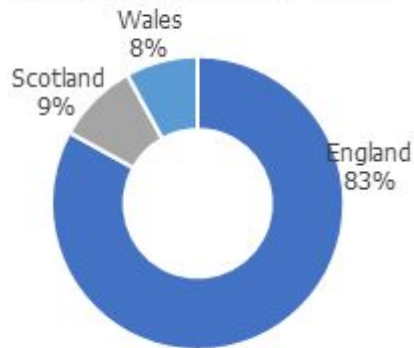


PPM self-disconnection accounted for 17% of complaints with volumes increasing 12% against Q1. This remains the top complaint category across all nations, responsible for 17% of complaints from consumers based in England, 12% Scotland and 20% Wales.

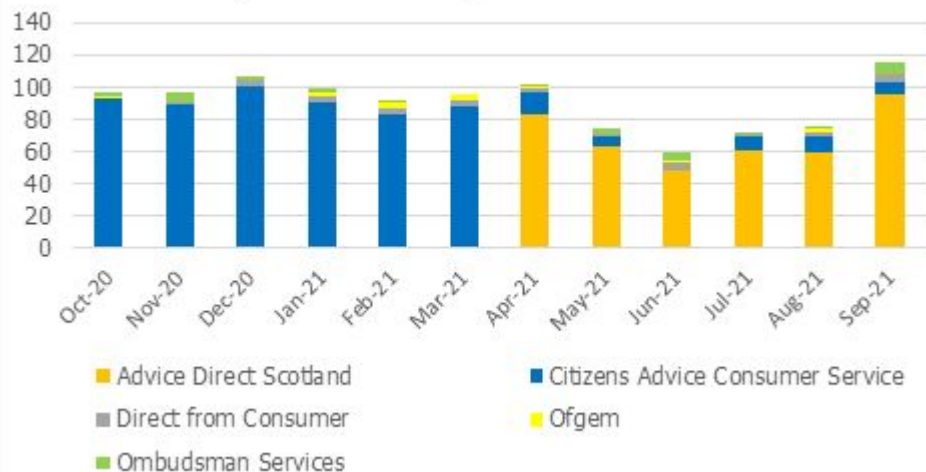


Referral Partners

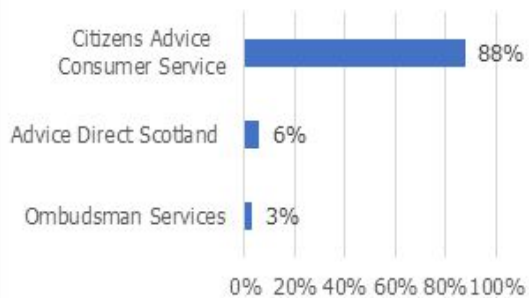
Geographical split of cases



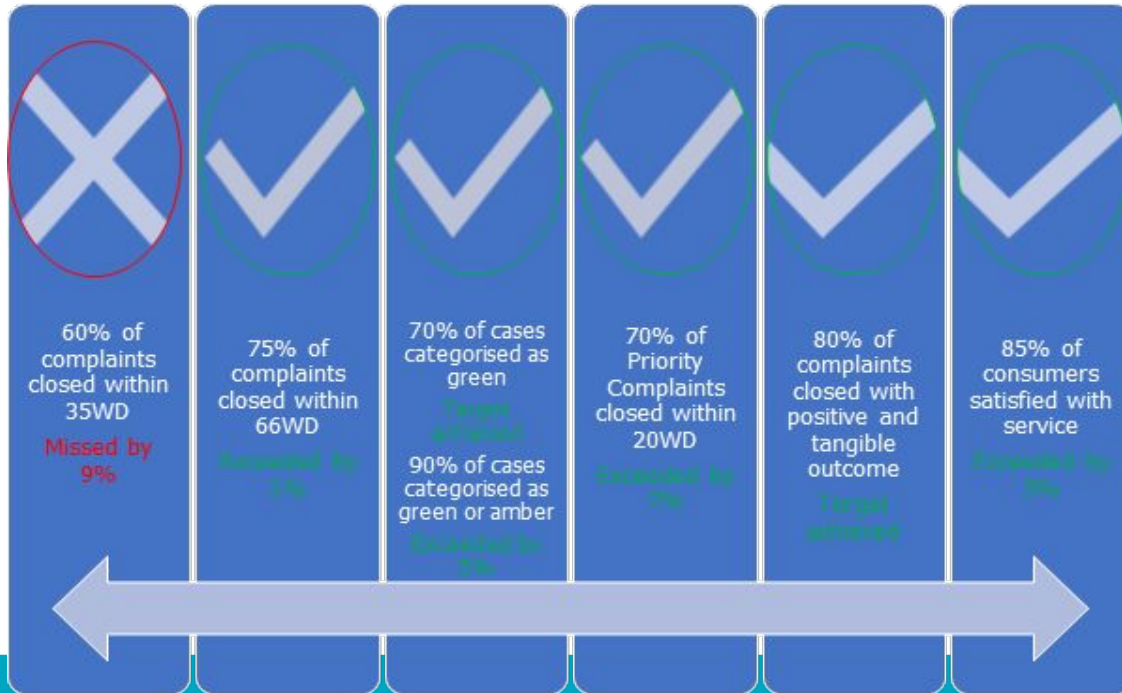
Complaint referral partners - Scotland



Main referral partners across GB - complaints



KPI Performance Q2 21/22



Accent Customer Satisfaction Survey

October Report - cases closed June to July to May 2021

90% felt case handler understood problem

96% reported positively comments about manner of staff

EHU helps me find a way forward
82%

EHU increased my confidence in dealing with future issues
79%

I feel less stressed
73%

88% satisfied with length of time to resolve case

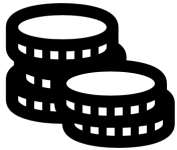
I feel less alone
73%

