

Trading Standards Working Group



October 2022

Agenda

- Welcome & introduction
- Actions from the last meeting
- BEIS Update
- Consumer campaigns and education update
- Performance and Operations update
- Number porting
- Scams
- Cost of living
- AOB

BEIS Update



Carol Rice

Consumer Education Update



October 2022

Consumer Education resources

- **Consumer education and Cost of Living**

Currently working on this area and working with content team to arrange dates for new material to be uploaded

- **Decarbonisation and home efficiency measures**

- We are creating the content for this area
- CEA will be hosting a coffee and catch - up session with Mark in December

- **Young people** - we are mapping current provision across E&W, where consumer education can feature in education and leaving care situations, in order to establish what resources we can create and provide.

Miscellaneous updates

- **National Consumer Week** - some new content links to the topics covered in the campaign
- **Citizens Advice conference** - our team will be hosting a session at this year's conference. We will showcase our financial capability and consumer education tools to support clients and our resource libraries which are designed to help clients at any point in their journey.
- **CEA** - working with the exec we have set up coffee and catch up breakfast 1/2hr sessions for anyone across the consumer landscape, with the aim of increasing members to the consumer group. Next sessions are
 - Derbyshire Citizens Advice - engaging local communities with CE
 - Mark Burton TS - decarbonisation, home efficiency and scams

Miscellaneous updates

- **Networking** - we continue to help organisations across the landscape in a number of ways
 - Share and promote consumer education resources
 - Share external resources with local CA offices via our intranet page
 - Sharing contacts with SE Fincap forum for a TS speaker at their next event (*thanks to Gina Green, Surrey.*)
- Reminder - we can share info, projects, news items with local offices on our intranet page if TS would like us to.

Campaign update



October 2022



National Consumers Week

14 - 20 November

This year we're focusing on giving consumers advice on **how to spend their money wisely, what to look out for when shopping and what to do if things go wrong.**

We're mindful that this year's campaign is set in the context of the cost-of-living crisis so will focus parts of the campaign on second hand shopping and online marketplaces.

Key messages and advice

How to shop wisely on online marketplaces

How and what to look out for when buying second-hand

How to spend your money wisely

What to do if things go wrong



Performance & Operations update



October 2022

Performance and Operations

- Overall the service handled **217,718** general consumer contacts throughout quarter one which is an increase of **19,000** contacts when compared to the previous quarter and is an increase of 15,000 contacts when compared to the same quarter last year
- Client Satisfaction results were achieved at **94%**
- Quality of advice consistently exceeded KPI levels throughout the quarter at both a local and national level
- Referral levels remained consistent across the quarter

Trends - Quarter one and two

GB inc Anon	
(EE04) Used car	10541
(EM01) Air	1858
(EH05) Car MOT, service and repairs	1806
(AD05) Upholstered furniture (e.g. sofas)	1713
(AB25) Roofing, roof sealing and chimney repairs	1642
(CA02) Women's clothing	1623
(AB28) Window frames and doors (excluding electric garage doors)	1509
(CZ99) Other	1373
(AB24) Major renovations (including lofts, conversions and extensions)	1362
(IA02) Internet service (e.g. broadband, WiFi, MiFi, dial-up)	1262

GB inc Anon	
(EE04) Used car	10675
(EM01) Air	2218
(EH05) Car MOT, service and repairs	1991
(CA02) Women's clothing	1916
(AD05) Upholstered furniture (e.g. sofas)	1749
(AB28) Window frames and doors (excluding electric garage doors)	1664
(AB25) Roofing, roof sealing and chimney repairs	1579
(AB24) Major renovations (including lofts, conversions and extensions)	1521
(CZ99) Other	1468

Consumer service website page views

July		August		September	
If your flights delayed or cancelled	218,531	If your flights delayed or cancelled	148,131	If your flights delayed or cancelled	168,884
Grants and benefits to help you pay your energy bills	105,903	Grant and benefits to help you pay your energy bills	146,338	Grant and benefits to help you pay your energy bills	156,191
Report to Trading Standards	41,575	If you need more help about a consumer issue	45,497	How to read your energy meter	49,251
If you need more help about a consumer issue	40,618	Report to Trading Standards	38,361	How to read your smart electricity meter	43,944
Get airline compensation for lost or delayed luggage	37,088	Get airline compensation for lost or delayed luggage	26,806	If you need more help about a consumer issue	40,692
Check if you can get your money back after a scam	24,410	Check if you can get your money back after a scam	25,339	Report to Trading Standards	34,991
Solve an ongoing consumer problem	18,245	Energy supplier has increased you direct debit	23,256	How to read your smart gas meter	33,312
Getting your money back if you paid by card or paypal	18,099	Struggling to pay your energy bills	23,129	Check if you can get your money back after a scam	25,063
How to read your energy meter	16,107	How to read your smart electricity meter	22,416	Get airline compensation for lost or delayed luggage	20,331

