



Ministry  
of Justice

# Sector Sustainability Grant

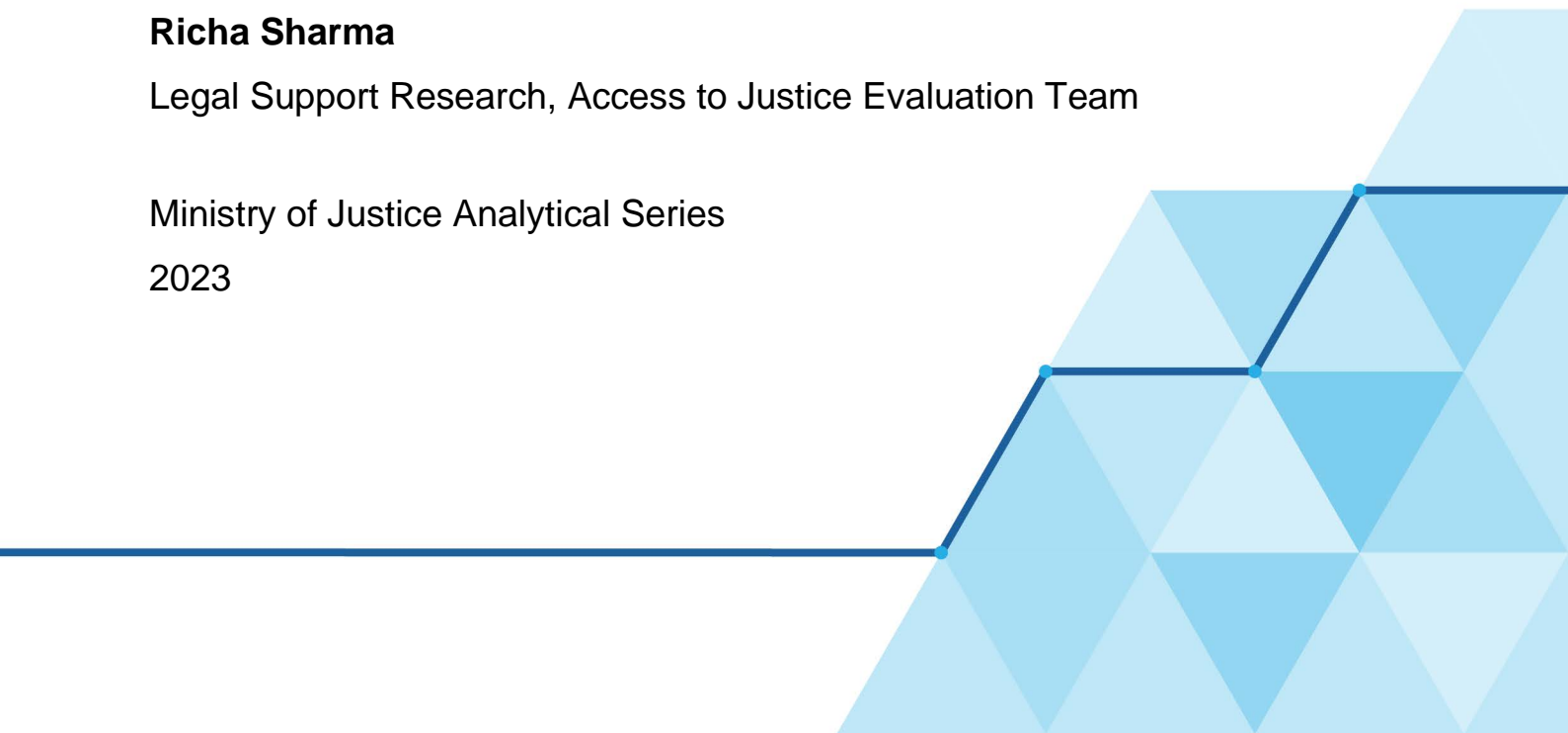
**End of Grant Report**  
**April 2023**

**Richa Sharma**

Legal Support Research, Access to Justice Evaluation Team

Ministry of Justice Analytical Series

2023



Data and Analysis exists to improve policy making, decision taking and practice by the Ministry of Justice. It does this by providing robust, timely and relevant data and advice drawn from research and analysis undertaken by the department's analysts and by the wider research community.

## Disclaimer

The views expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the Ministry of Justice (nor do they represent Government policy).

First published 2023



© Crown copyright 2023

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [researchsupport@justice.gov.uk](mailto:researchsupport@justice.gov.uk)

This publication is available for download at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/research-and-analysis/moj>

## **Acknowledgements**

The legal support policy and analytical teams at the Ministry of Justice would like to thank the 66 grant recipients who provided an extensive amount of data used in this report over a challenging delivery period while still maintaining services. We would also like to thank colleagues from the grant team at the Access to Justice Foundation who were pivotal to gathering the data used in this report by leading the day-to-day management and administration of individual grants, alongside the data collection process.

# Contents

## List of tables

## List of figures

<b>1. Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Grant context	1
1.2 Summary of findings	2
<b>2. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Distribution of Funding</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Funded Organisations	7
3.2 Grant Demand	10
3.3 Grant Expenditure	12
<b>4. Outcome 1: Sustaining advice services to address the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Volume of Cases Supported by Grant Recipients	15
4.2 Cases Supported by Grant Recipients disaggregated by Areas of Law	19
4.3 Impact on grant recipients' organisational capacity	23
<b>5. Outcome 2: Increasing access to justice through strategic innovation</b>	<b>25</b>
5.1 Delivery Methods	25
5.2 Website Visits	30
5.3 Technology	32
<b>6. Outcome 3: Ensuring widespread access to justice by awarding grants to improve access to advice for those who could not otherwise access it</b>	<b>34</b>
6.1 Client Demographics and Characteristics	34
6.2 Innovating to provide services in remote areas	37
<b>7. Feedback from grant recipients on grant process and delivery</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>8. Conclusion</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>9. References</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>48</b>
Methodology	48

<b>Appendix 2</b>	<b>50</b>
Grant Recipients and Grant Value	50
<b>Appendix 3</b>	<b>53</b>
Distribution of issues supported across areas of law	53
<b>Appendix 4</b>	<b>54</b>
Topic Guide for grant recipients' interviews	54
<b>Appendix 5</b>	<b>57</b>
Grant Recipients Survey Questionnaire	57

## List of tables

Table 1: Distribution of grant value across grant recipients	11
Table 2: Aggregate spend profile across all 66 grant recipients by funded activities	12
Table 3: Number of Delivery Methods Used by grant recipients	26
Table 4: Reporting Schedule	49

## List of figures

Figure 1: Region in England and Wales supported by grant recipients	9
Figure 2: Ratio of grant value organisations applied for versus grant value received	11
Figure 3: Monthly distribution of total cases supported by grant recipients across all areas of law	17
Figure 4: Total number of cases supported by grant recipients across all areas of law	20
Figure 5: Areas of law with highest number of cases supported by grant recipients monthly during grant reporting period (April 2021-March 2022)	21
Figure 6: Number of grant recipients using each delivery method	27
Figure 7: Monthly Distribution of Website Visits from April 2021 to March 2022 (31 grant recipients)	31

# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1 Grant context

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) provided £5.4m to not-for-profit providers of specialist legal advice, through the COVID-19 Specialist Advice Services Scheme (CSASS) grant. The CSASS grant was disseminated through the Community Justice Fund (CJF): a pooled fund with other independent funders. The grant helped organisations prevent closure and remain operational. The detailed impact of the CSASS grant was captured in the end of grant report (Heppell & Sharma, 2021).<sup>1</sup> While the CSASS grant funding period ended in March 2021, the not-for-profit legal advice sector continued to experience the negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, in August 2021, the MoJ contributed an additional £2m of funding to Wave Two of the CJF. This funding was called the Sector Sustainability Grant (SSG) and was used to support 66 not-for-profit legal advice organisations in England and Wales for the financial year 2021-22.