After support, my mental health and wellbeing improved
59%



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Outcomes Q2 21/22



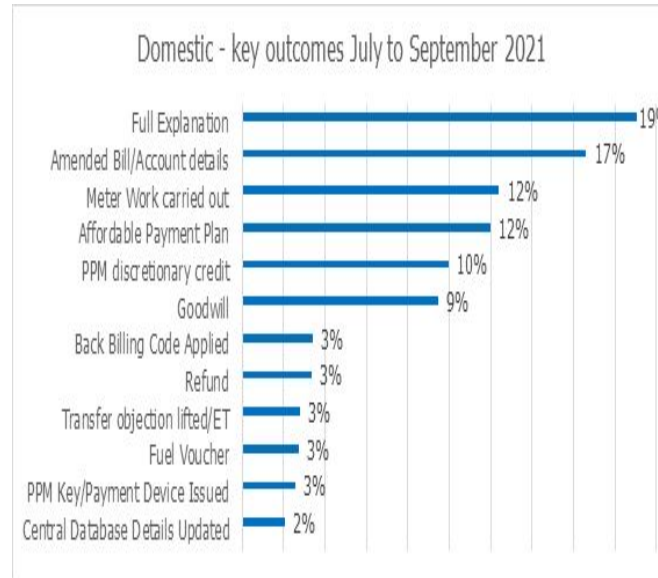
Financial Redress £729,676



79 successful fuel bank applications (201 people supported)



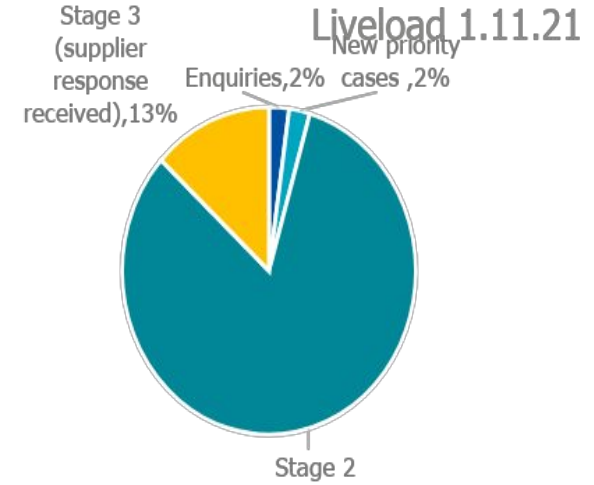
93% of self-disconnection positive outcome



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Operational update

- > 98% of calls answered (8535 calls)
- > Workload and backlog update
- > EHU caseworker plan
- > Resource update
- > Servicemail replacement project update
- > BSI audit mid-November



Festive opening hours

- > The Extra Help Unit will be closed on 27th & 28th December, and the 3rd and 4th January.
- > On the 24th & 31st December the EHU will close phonedlines at 1pm. Referrals therefore may be called through until 1.15pm, and we ask that your team can then make sure any urgent action is taken.
- > If your phonedlines also close at 1pm, please make sure we know who to contact for the last 15 minutes.