Telephony platform

- Consumer service is moving to a new telephony platform on December 7th
- We are working closely with the project team delivering the new platform to ensure that the migration is as seamless as possible
- As a part of the migration we have reviewed all of our current IVR messages that we have in place and in particular the message clients hear when the service is closed. This message has been standardised and references to product recalls and energy have been removed. Where a specific topic with important client information arises we can add information to the message to allow clients to self help where appropriate

Product Safety

- The Citizens Advice consumer service are working with the Office of Product Safety and Standards with the aim of raising awareness with clients about safety of the things they buy, what they can expect, and what to do if things go wrong
- Also looking at product safety through the cost of living lens, and how that can impact consumer behaviour and decision making (counterfeit goods, second hand goods, 'wiggle the wire')
- Product safety briefing has been updated and re shared with all the delivery centres
- Samples of product safety cases are being reviewed to ensure the correct case coding is being used and referrals are being made

Number Porting



Background

In preparation for the migration to the new telephony platform we have taken stock of all numbers currently pointing to the IVR - this is the main phone menu for the Consumer Service.

- We have 321 numbers within our Consumer Service.
- A significant proportion are not public facing but allocated to trading standards.
- We would like to streamline these in preparation for our system move so that this can be as efficient as possible and reduce any unnecessary cost and technical complexity.

What do we need you to do

- If you wish to continue giving clients the option to transfer directly to the consumer service from your own telephony menu, you will need to instruct your IT team or telephony provider to change from your programmed number to **08081566720**.
- As these numbers should only be 'behind the scenes' there should be no requirement to update any public facing information, but you may wish to check that you are providing up to date information about consumer service numbers.

Timeline

- You can make this change as soon as you wish but we appreciate you may need some lead time.
- The existing numbers will remain active until the end of **November** and after this the client will hear a message asking them to redial, the call will not be connected.
- The message will only stay on until early next year and at this point the numbers will be completely discontinued.

Scams



Jon Walters

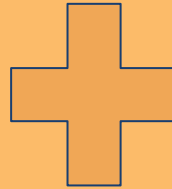
Cost of Living



Dave Mendes da Costa
Principle Policy
Manager (Consumer)

