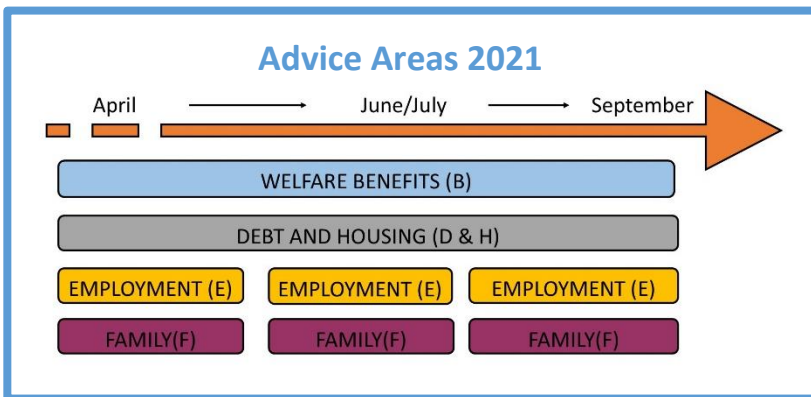


**Introduction**

You are receiving this update because we wanted to bring awareness of specific advice areas that are relevant and emerging throughout Bromley and specific local wards. This document is a summary of quantitative statistics with qualitative comment demonstrating current emerging issues in this phase of the pandemic. In this edition we will focus on **Employment**. We are providing this as an aid to enable focused decisions to be made in areas of need, both geographically and socially.

**1. Advice Areas**

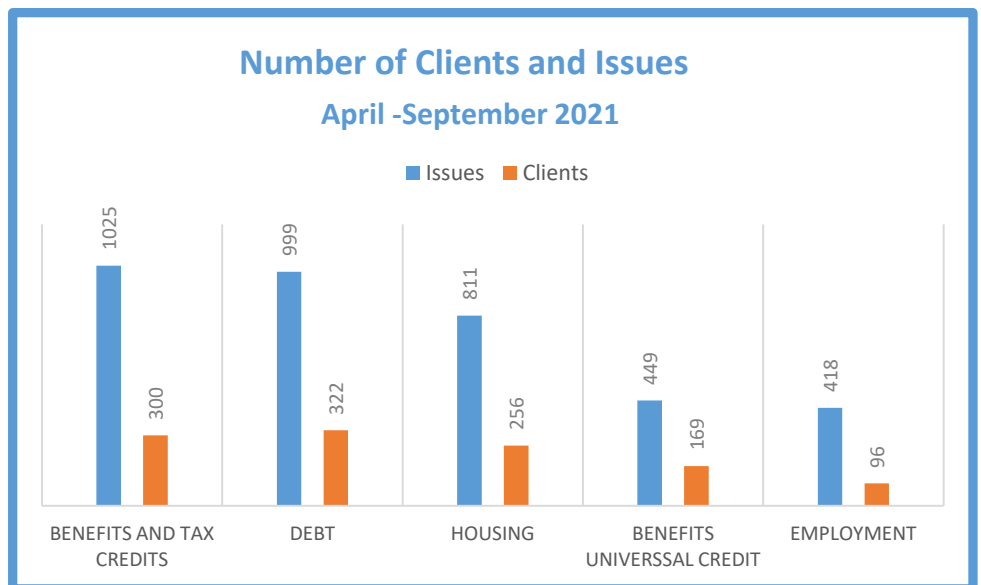


April 2021 onwards has continued showing a need for Employment Advice as clients balance often a mixed model of working from home and in the office. Furlough came to an end in September however this brought many challenges. Issues such as getting furlough pay and the correct amount, time off to care for someone, self-employment (income support scheme), Covid-19 and working safely as well as rights (discrimination) and searching for employment whilst in the middle of a pandemic. We continue to see Welfare

Benefits, namely Universal Credit, as our top enquiry area followed by Debt (Council Tax and rent arrears are highlighted) and Housing (specifically disrepair issues) in equal measure. Lastly, family enquiries around separation and divorce including domestic violence and legal advice effected by the above major stressors on couple’s relationships has underpinned many of the above issues as clients.

**2. Key Statistics 01.04.2021 - 30.09.2021**

Table 1.0 opposite shows key demographic data comparing clients to numbers of associated issues in the top 5 advice areas. Benefits/Tax credits (1025) and Debt (999) are both now consistently high, followed closely by housing enquiries (811) (a sharp increase). Employment (418) with 96 clients would appear the lowest for advice. Reasons include redundancies (preparation for HR meetings) during Covid 19 and rights, contractual (changes, lack of contract), hours reduction/increase and effect on benefits, disciplinary and sickness reviews.