4th January

- > As the Citizens Advice consumer service will be open but the EHU closed (due to Scottish Bank Holiday), cases involving consumers who are off supply or at imminent risk of being off supply will be referred directly to suppliers
- > A referral will also be sent to the EHU and the consumer called on the 5th January to ensure their case has been resolved.
- > Cases will be closed immediately as enquiry no action where the supplier has taken appropriate action – therefore not included in league table



Industry trends and engagement

- > A shift to large blocks of cases involving the bigger energy suppliers in recent months
- > A small group of smaller suppliers are not engaging effectively
- > Supplier Failures
- > Tariff increases and affordability – not fully seeing the impact of this yet
- > Allocation of suppliers to SLOs to be reviewed



Initial problems following failure announcement

- Immediately after a supplier failure is announced the most immediate concern relates to any off-supply cases that might be received until a SOLR is appointed
- Not just a prepayment meter issue – smart credit meters stopping working has also been an issue
- We have asked Ofgem to ensure we are provided with contacts who will continue to be available after the announcement
- Impact on the priority team



Case study: People's Energy from announcement until SOLR appointed

14th September – Announcement made that People's Energy had failed. Lines closed and existing arrangements with EHU stopped functioning.

15th September – Struggling to make contact with People's Energy. Tried to use emergency line details but struggled getting through and their team unaware of EHU's requirements.

16th September – Was able to have a call with senior managers who promised to help us track cases. Suggested we email them directly about any issues, but gap in responses being provided.

Case study continued

17th September – at 15.00 given dedicated contacts for managing EHU cases, but still limits to what feedback could be provided as they continued to struggle with meter operators.

20th September – Dedicated contacts told us mid-morning we needed to deal with appointed SOLR. We were able to successfully work with the SOLR to ensure unresolved off supply cases from the past few days were fixed.

Lack of planning for the event and "surprise" problems with the meter operators blamed.



Working with SOLRs

Regular catch-up meetings are required with appointed SOLRs to understand issues such as:

- How priority cases will now be handled
- Plans for communicating with customers
- Arrangements for managing credit balances
- Arrangements for managing debt (if appropriate)
- How we progress existing and new cases that might be received



Working with administrators

It is helpful to contact administrators to discuss:

- Arrangements for final billing accounts
- Communications and customer service arrangements offered
- Arrangements for managing debt (if appropriate)
- Will they review concerning EHU cases - such as cases involving clear billing errors

Administrators can initially be difficult to contact.



Impact on open EHU cases

- Approximately 7% of domestic cases currently open are for failed suppliers.
- These initially require micromanagement – no one size fits all approach.
- Some cases must be closed; others depend on whether the issues will affect the new account and/or goodwill by the appointed SOLR/administrator to resolve
- Some cases that are closed, could be reopened if a consumer's issue is not resolved.



Supplier Failures – issues causing concern

- Erroneous Transfer cases – consumer can't be returned to original supplier and tariff
- Cases which involve Multiple Failed Suppliers – often linked to switching service e.g. Flipper
- Unresolved billing cases – how will an administrator approach these
- Paid appointments to fit a new meter with failed supplier



Concerning issues continued

- Smart meters losing their configuration for multi rate meter arrangements
- Gap between announcement, final bill and first SOLR bill, plus issues with direct debits
- Potential surge in referrals to EHU once final bills and credit balances are issued in the run up to Christmas

We are working with internal and external stakeholders and relevant suppliers to highlight these concerns.



Case Study: Erroneous Transfer

Consumer was taken over as an erroneous transfer in February 2021, but was not billed by the supplier that later failed.

Consumer approached his original supplier who he had continued to pay. They said they would refund the payments made to them after the supply had been ET, but could only take the consumer back as a new customer and that they could not offer the existing beneficial tariff rate the consumer was signed up to.

The consumer will be billed by the administrator.



Case study: Case with multiple failed suppliers

Consumer tried to switch supplier in February 2020. Original supplier blocked the transfer of one supply due to a debit on the account. They made a payment and arranged for the gas supply to be transferred.

Consumer continued to pay the new supplier for a dual fuel account.

In September 2021 the first supplier suddenly issued a bill for non-payment of the gas supply. It transpired the gas supply still hadn't transferred.