Today

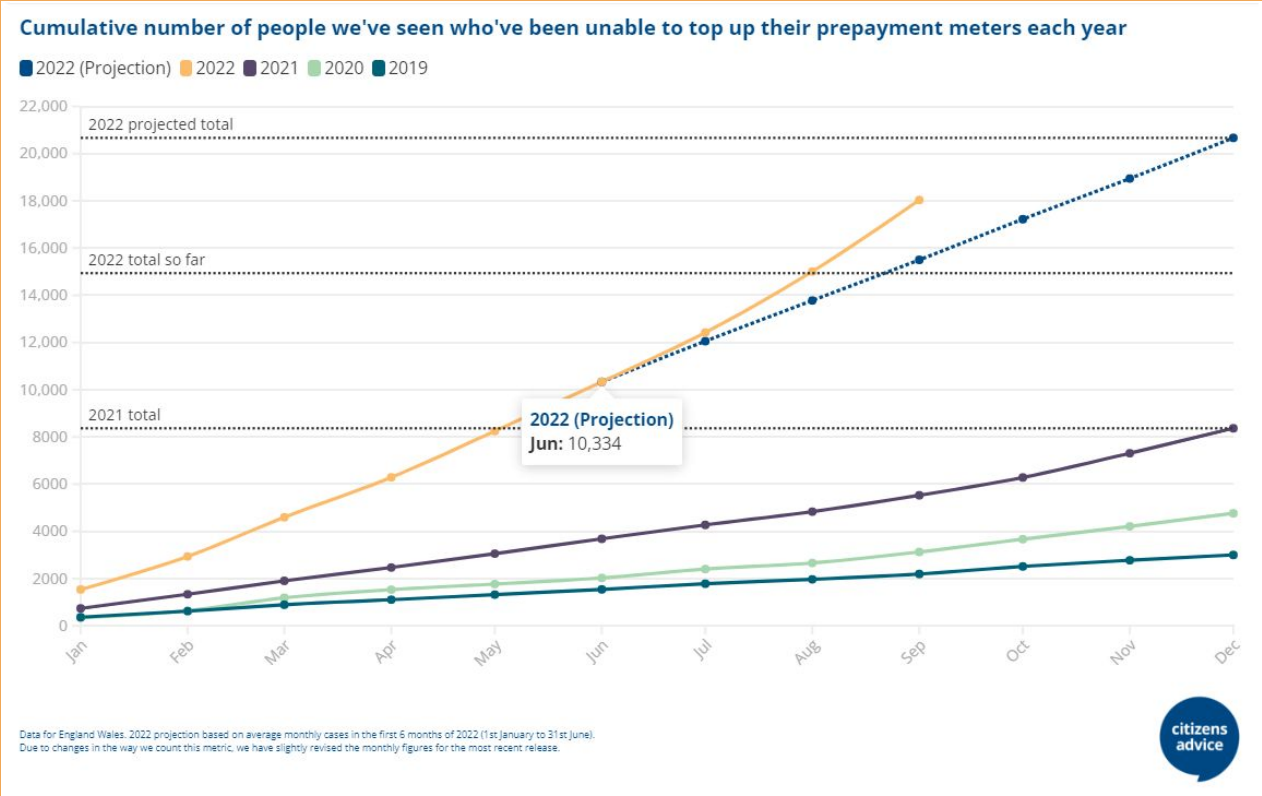
Cost of Living Crisis



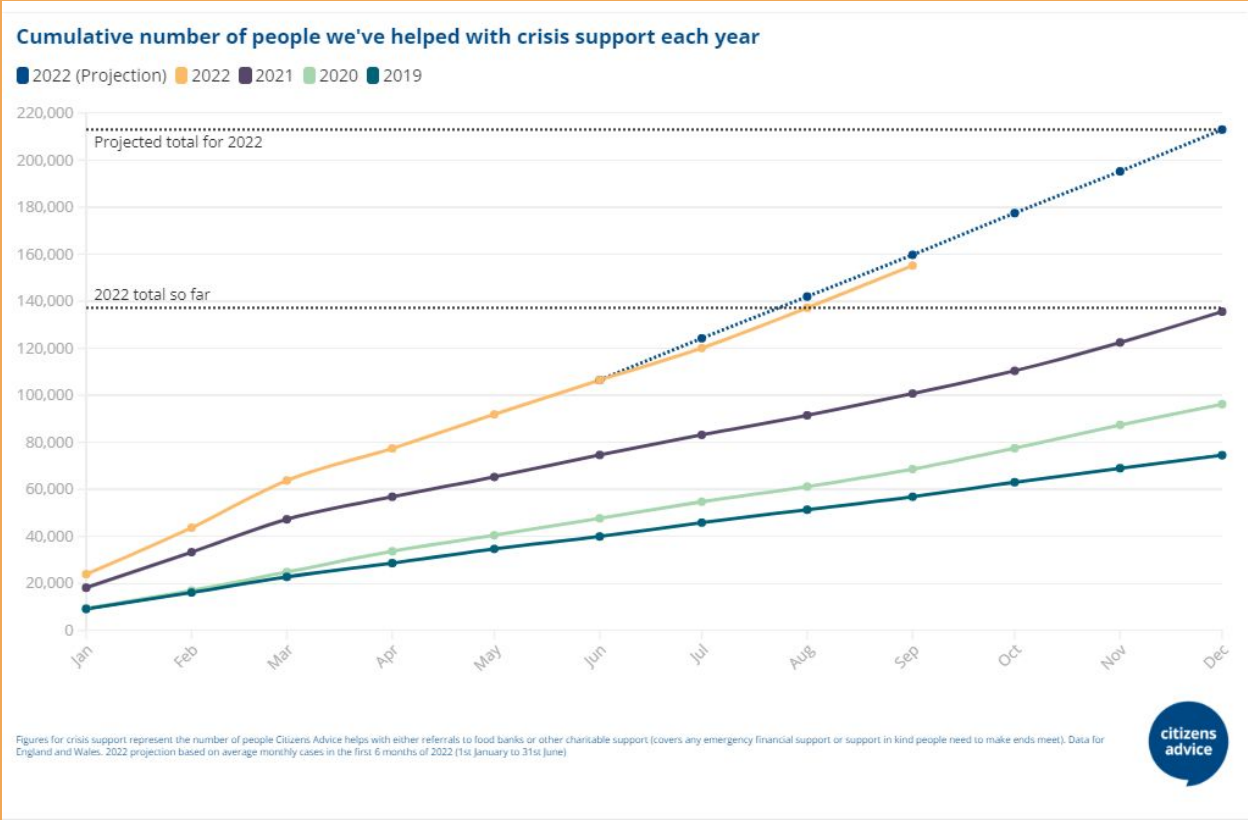
**Persistent
consumer issues**

**Some ideas for
solutions**

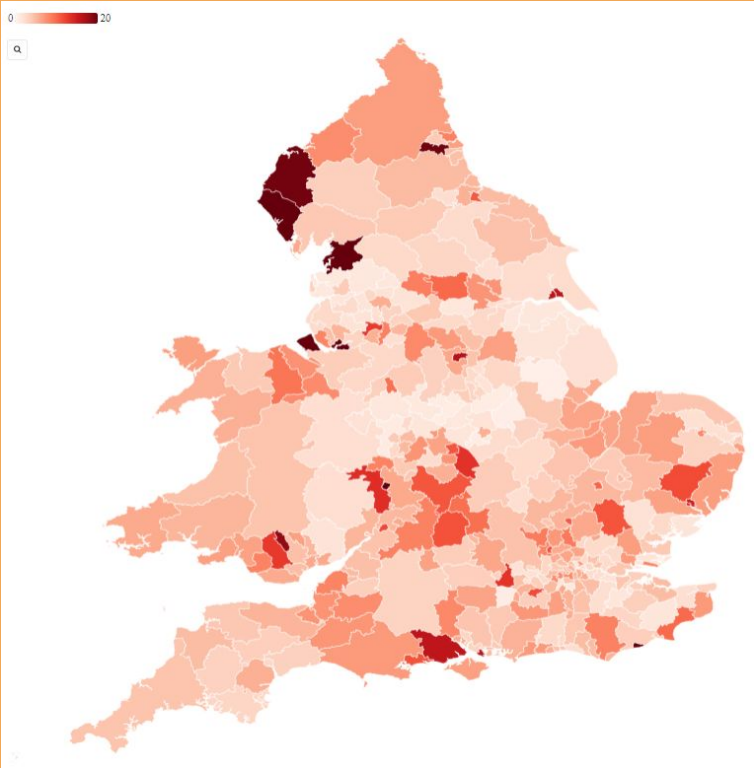