It was expected that the funding would enable grant recipients to:

1. Sustain advice services to address the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. Increase access to justice through strategic innovation; and
3. Ensure widespread access to justice by awarding grants to improve access to advice for people who could not otherwise access it (including vulnerable individuals who were unable to access online support).

As part of the grant conditions, grant recipients were required to report on how they used the funds, as well as track the level of provision they were able to deliver. The data collected for this report comprises monitoring data collected during and after the grant

---

<sup>1</sup> The end of CSASS grant report can be read here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specialist-advice-service-scheme-end-of-grant-report>

funding ended, semi-structured interviews with a sample of seven grant recipients, and the CSASS final report to compare sectoral trends.

## 1.2 Summary of findings

- **In general, the grant was largely successful in meeting its aims, particularly around ensuring that grant recipients remained operational, and where required, could adjust their capacity and delivery methods.** The average size of the grants made via the SSG was approximately £44,815. Staff costs formed the largest expenditure item on which around 80% of funds were spent, indicating that the grant was primarily used by grant recipients to remain operational and continue providing specialist services. Grant recipients also reported expenditure on payment of bills, IT, and other miscellaneous expenses such as specialist staff trainings.
- **Feedback from grant recipients regarding the impact of the SSG was positive and attested to the ‘vital’ nature of the fund.** Grant recipients seemed to have used the grant funding in a responsible manner to ensure the continuity of quality advice, increase capacity to meet the increased number of cases/clients, and introduce innovative methods and technology for advice provision.
- **After the receipt of funding from the SSG in August 2021, the number of cases supported by grant recipients initially increased.** After a decrease between September and December 2021, there was then an increase in cases supported from December 2021 until the end of the funding period in March 2022. Between April 2021 and March 2022, the 66 grant recipients reported providing support to over 200,000 client cases across all areas of law (excluding ‘other’). Increased support spanned most areas of civil law, particularly in areas of social welfare. Grant recipients interviewed noted that they had felt an increase in demand for support compared to pre COVID-19 pandemic levels and had to adapt their capacity and delivery methods to meet this demand.



- **Website traffic consistently increased between April 2021 and September 2021 after which there was a declining trend.** The highest number of website visits recorded by a subsample of 31 grant recipients was in September 2021.
- **In the SSG funding period from August 2021 to March 2022, face-to-face service delivery of services had recommenced, while remote delivery methods, such as telephone and email, remained popular as well.** Grant recipients shared that the easing of social restrictions and the need to serve more vulnerable clients and those who were unable to access IT were key reasons for resuming face-to-face delivery of services. A few grant recipients also reported new methods of service delivery such as technology hub/community access points to clients who may be in geographically isolated areas or unable to access IT in their homes.
- **In general, the evaluation of the SSG (and CSASS) have illustrated that flexible grants are valuable for grant recipients as they showcase a level of trust from funders and allow grant recipients to best meet client needs across the range of specialisms, locations, and sizes of grant recipients.** Grant recipients however expressed that multi-year grants would be more helpful in meeting these aims as they would allow organisations to plan ahead strategically.
- **On the frontline, flexible funding enabled grant recipients to hire and keep experienced or specialist staff in order to provide specialist services in an unstable period.** This was a key outcome for the SSG given the backlog of client cases that arose due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The continued availability of specialist advice as a result of SSG funding – the right help at the earliest point possible – supported resolution and avoided unnecessary escalation of client problems.

## 2. Introduction

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) provided £5.4m to not-for-profit providers of specialist legal advice, through the COVID-19 Specialist Advice Services Scheme (CSASS) grant. Of the total amount, £3m was distributed to law centres via the Law Centres Network (LCN) and £2.4m went into a pooled fund called the Community Justice Fund (CJF) to support 72 specialist legal advice organisations across England and Wales. The CSASS grant helped organisations prevent closure and remain operational to provide specialist legal advice services following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the CSASS grant ended in March 2021, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continued to be felt by the not-for-profit legal advice sector, which was already operating under reduced income and capacity. The end of grant report<sup>2</sup> alongside a news story<sup>3</sup> was published on the GOV.UK showcasing the vital impact of the fund.

In order to continue supporting the sector, the MoJ renewed its investment into the CJF with an additional £2m in March 2021. This renewed investment, part of Wave Two of the CJF, was named the Sector Sustainability Grant (SSG) as it aimed to support organisations through the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, while enabling a longer-term vision of encouraging collaboration and innovation in the sector. By contributing to the pooled fund, the SSG supported a greater number of organisations and grants than would otherwise be possible, maximising the impact of monies available. Working with independent funders, the combined grants enabled non-SSG monies to be spent after March 2022, providing grant recipients with flexibility to progress towards their long-term outcomes. This grant therefore aimed to create a network where organisations could draw on each other in the future, beyond the funding period.

66 organisations were funded through the SSG in Wave Two of CJF. 30 of these were also funded in Wave One through the CSASS. All organisations applied for the SSG

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specialist-advice-service-scheme-end-of-grant-report>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/responding-to-the-rapid-rise-in-demand-for-free-legal-advice>

through a common CJF portal and were selected through an application process managed by the Access to Justice Foundation (ATJF) on behalf of the MoJ.

The key driver for the SSG was that the legal advice sector plays a vital role in helping people when they are at a difficult point in their lives. People with legal problems may be stressed, unable to think rationally, and at a crisis point. Evidence has consistently highlighted that, individuals may have their anxiety and distress exacerbated if they do not have a person to talk to, regardless of their legal capability (Pleasance, et al., 2011) (Franklyn, Budd, Verrill, & Willoughby, 2017). Factors such as stress, anxiety, and distress can make it harder for individuals to engage with a website or virtual support, and instead they might be better supported through a face-to-face visit for legal advice. Therefore, this funding was important to ensure face-to-face delivery continued to be available, where restrictions allowed, for those individuals who needed it most.