Consumer tried to contact these supplier's but both had failed within days of each other.



Ongoing projects

- > Backbilling project
- > Self-disconnection project
- > Remote Mode Change



Other areas of work

- > Supplier to supplier contacts on website
- > Working Together Document
- > Intention to review disputes process
- > Issues with obtaining a new meter/registration and unregistered supplies
- > Non-domestic supplier liaison meeting



Questions?



Energy policy team update



Supplier Liaison Meeting
4th August 2021

Contents

1. Publications, blogs and consultation responses
2. Team updates
 - Energy Retail Markets
 - Future Energy Services
 - Energy Network and Systems
3. Supplier failures

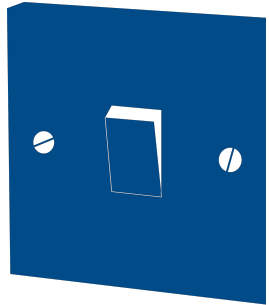
Recent publications

We've put out figures on the [financial impact of supplier failures on customers moving to new suppliers](#), as well as several blogs on supplier failures, including [how we support consumers](#), [protections needed for consumers](#), and [how to help customers struggling with their energy bills](#).

We've also released a [Good Practice Guide](#) for suppliers on how best to support customers this winter.

We've produced a [report](#) on the electricity distribution companies draft business plans and responded to the consultations about [code governance reform](#) and [future system operator](#).

All our publications are available [here](#).



Upcoming policy/advocacy work

Retail

- Advocating for consumers as suppliers fail and energy prices rise
- Publishing our report on third party deductions
- Completing research on consumers who are digitally excluded, vulnerable this winter, and people who live in the private rented sector

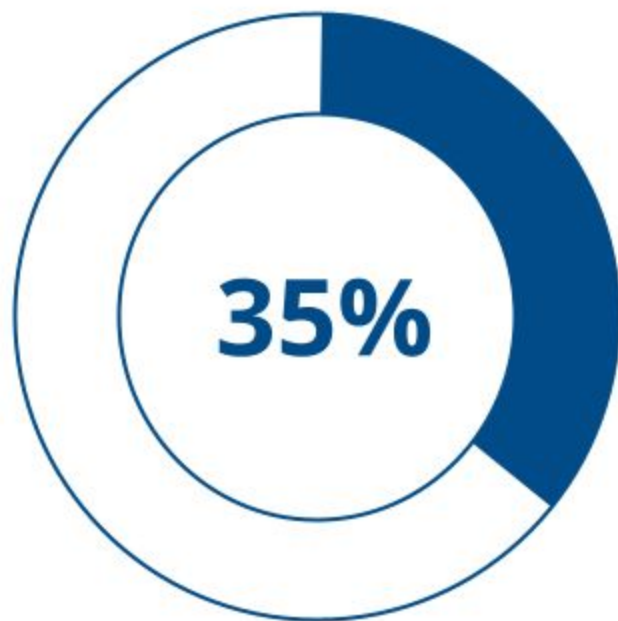
Net Zero Homes

- Recently published net zero consumer protection report.
- Finalising a report on user focused consumer protections for smart energy
- Commissioning research to understand consumers needs for post installation support for low carbon home technology.
- Participating in research alongside WWF, OVO, Lancaster University looking into consumer insights for net zero.
- Responding to multiple consultations on decarbonising heat and heat networks.

Energy Networks & Systems:

- Reviewing the final business plans of the electricity distribution companies

More than 1 in 3 are worried they'll struggle to pay their energy bills this winter