What we're seeing at the frontline



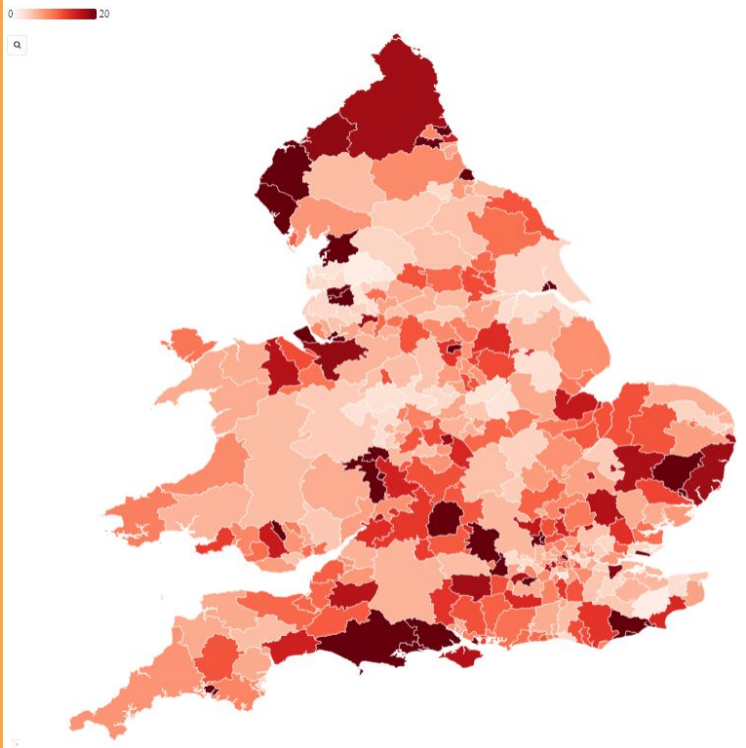
What we're seeing at the frontline



The impact is national - but already struggling areas are seeing the worst effects



2020-21 (Q2)