\*Note this table does not show all advice and areas given

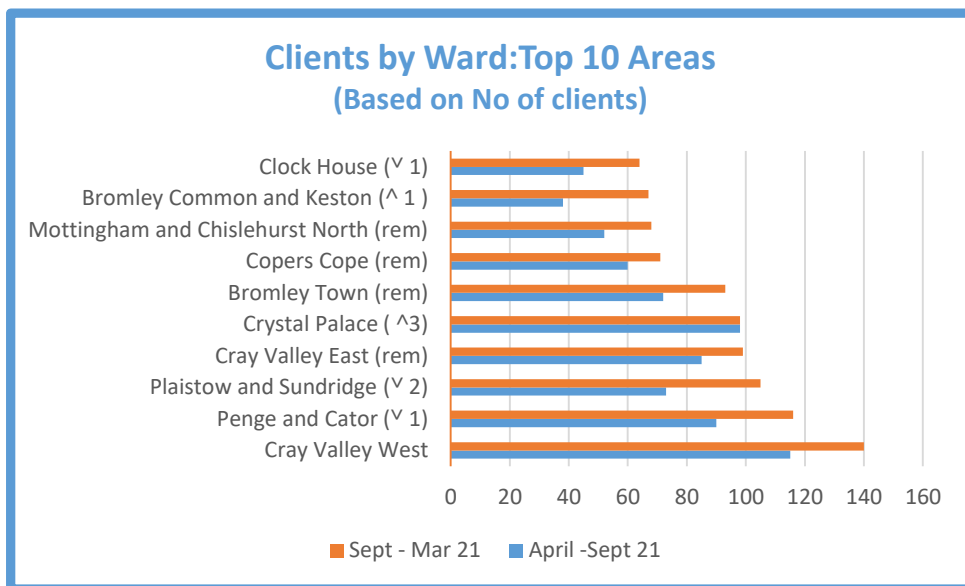
**3. Case Study**

The client was referred to Citizens Advice Bromley’s Employment team due to being selected for redundancy while on maternity leave. The client was very worried as the maternity leave had only just started and they had a new baby. The employer had stated that she would have to be interviewed for suitable alternative employment. We were able to share employment law with the client that if a woman is made redundant during their maternity leave, regulation 10 of the Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999 states that a woman on maternity leave must be offered a suitable alternative vacancy, if one exists, as soon as her post is at risk of redundancy. We

empowered the client to use this advice and the knowledge that she was correct in law to insist she did not need to be interviewed and go through a selection procedure. Before the second consultation meeting set by the employer, the client emailed the employer to ask if their insistence on an interview process still pertained, which she was informed it did not. The outcome was the client was offered the role without any further discussion or requirements which had a positive noticeable effect on the client and the family's well-being.

#### 4. Local Impact in Bromley by Ward 01.04.2021 - 30.09.2021

Table 2.0 opposite identifies Clients by ward, Cray Valley West remaining the highest and Crystal Palace moved to second highest client's numbers. However, this is in relation to less clients receiving advice support overall. Specific areas that have seen decreased clients are Penge and Cator (33), Bromley Common and Keston (29) and Bromley Town (21) to name a few. In response to this we have re-opened all of our Outreach services and are now running a hybrid model of Advice both via booked appointments and telephone advice.



#### 5. Outcomes (Bromley Office)

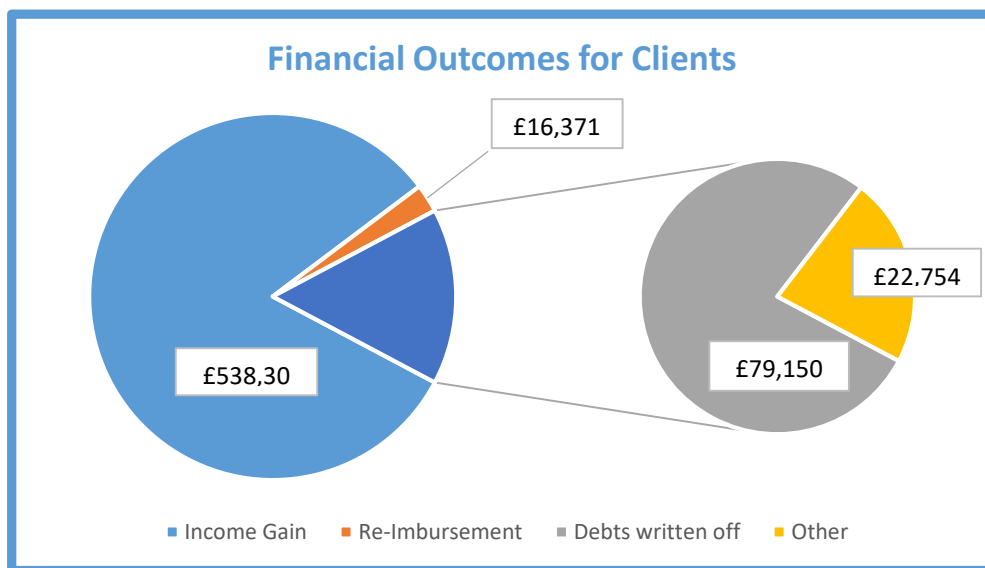


Table 3.0 opposite shows the financial outcomes recorded for the period 01.04.2021 - 30.09.2021 inclusive.

This data is reflective of a mixture of specific outcomes including but not limited to Income Gain, Re-Imbursement, Debts written off and other miscellaneous financial outcomes. The total financial outcomes for clients in this period was £656,579.00.

#### 6. Contact Citizens Advice Bromley

If you have any questions about the information above or maybe have a certain area that you are passionate about (Welfare Benefits, Housing, Employment, Family or Debt) then please reach out to us.

Furthermore, if you simply want to find out more about what we provide at Citizens Advice Bromley either in central Bromley or within our outreaches in St Pauls Cray, Orpington or Anerley we always welcome contact from Local Authority leaders, MP's and Councillors and can if necessary arrange a visit to see a session in progress.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch at: [researchandcampaigns@citizensadvicebromley.org.uk](mailto:researchandcampaigns@citizensadvicebromley.org.uk)