The aims of the SSG were threefold. It was expected that the funding would enable grant recipients to:

1. Sustain advice services to address the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. Increase access to justice through strategic innovation; and
3. Ensure widespread access to justice by awarding grants to improve access to advice for people who could not otherwise access it (including vulnerable individuals who were unable to access online support).

More broadly, the CJF aims to encourage collaboration and innovation between legal advice sector organisations helping to create a network where organisations can draw on each other in the longer-term. This aims to benefit both grant recipients, as a result of reporting consistent data across funding streams saving time and resource, and funders such as the MoJ, supporting them to work together to explore opportunities to demonstrate the value of funding and early legal advice more broadly.

This end of grant evaluation report is based on **monitoring data collected between April 2021 and March 2022**. The SSG funding was released during this period, in August 2021. In order to inform policy development and gauge the state of the sector over a fuller time period the analysis includes data from April 2021 to July 2021, although organisations

were not being funded by the SSG at this time. This report also refers to analysis in the CSASS end of grant report to frame the results and connect themes, although it is important to note that CSASS and SSG were separate data collection exercises covering a different spread of organisations.

The data in this report is presented in aggregate format and may therefore mask variation between individual grant recipients.

## 3. Distribution of Funding

This section of the report details how the SSG was distributed among the 66 grant recipients, including an analysis on the number of organisations that received funding, locations of where the organisations provided support, grant demand, and expenditure.

### 3.1 Funded Organisations

#### Number of organisations that received funding

##### Key Points

- A total of 66 organisations received grants.
- Although this number represents a small proportion of the total number of organisations providing legal advice in England and Wales,<sup>4</sup> it represents a significant financial investment that helped the sector at a critical time.

A total of 66 organisations received funds distributed via the ATJF through the CJF. A full list of the organisations funded, along with the value of the grants they received, is provided in Appendix table 1. CJF Wave Two was an invitation-only grants round for CJF Wave One grant recipients, due to the limited funds available. With a limited fund, it was necessary to prioritise organisations most in need of support to sustain their specialist services. Unsuccessful applications were largely declined due to their perceived ability to survive the coming year, rather than a reflection of their service delivery or impact.

Collectively, the 66 funded organisations represent a small proportion of the total number of not-for-profit specialist legal advice providers in England and Wales. However, based on anecdotal and expenditure data from grant recipients, the funds were a valuable injection to help the sector cater to the legal needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of which was maximised by contributing to the CJF: a pooled fund that was able to

---

<sup>4</sup> The Access to Justice Foundation identified 432 registered charities in their Specialist Legal Advice Funding Report that were providing specialist legal advice in England and Wales in 2019-2020, accessible at <https://atjf.org.uk/specialist-legal-advice-funding-report>.

support 179 specialist advice organisations throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland with £11.59m in grants from March 2020 (Community Justice Fund, 2021).

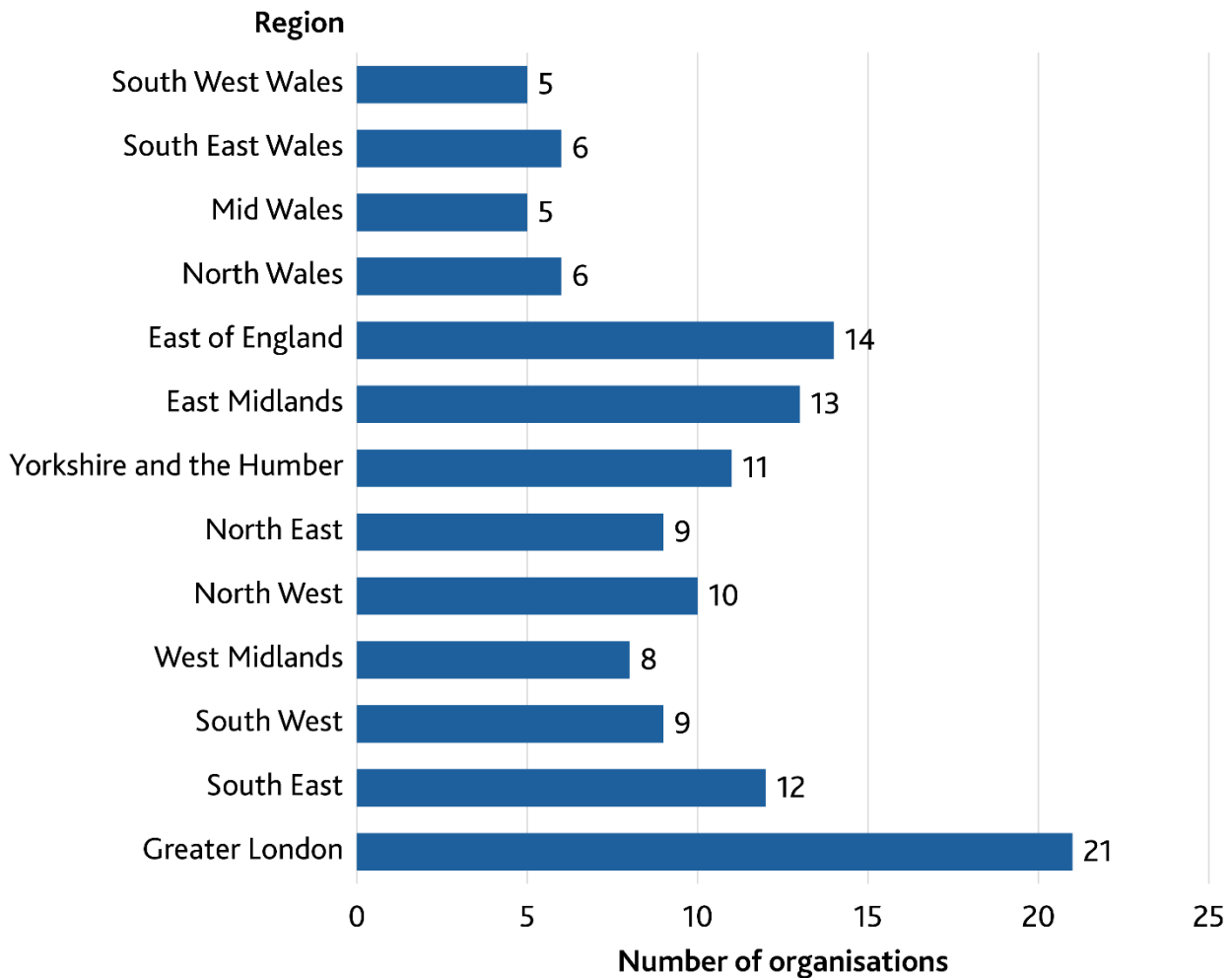
## Locations of organisations

### Key Points

- There was a national spread of support, with grant recipients working in all regions of England and Wales. Out of the 66 organisations funded, 21 (32%) organisations operated in the Greater London area.

Monitoring data provided information on the regions where organisations provided support across England and Wales.