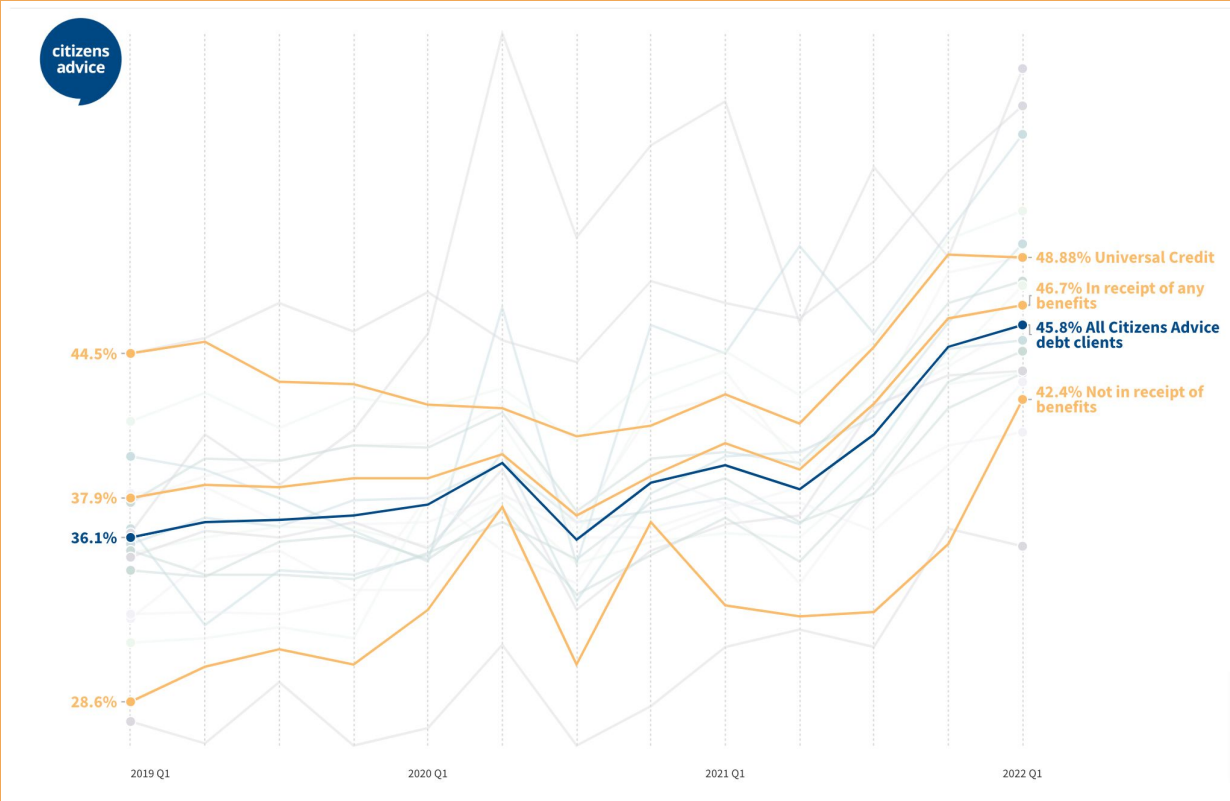


2021-22 (Q2)

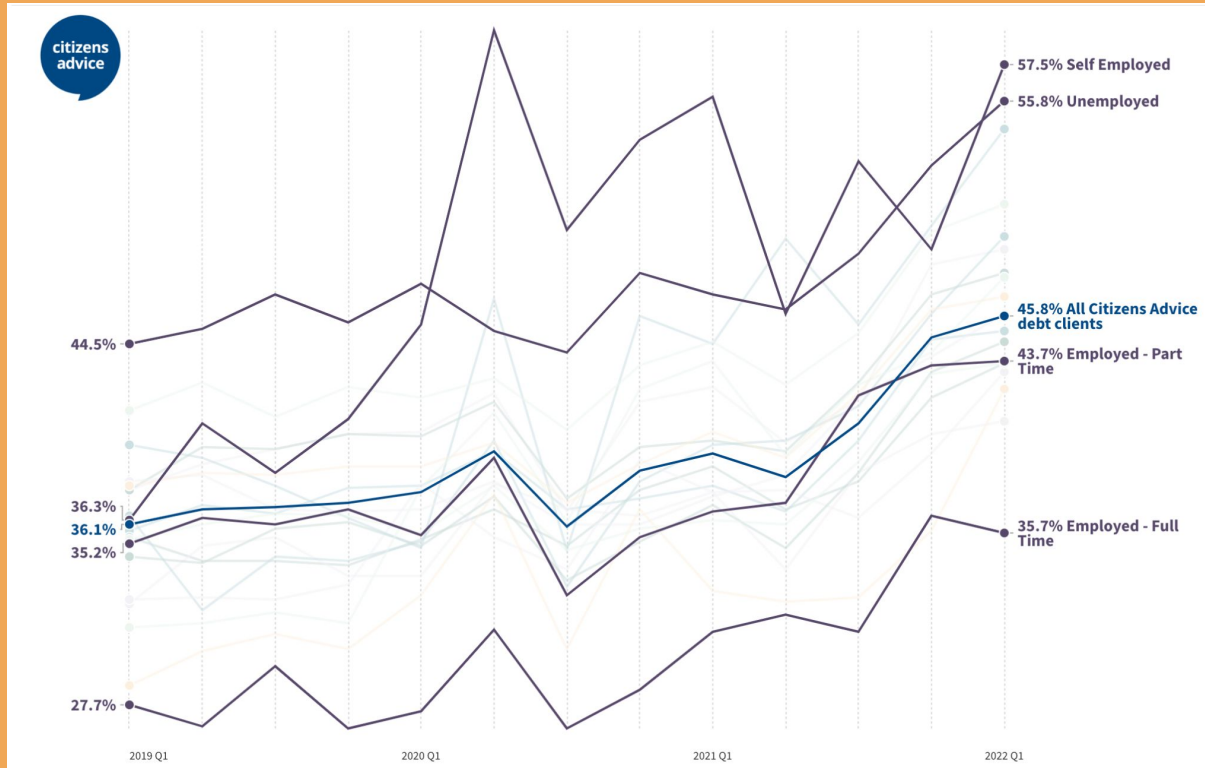
More people we help have a negative budget