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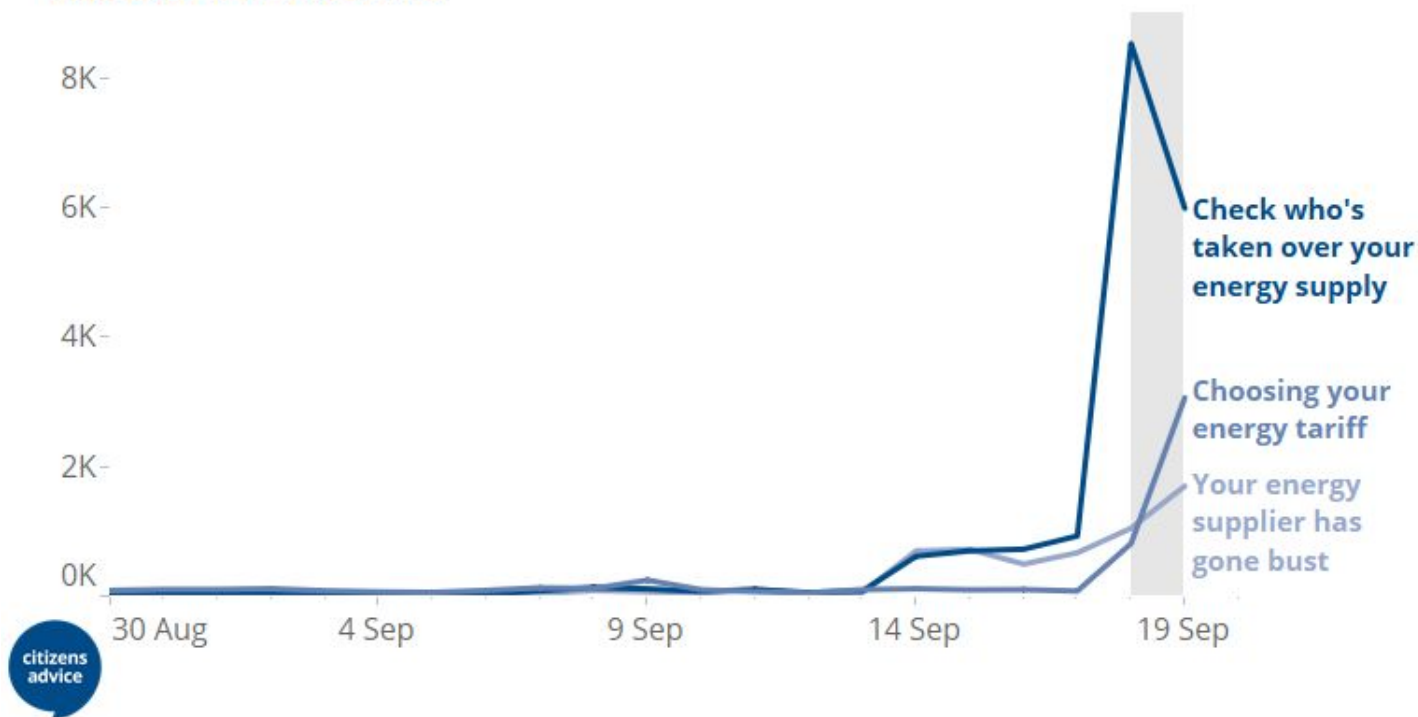
Source: Nationally representative polling of 2,000 adults for Citizens Advice, Sept 2021, Yonder Data Solutions

Energy market issues - what we're seeing



What does our data say?

Pageviews of energy advice pages on the Citizens Advice website saw a huge increase this weekend



What issues are people seeing?