**Figure 1: Region in England and Wales supported by grant recipients**



**Note:** Grant recipients may be national charities and therefore may be providing support across the UK, including providing support in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The SSG funding was however used to provide support in England and Wales only.

Figure 1 shows a national spread of all regions in England and Wales that were supported via the fund. Out of the 66 organisations funded, 21 (32%) organisations operated in the Greater London area. The next most represented regions were East of England; 14 organisations (21%), East Midlands; 13 organisations (20%) and South East England; 12 organisations (18%).

Understanding which areas in England and Wales had the highest need for specialist legal advice was complicated due to the fragmented nature of the advice sector and challenges with capturing consistent client data. As a result, it was not possible to tell whether the

distribution of funded services matched the overall patterns of need, as reporting could only allow for data gathering on the supply of services, that is, those areas of specifically funded specialist provision. However, the flexibility of the grants allowed organisations to be responsive to local demand (within the limitations of their specialist expertise). Thus, while patterns of legal need could not be identified, the data reflected existing demand within the areas of law that the grant recipients specialised in.

## 3.2 Grant Demand

### Average grant size

#### Key Points

- Most grant recipients received funding in line with their submitted bids.
- The median grant size was £48,250 and the average grant size was £44,815.

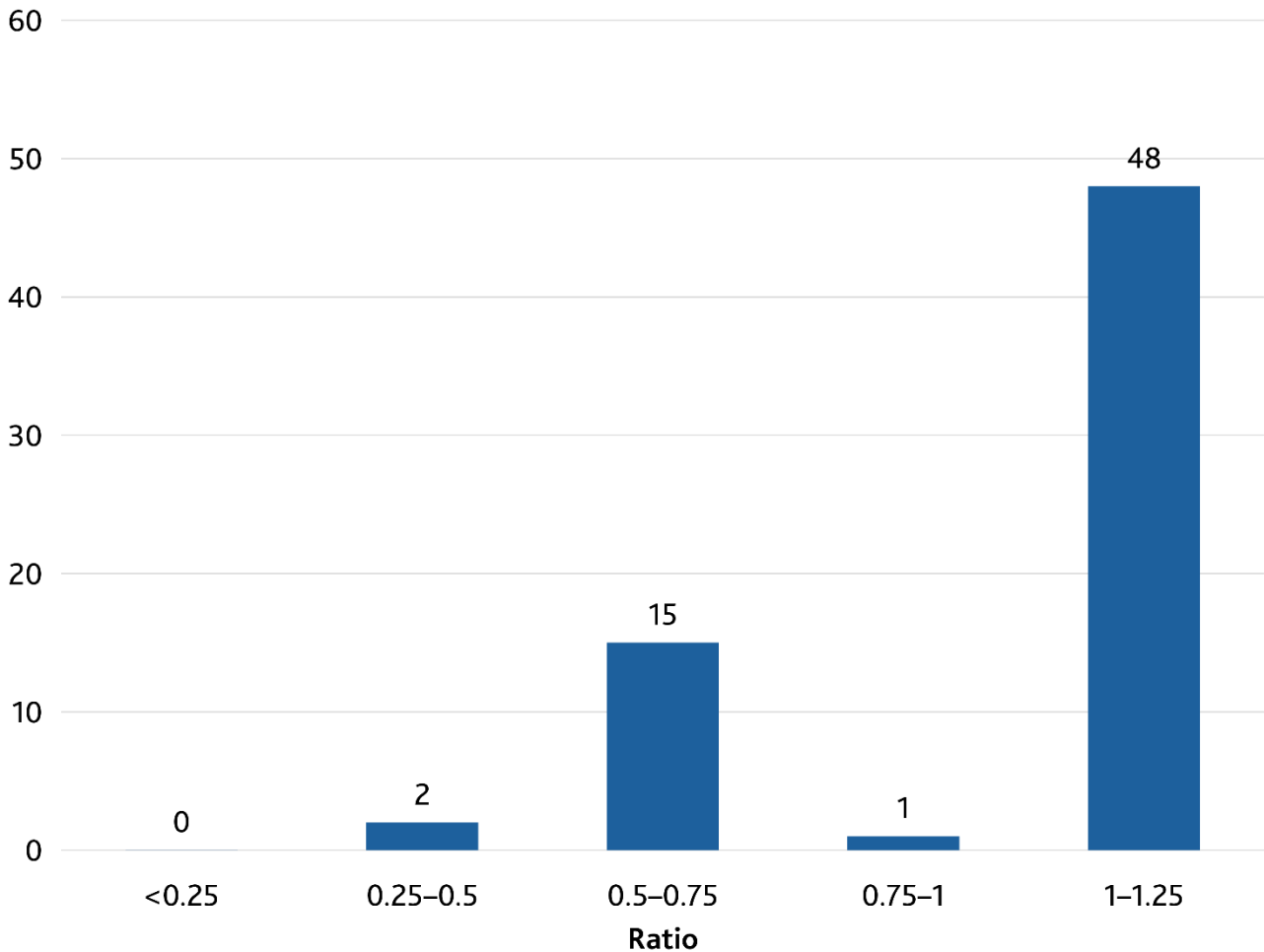
Organisations submitted applications for the funds they felt were needed. Given the learning experience from the CSASS grant, the collective expertise and sector knowledge of independent funders and the CJF Steering Group of sector stakeholders, this enabled a fair and thorough assessment of eligibility, need for prioritisation, and financial situation. This data is presented in Figure 2 as a ratio of the grant value organisations applied for versus the grant value received.

**Note: The grant value awarded comprises the total value of the grant awarded to an organisation under the CJF by all funders including the MoJ.**



**Figure 2: Ratio of grant value organisations applied for versus grant value received**

Number of organisations



The majority of organisations received close to the amount requested, with 49 of the 66 organisations being awarded within  $\pm 25\%$  (ratios 0.75 – 1.25) of their request. 15 organisations (23%) received between 50%-75% of the amount they had requested (depicted by ratio 0.5-0.75), while only 2 organisations (3%) received half or less than half the amount they had requested (depicted by ratio 0.25 – 0.5).

Table 1 displays the distribution of grant value across grant recipients.

**Table 1: Distribution of grant value across grant recipients**

	Minimum	Median	Maximum	Mean
Grant Value (£)	10,000	48,250	70,000	44,815

The smallest grant awarded was £10,000 and the largest was £70,000. The median amount organisations received was £48,250, while the average (mean) grant value was £44,815.

### 3.3 Grant Expenditure

#### Key Points

- Grant recipients spent the majority (~80%) of funds on staff costs including wages, training, and recruitment, and 12% on other organisational running costs.
- To a lesser degree, grant recipients reported expenditure on payment of bills, IT, and other miscellaneous expenses such as specialist staff trainings.

All funds were disseminated by October 2021 and expenditure was accounted for. Through the SSG, the MoJ contributed a total of £1,950,000 to the CJF, which was distributed to 66 front line organisations. This excludes administration costs of £50,000 collected by the ATJF, as the grant administrator. During the funding period of August 2021 to March 2022, grant recipients spent all the grant funding allocated to them individually.