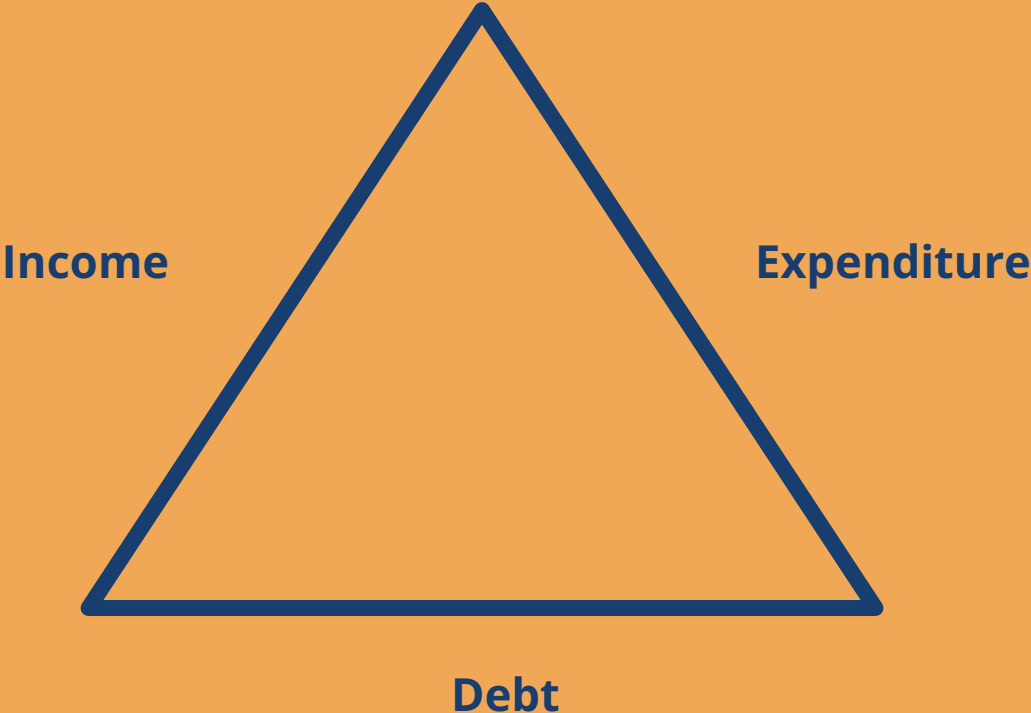
There has been a sharp rise across all groups



But some groups are seeing a bigger impact

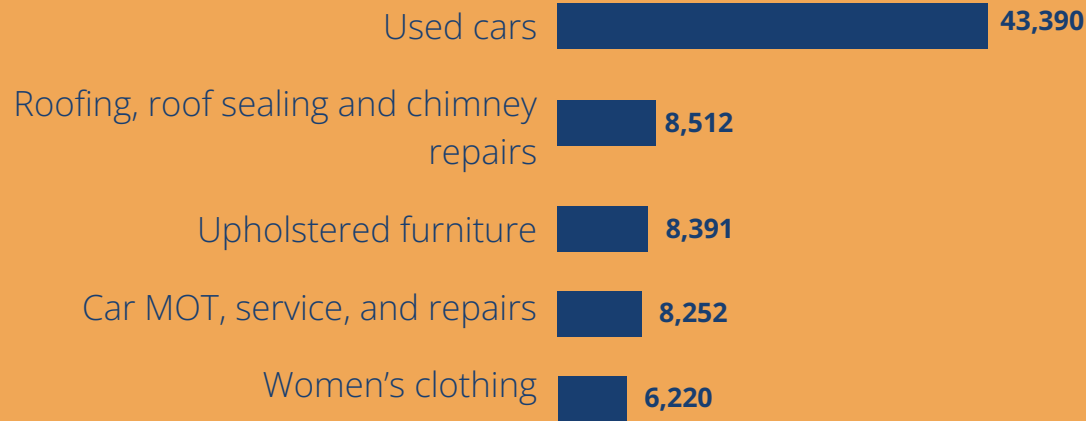


The 'cost of living triangle'