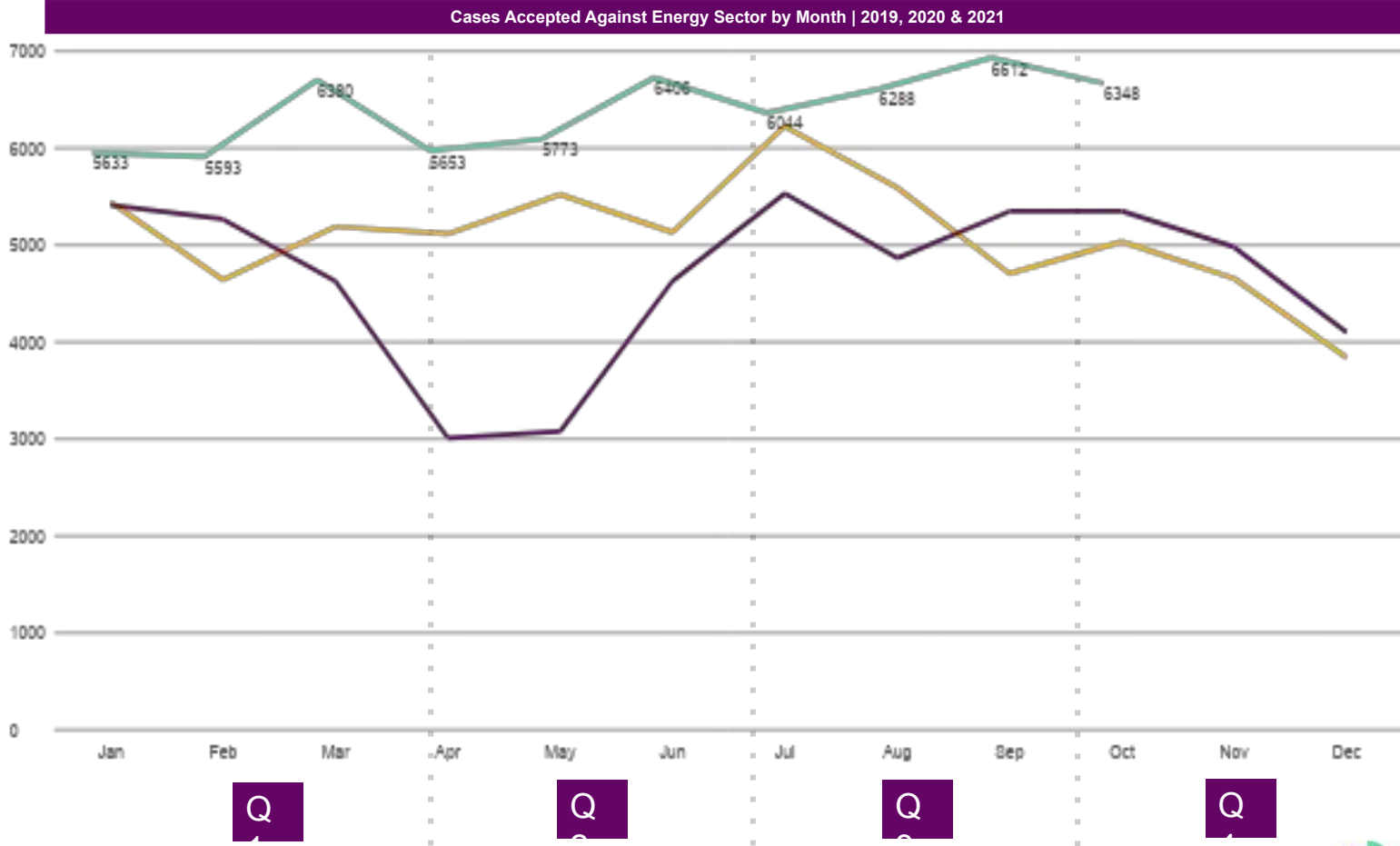
- Since the 01/10/2021, there have been only a few PPM cases. The majority of PPM cases prior to this date were due to the initial disruptive failure of People's Energy and these cases have now mostly been referred to the EHU and resolved.
- Current active PPM cases, though small in number, reflect high levels of detriment to the consumer. Commonly, customers have found their meter or payment method to be faulty, but are unable to get in touch with their supplier to arrange an engineering appointment.
- Since the 01/10/2021 there have been over 100 Administrator/Debt cases. The majority of these cases are customers seeking reassurance over both debit and credit balances. However, some cases are starting to be referred to the Insolvency Service for further advice.

How do we respond?

- **Engage with outgoing supplier**, gather information and share with Extra Help Unit, consumer service and local Citizens Advice offices
- Share **best practice guides** with suppliers on how to support their customers in these difficult times both as an outgoing supplier and also for the [SoLR](#).
- **Feed in insights** from the consumer service and Extra Help Unit to Ofgem on cases from supplier failures to show issues and suggest fixes
- **Engage with SoLR and administrators** and feed in trends from consumer service data to improve practice
- Advocate for **greater protections for customers** in vulnerable circumstances