Grant recipients reported monthly expenditure for the reporting period of August 2021 to March 2022. Table 2 displays the aggregate spend profile across all 66 organisations by key funded activities.

**Table 2: Aggregate spend profile across all 66 grant recipients by funded activities**

Funded Activities	Total per activity (£)	Proportion of grant spent (%)
Staff Costs	1,543,198	79%
Office and other organisational running costs	229,527	12%
Purchasing or upgrading I.T. and communications equipment	84,238	4%
Staff training of new equipment and software	3,240	<1%
Hiring staff to increase capacity	49,631	3%
Expansion of services offered	8,250	<1%
Extension of geographic reach of services	3,919	<1%
Other Expenditure	27,999	1%

The majority of the grant (79%) was utilised by grant recipients to cover existing staff costs which included spending on wages, removing staff from the furlough scheme, hiring new staff, and translation or interpreting services. This expenditure pattern demonstrates that the grant was successful in its aim of sustaining advice services to address the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This was further attested to by grant recipients:

“I want to reiterate how vital this finding is for us. In recent years, more than a quarter of our funding has come from housing legal aid which remains very hard to come by at present as the number of eligible cases coming to court remains quite low. At the same time, from meetings with the Homeless Strategic Group of the local council, DWP, housing associations etc, I have gathered that issues with welfare, benefits, debt and eventually housing will increase over the winter. Therefore, without this funding, it is hard to see how we would have kept going and have a service on the road, ready to respond, as we do today.”

12% of the grant was spent by organisations on organisational running costs, which included spend across three subcategories: (i) *office costs* such as repair / replacement of defective equipment; purchase / installation of equipment for social distancing; PPE; office supplies; (ii) *other running costs* such as paying rent; payment of utilities and other bills; repairs to premises; and (ii) *remote/home working office equipment* such as such as office chairs, desks, and other office supplies.

Organisations spent only 4% of the grant on purchasing or upgrading I.T. and communications equipment such as laptops, smartphones, mobile phones, desk phones, monitors, and printers. It had been noted in the CSASS grant report<sup>5</sup> that this category could involve high expenditure, which was not the case for SSG. During interviews, grant recipients shared that they had upgraded I.T. equipment during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic period when organisations had to switch to remote working in 2020-2021, and that they had utilised other grants where there were conditions around I.T. spending to spend on new equipment:

---

<sup>5</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1039750/csass-grant-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1039750/csass-grant-report.pdf)

“When the pandemic hit, we already had Microsoft Teams licencing, so we didn’t have to spend money on software, but more on getting physical equipment like laptops for which we used other funding... We thought this fund was best used for staff retention...”

As in the case of the CSASS grant, grant recipients of the SSG also noted that the flexibility of the grant allowed for reallocation of other funds across the organisation, maximising impact in the context of reduced legal aid income and limitations of project specific funding:

“This funding is vital for us. We face some significant challenges, not just increases in client numbers, but also preparing for some significant recommissioning of services by funders for 2022/23 and planning a safe return to our new offices. It enables us to continue to provide all our services and spend the money where we have identified it is most needed.”

A relatively small proportion of spend was used to hire staff to increase capacity (3%) and on other expenditure (1%). Activities under ‘other expenditure’ funded by the grant included audit fees, membership subscription fees for the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC), translation and interpretation services, volunteer expenses, and professional specialised training for staff such as for a Solicitor’s Practising Certificate and qualifications for Immigration Advisers.

## 4. Outcome 1: Sustaining advice services to address the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

This section of the report assesses the activity levels among grant recipients to gain perspective on the usage and impact of the grant across different areas of law, the delivery methods used by grant recipients and the level of website traffic.

In order to understand the wider context that surrounds the trends observed in the data, several events have been highlighted e.g. the removal of social restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic in June 2021. This is to frame the data against the background of relevant societal changes occurring at the same time. However, note that the parallels drawn do not indicate direct causality.

### 4.1 Volume of Cases Supported by Grant Recipients

#### Key Points

- Grant recipients reported the highest levels of cases supported (19,315) in June 2021 which coincided with the removal of all social restrictions by the Government.
- Between April 2021 and March 2022, the 66 grant recipients reported providing support to 201,861 client cases across all areas of law (except 'other').
- There was an increase in cases supported from December 2021 until the end of the funding period in March 2022.
- Grant recipients interviewed noted that they had felt an increase in demand for support compared to pre COVID-19 pandemic levels and had to readapt their capacity and delivery methods to meet this demand.

A key metric the monitoring data looked to capture was the level of activity that grant recipients undertook during the reporting period (April 2021 to March 2022).

To that end, grant recipients were asked to report the number of clients or ‘cases’ that were supported in each of the eleven areas of civil law.<sup>6</sup> Grant recipients were advised that if a person attended an advice session and received support across multiple areas of law, they would be captured against each one. This had the advantage of simplifying how to classify someone who presented with multiple concurrent problems. For similar reasoning, the values reset between each monthly capture period, meaning that if the same individual reported in both June and July with the same issue, they would be measured in both months.

As a result of this approach, it should be noted that:

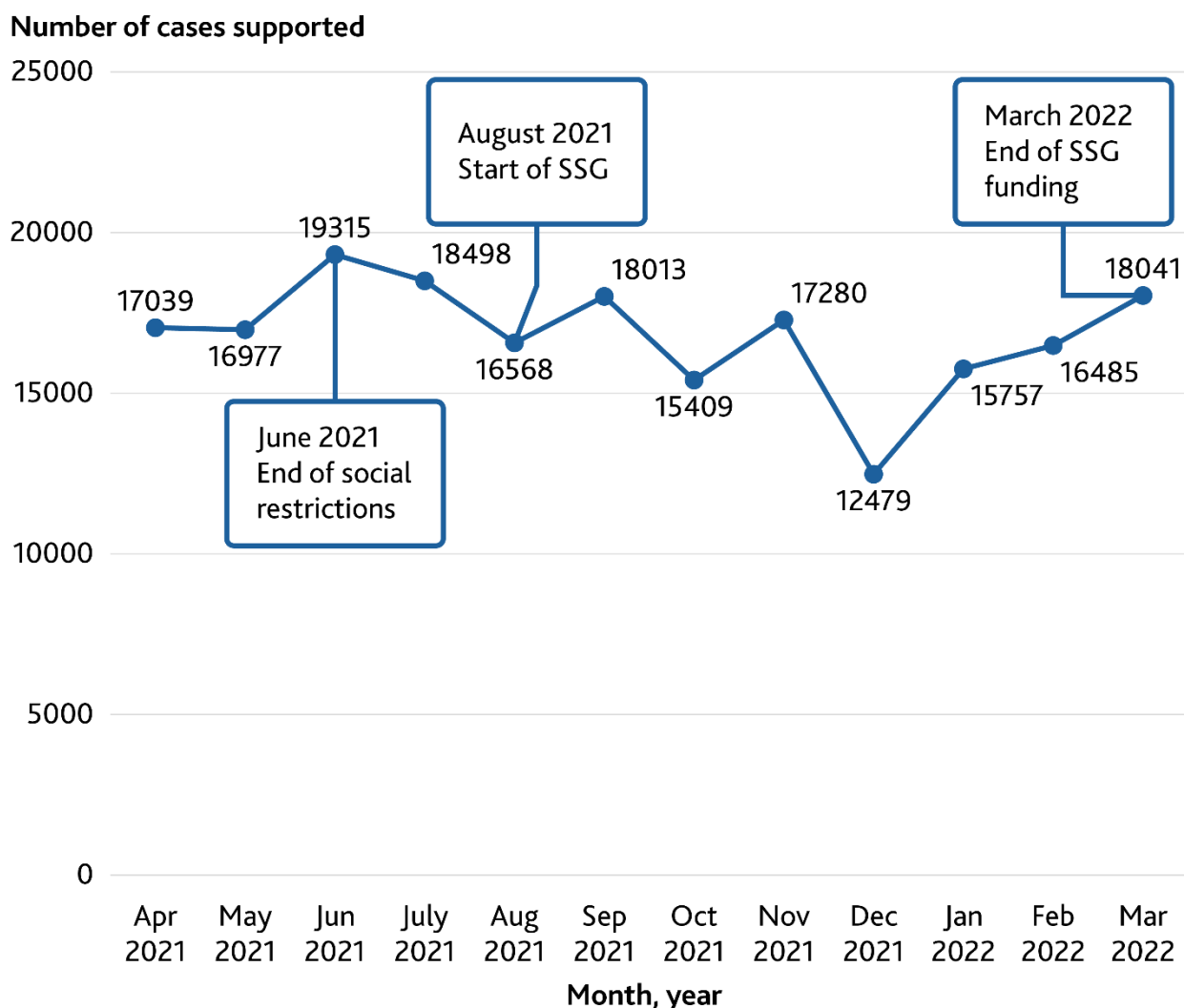
- A degree of caution should be applied when interpreting figures, as they cannot be summed across the type of legal issue or accurately be understood as the time taken to represent the number of individuals supported.
- The figures represent the work of grant recipients as a whole and not necessarily the specific activities funded directly through the grant. Often, specialist legal advice providers do not run distinct projects funded from different pots of money. Instead, there is a high degree of mixing between funding streams and activities. With separation impossible, the most viable option was to collect data for the organisation, rather than look to disaggregate it.
- The evaluation approach aimed to be proportionate given the pressures faced by grant recipients. As such, available data was captured instead of setting up new systems, which meant there was diversity in the approach taken due to individual reporting practices (for example, ‘client support’ could have been interpreted as numbers of clients and/or number of issues undertaken by organisations).

Figure 3 shows the total number of issues supported from April 2021 up until March 2022. It should be noted that the volumes observed are based on the capacity of grant recipients to provide support and not necessarily demand from clients.

---

<sup>6</sup> Asylum & Immigration, Community Care, Debt, Disability, Discrimination, Education, Employment, Housing, Mental Health, Public and Administrative Law, and Welfare Benefits

**Figure 3: Monthly distribution of total cases supported by grant recipients across all areas of law<sup>7</sup>**



The above data excludes figures reported under 'other' areas of law as these typically were outside the scope of civil law. Furthermore, figures for 'asylum' and 'immigration' cases have been combined to treat 'asylum and immigration' as one area of law. Over the course of the funding period, in aggregate, grant recipients reported providing support to 201,861 cases (not counting 'other' areas of law which had 28,554 cases supported in total).

As with other data from the advice sector there is a degree of expected monthly variation in cases supported, including a seasonal effect around December whereby caseloads tend

<sup>7</sup> Asylum & Immigration support have been combined as some grant recipients were unable to split client support between the two categories.

to decrease on a temporary basis. Although some of the smaller monthly variations coincide with events at those times, for example the end of social restrictions in June 2021, the data does not show direct causality and a multitude of factors may influence the shorter-term trends observed.

During interviews, some grant recipients did reference using the period after the removal of social restrictions (June/July 2021) to adjust their physical infrastructure, organisational capacity, and delivery methods to respond to the changes in the nature and volume of issues faced by clients. One grant recipient reflected upon their experience of this period noting that they had to suddenly cope with an increased number of issues/cases when the social restrictions ended, while trying to find solutions for increasing capacity:

“Pre-pandemic, we used to get 200-250 calls a week. This increased to 400 calls a week in June 2021, and now (*June 2022 at the time of the interview*), we get 600 calls a week – hence increased demand has continued. At the moment, 55-66% of the client need is being met... There has been lot of pressure to work face-to-face (since June 2021), and we have now opened up eight main services which we have to maintain with phone and webchats. Filling posts to meet this demand is however getting harder – training mechanisms are not there – people coming out of university with law degrees are going to be barristers, not work for charities for £23,000 a year... and volunteers are not a long-term solution...”

Citizens Advice (CA) (the MoJ has funded six CAs through this SSG and four CAs through CSASS in the first wave of funding of the CJF) noted that it had, for the third month in a row in March 2022, broken its record for providing crisis support. In March 2022, the charity had referred almost 24,000 people to food banks or to other charitable support, up by 44% compared to the same time in 2021.<sup>8</sup> While data from grant recipients was collected only until the end of the funding period in March 2022, more recent CA data (e.g. their Cost of Living dashboard)<sup>9</sup> provides insights on how advice needs are evolving in response to deepening financial pressure on individuals and the economy.

---

<sup>8</sup> (Citizens Advice Bureau, 2022). Article accessible on: ‘<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/about-us1/media/press-releases/citizens-advice-crisis-support-record-broken-again-in-march/>’

<sup>9</sup> <https://public.flourish.studio/story/1634399/>



Some grant recipients providing asylum and immigration support also noted an increase in demand for their services. As one noted:

“Demand increased substantially – mainly when decisions which were on pause during the pandemic previously from the Home Office came through. People (asylum seekers) are still in motels etc and have received refusals on their applications ...Also during the pandemic, people were barely on the streets. But due to the current situation, people are triggered by the fact that they have been here for years and don't have evidence, their 'discretionary leave to remain' may have elapsed. We have people whom we had not heard from since 2017 coming back for support. It is worse than pre pandemic levels, our case workers work tirelessly to clear backlog...”