It's more important than ever to tackle consumer issues

Consumer service Top 5 most complained about general consumer goods or services in 2021/22



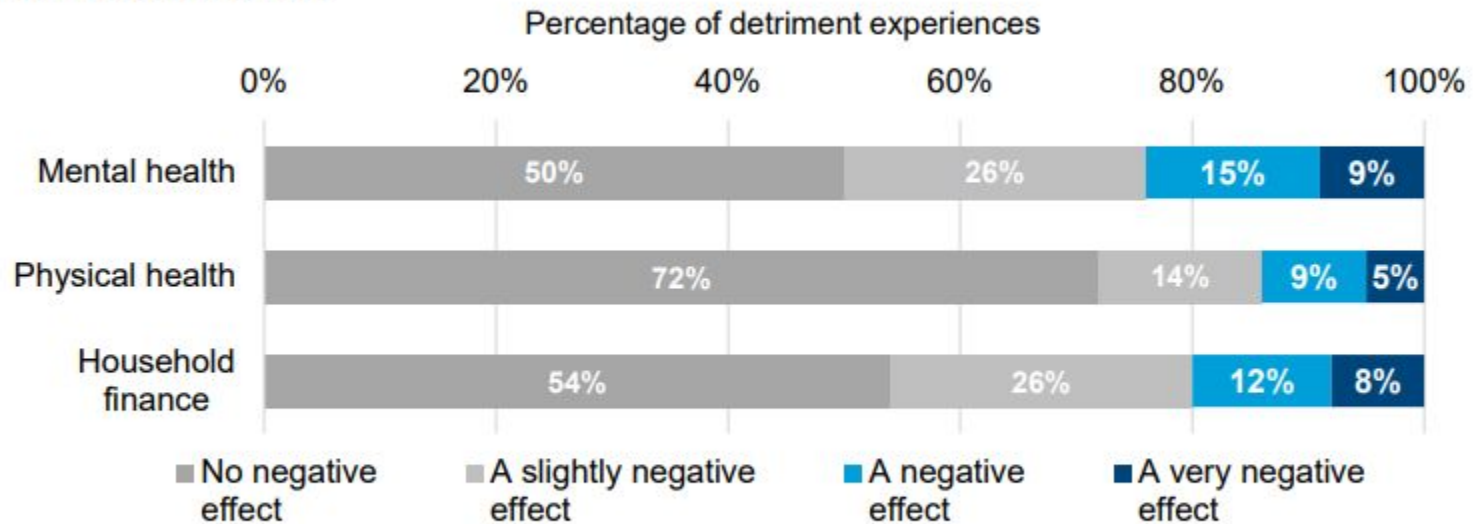
We know that these problems are costing the people we help money.

The consumer services helps people save on average:

- **£2,870** for used car issues
- **£1,159** for MOT services and repairs
- **£1,845** for home maintenance

It's not just about financial impact

Figure 17 – Negative impact of the detriment experiences on consumers' health and household finances