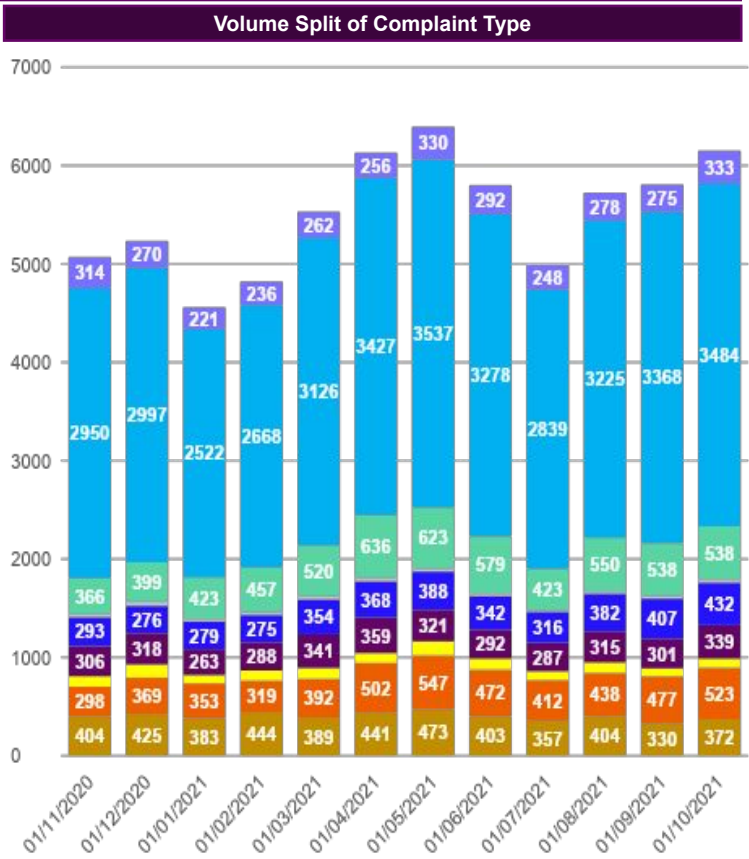
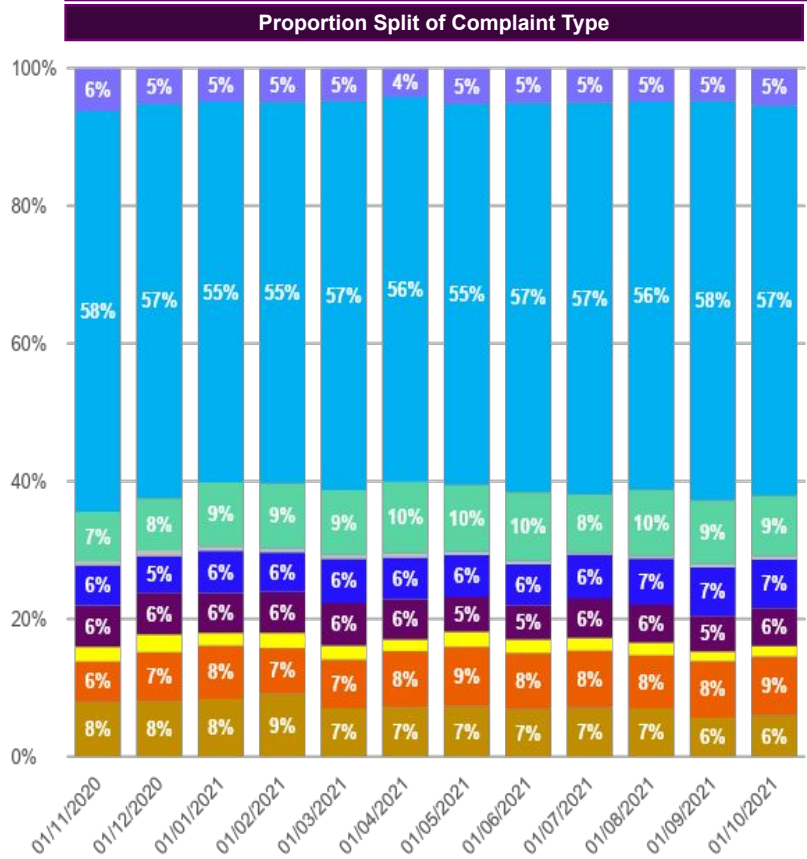
Ombudsman Services: Energy