## 4.2 Cases Supported by Grant Recipients disaggregated by Areas of Law

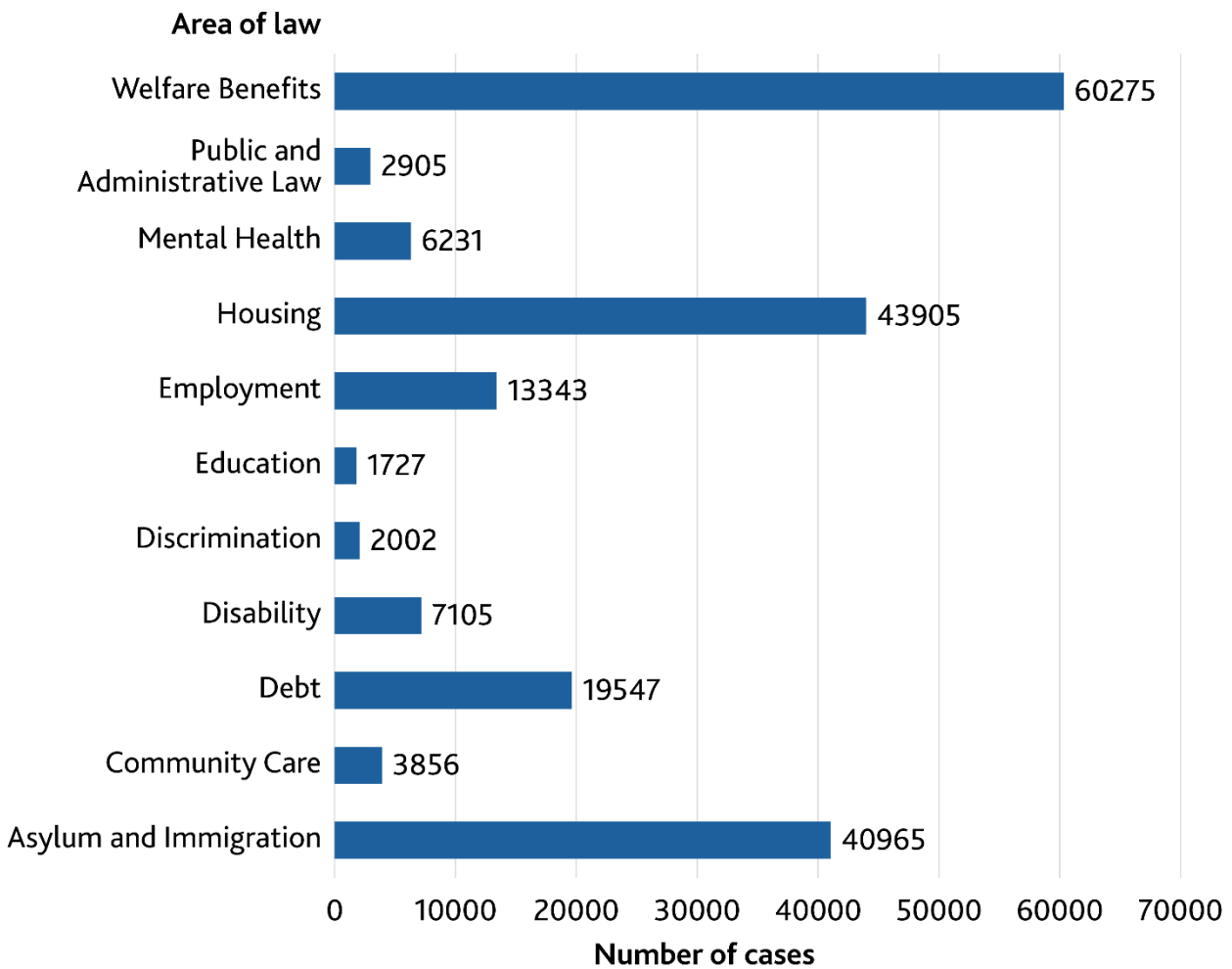
### Key Points

- Almost all areas of law witnessed an increase in support after the release of the SSG grant in August 2021.
- Welfare Benefits, Housing, Asylum and Immigration, and Debt were the four most supported areas of law in the reporting period.
- In general, grant recipients were able to maintain and/or increase capacity with the help of the grant in order to meet the increased demand for their services over the previous year. At the same time, grant recipients noted difficulties faced in recruitment due to the specialised advisor qualifications needed for the evolving and clustered nature of issues, not-for-profit sector pay compared to the private sector, and the short-term nature of funding.

This section presents insights on the volume of cases supported by grant recipients across individual areas of law. A total of 201,861 issues or cases were supported by the 66 grant recipients between April 2021 and March 2022. Disaggregated across areas of law as shown in Figure 4, the highest number of cases supported were in Welfare Benefits (60,275), followed by Housing (43,905), Asylum and Immigration (40,965), and Debt

(19,547). The top three areas of law most supported remain the same across the SSG and the CSASS (that is, Welfare Benefits, Asylum and Immigration, and Housing), however Debt as an area of law has replaced Employment in fourth place during the SSG funding period.<sup>10</sup> It is worth noting that while the comparison between SSG and CSASS data can draw upon general trends in the not-for-profit legal advice sector, inferences must be made with caution as only 29 of the 66 organisations were funded via both grants.

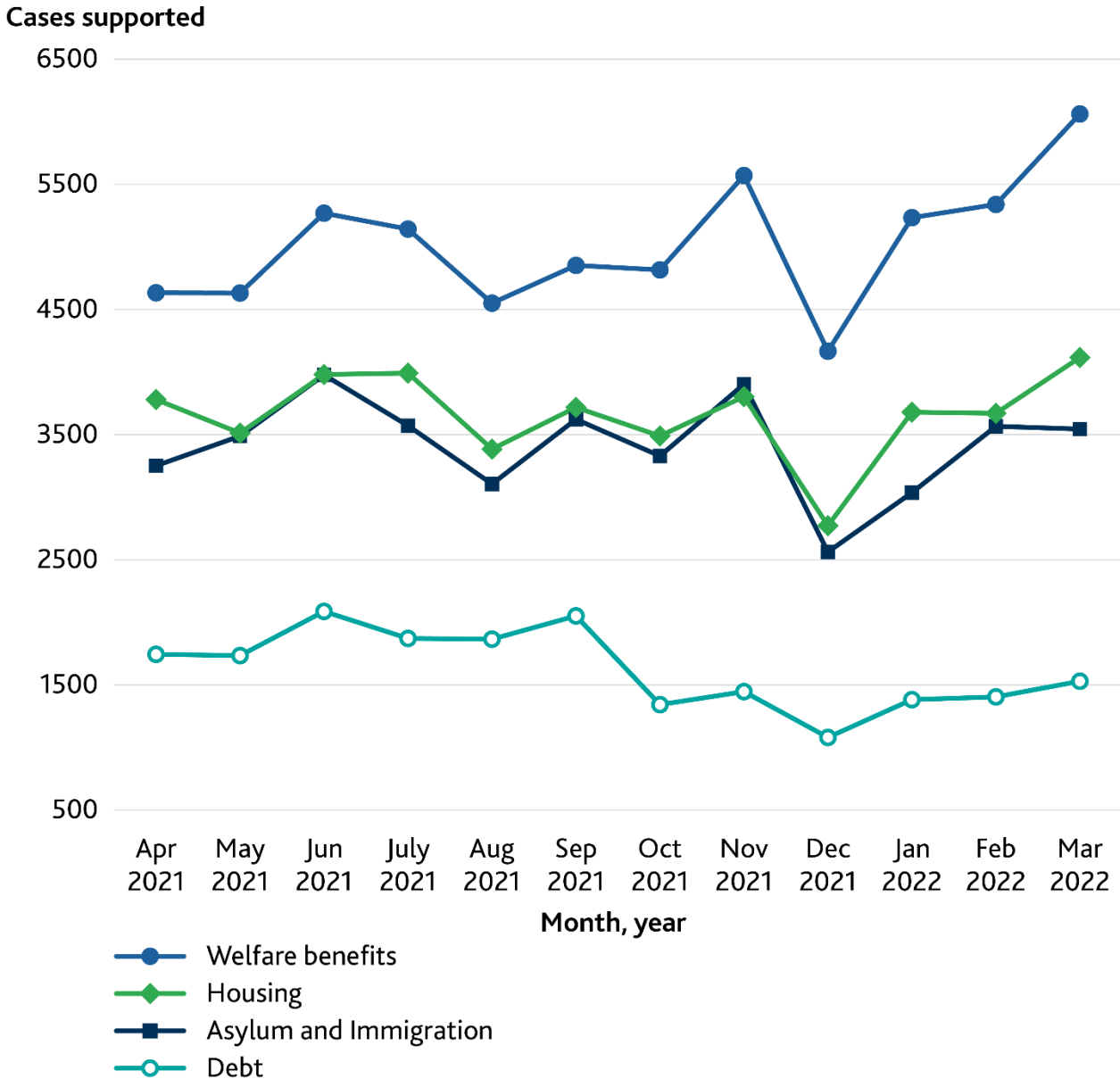
**Figure 4: Total number of cases supported by grant recipients across all areas of law**