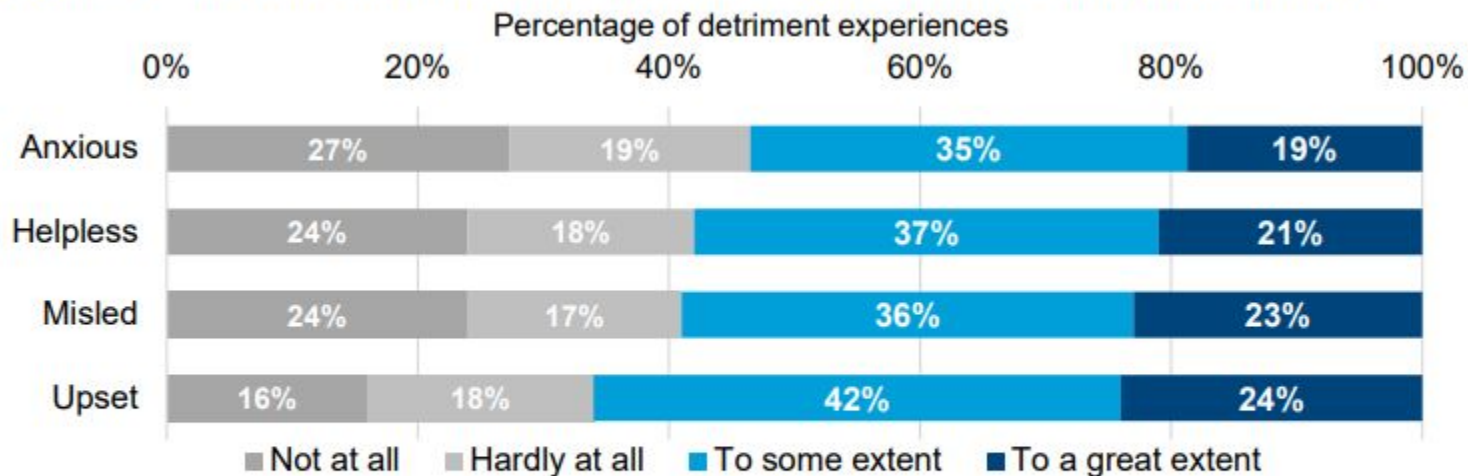


Base: All detriment experiences in the UK in the 12 months to April 2021.

Unweighted: 9,416 (Mental health 9,395; Physical health 9,389; Household's finances 9,392).

Impact on health (and trust?)

Figure 16 – Negative impact of the detriment experiences on consumers' feelings



Base: All detriment experiences in the UK in the 12 months to April 2021.

Unweighted: 9,416 (Anxious 9,382; Helpless 9,390; Misled 9,374; Upset 9,375).

Our consumer cost of living policy at CitA

Two broad principles:

1. Urgent need to address poor practices which drive up prices
2. Maintain affordable access to essential services

Our consumer cost of living policy at CitA

1. Addressing poor practices

Overcharging consumers in a cost-of-living crisis
The loyalty penalty:
4 years on

August 2022
Aiden Greenall
Emer Sheehy



Mid-contract price rises → Tightening the squeeze on consumers

September 22

 ▼ Top

[Home](#) > [Business and industry](#) > [Business regulation](#) > [Competition](#)

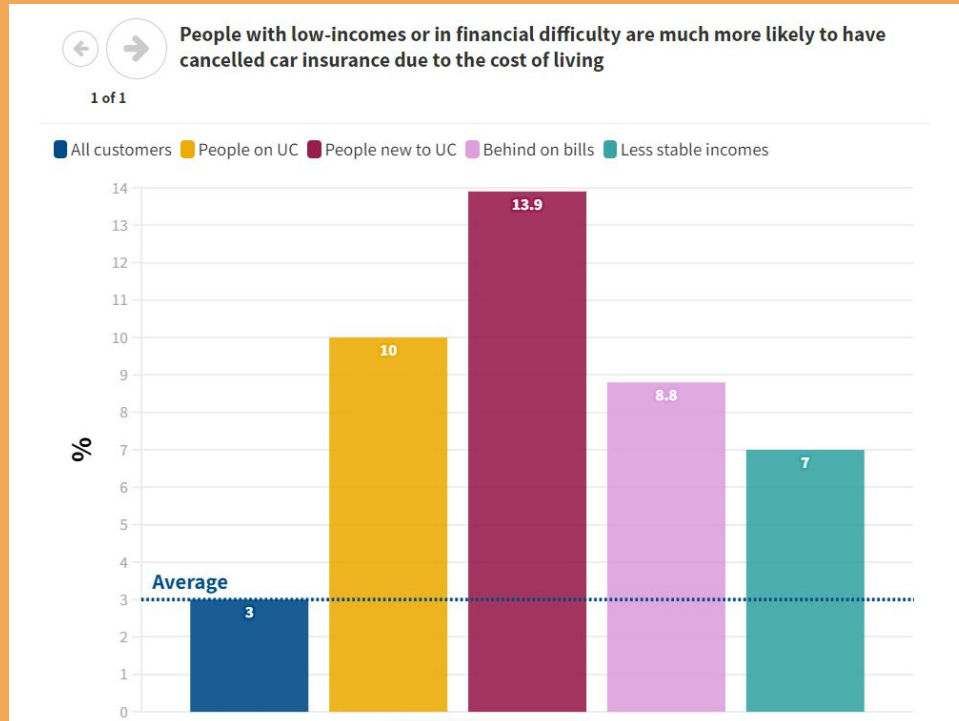
Press release

New rules to protect consumers' hard-earned cash

Reforms to shield the public from rip-offs and boost competition.

Our consumer cost of living policy at CitA

2. Affordable access to essential services



Thank you

Dave Mendes da Costa

david.mendesdacosta@citizensadvice.org.uk



AOB

The logo for Citizens Advice, featuring the text "citizens advice" in a dark blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The text is centered within a white speech bubble shape that has a small tail pointing downwards and to the left.

**citizens
advice**

AOB

- Date of next meeting Tuesday 31st January 2023

Thank you

The logo for Citizens Advice, featuring the text "citizens advice" in a dark blue, sans-serif font inside a white speech bubble shape with a small tail pointing downwards and to the left.

**citizens
advice**