Cases Accepted | 2019, 2020 & 2021



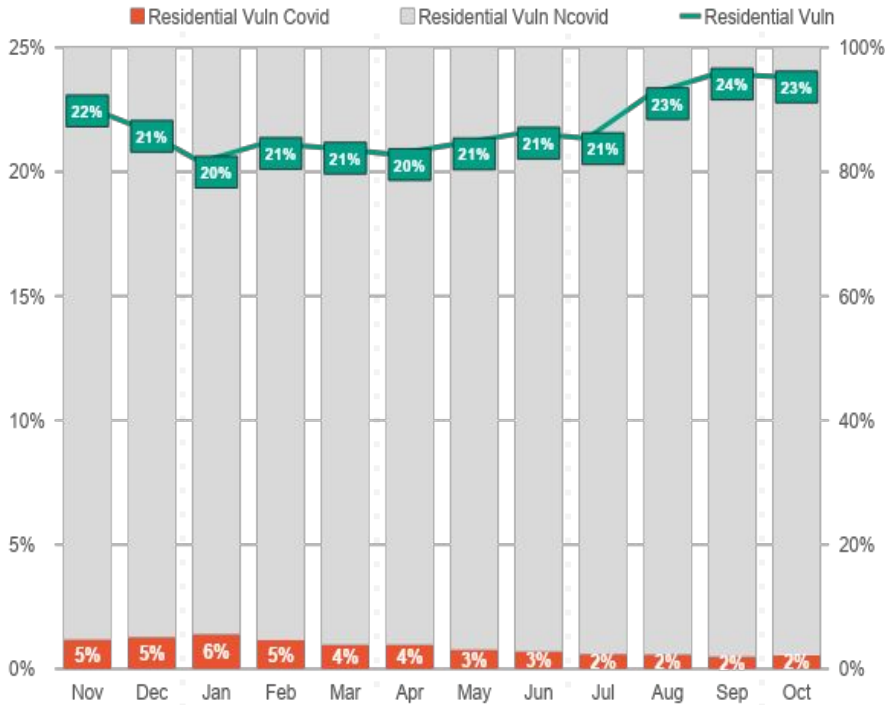
Cases by Complaint Type | Energy Sector

Complaint Types for Energy Sector by Proportional and Volume Split



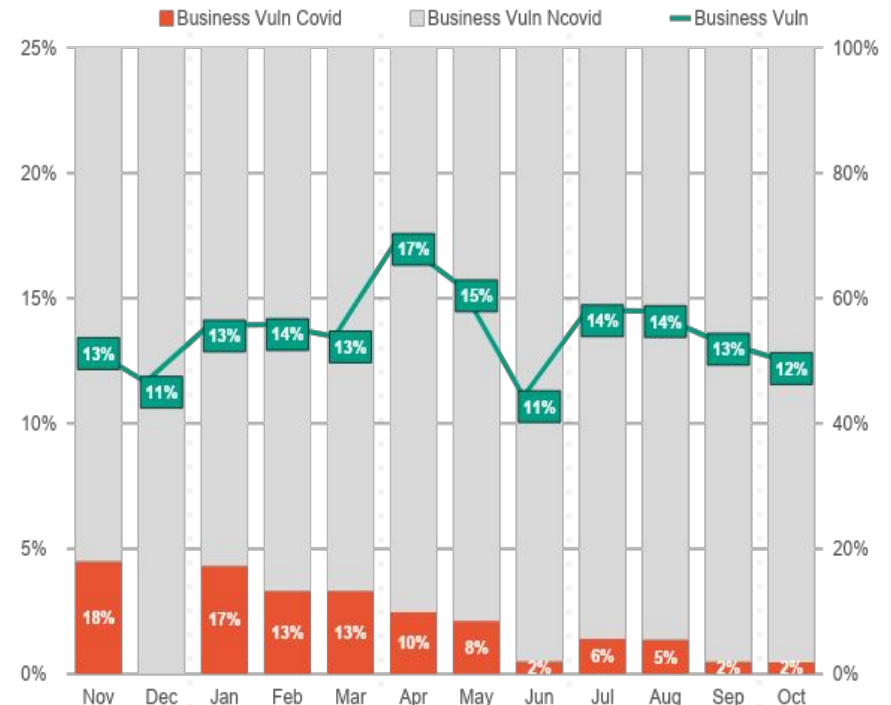
- Transfer
- Smart Meters
- Sales
- Payments and Debt
- Meter
- Feed in Tariff
- Customer Service
- Billing
- Backbilling

Proportion of Cases Accepted flagged as in Potentially Vulnerable Circumstances by Month | November 2020 to October 2021



Residential | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3

Graph Summary: The plotted line show the % of Accepted cases flagged as potentially in vulnerable circumstances



Business | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3

The bar chart behind the plotted line goes on to show the proportion of these potentially vulnerable cases split by potentially vulnerable where COVID is discussed vs potentially vulnerable cases where COVID isn't mentioned

OS Performance

- Increase in complaints across the sector
- Still in KPIs

Energy Brokers

- Update on the enduring scheme
- Brokers/Suppliers information sessions
- List of brokers

SoLR

- Affect a lot of customers
- Support proposed to SoLR to help with inflight complaints
- No surge of calls so far at our end.