<sup>10</sup> See CSASS report, pg.17, Figure.6, accessible at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1039750/csass-grant-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1039750/csass-grant-report.pdf).

On further disaggregating these figures into monthly distribution of cases supported across the top four individual areas of law in Figure 5,<sup>11</sup> a sharp increase in cases after December 2021 is once again noted in Welfare Benefits, Asylum and Immigration, and Housing.

**Figure 5: Areas of law with highest number of cases supported by grant recipients monthly during grant reporting period (April 2021-March 2022)**



As seen in Figure 5, grant recipients consistently provided the highest amount of support to clients facing Welfare Benefit issues in the reporting period. Within Welfare Benefits, the highest number of clients (6,063) were supported in March 2022 which is also the highest

<sup>11</sup> Asylum & Immigration support have been combined as some grant recipients were unable to split client support between the two areas of law.

number of clients supported in the reporting period across all areas of law.<sup>12</sup> The second highest number of cases supported concerned Housing advice, which saw a sharp increase from December 2021 to March 2022 (4,117 cases at peak). Asylum and Immigration advice saw a similar pattern of increase with a peak of 3,978 cases supported in June 2021.

Grant recipients providing Asylum and/or Immigration advice noted clustering of issues and advice seeking behaviour on newer issues due to geo-political situations internationally, which also pushed organisations to upskill in order to provide specialist advice:

“...We now also have people seeking advice relating to newer geo-political things related to the crisis in Afghanistan and Ukraine. A key change is that we are catering bit more to Immigration than Asylum... I am qualified in Immigration and now a colleague has trained as a Level 2 Immigration Advisor. We also run fortnightly immigration advice workshops, pointing out the difference between discretionary leave versus seeking asylum etc... We get discretionary leave quite a lot for clients but this costs thousands of pounds and has to be renewed every 2.5 years... Hence the nature of the work has evolved. Most of the time there are multiple issues: cases sometimes combined with domestic abuse as well...”

Welfare Benefits, Housing, and Asylum and Immigration were also the three most supported areas of law in the first wave of funding through the CSASS, indicating that organisations are seeing sustained need for legal advice in these areas. The fourth most supported area of law in this SSG reporting period was for Debt advice which broadly remained consistent but peaked in June 2021 with 2,088 cases. Debt as an area of law thus replaced Employment as the fourth most supported area compared to data from the CSASS grant.

In general, almost all areas of law witnessed increased support after the release of the SSG grant in August 2021, although there was a decline in cases supported in November 2021.

---

<sup>12</sup> It is worth noting that this period coincides with when people may have been informed of their benefits uprating which might have triggered advice seeking behaviour.

### 4.3 Impact on grant recipients' organisational capacity

In general, grant recipients were able to maintain and/or increase capacity with the help of the grant in order to meet the increased demand for their services. At the same time, grant recipients noted difficulties faced in recruitment due to the specialised advisor qualifications needed for the evolving and clustered nature of issues, not-for-profit sector pay compared to the private sector, and the short-term nature of funding:

“Our recruitment has been focused on filling gaps and maintaining capacity, as funders have taken the pandemic period to do some soul searching around funding criteria. Thus, during a time when it felt harder to fundraise, we were grateful for the flexible nature of the grant.”

“Locally, we increased capacity purely in the advice team but have had excellent staff retention thanks to the grant. If I look at the organisation nationally/globally, we have been having difficulty recruiting due to short term contracts. Sometimes when we lose an advisor, we might not get the same level of expertise coming back in – might have to get people at trainee level and skill them, but it's not a long-term solution.”

“The grant and legal aid income have been static for very long. Our salary rate for solicitors is very good, but obviously no one can grow within the structure at that grade. Because it is difficult to have a competitive pay structure, people are moving away from legal aid to other aspects of legal advice work...can see the trend particularly in the North that a lot of private practitioners have decided not to do legal aid work anymore...”

Given these challenges, organisations also began to think creatively around increasing capacity through collaborations. One grant recipient partnered with private law firms in their city to increase the number of legal advice providers to clients over email. The law firms undertook this collaboration pro bono, in a mutually beneficial manner, where the legal trainees (as well as interested senior partners) drafted legal advice for clients using the platform Trello. These responses were then sent to clients by the grant recipients through the organisation's email.

Another grant recipient shared that they worked with a development consultant on organisational restructure. This enabled the organisation to think more strategically and take a step back from operations. As most of the organisation's employees worked part-time, the restructure allowed the organisation to focus on bringing people in and working on capacity development, as well as increased representation of people with a refugee background as part of the organisation.

## 5. Outcome 2: Increasing access to justice through strategic innovation

The second outcome of the SSG was to increase access to justice through strategic innovation. This entailed making grants to organisations who had ideas or existing projects that aimed to increase access to justice at scale, including through digital delivery of services. To that end, this section provides insight into the delivery methods used by grant recipients across the funding period, including website visits and spending on technology.

### 5.1 Delivery Methods

#### Key Points

- Face-to-face service delivery resumed at nearly all organisations.
- Grant recipients used blended modes of delivery for their advice services during the reporting period, using online and face-to-face delivery nearly as much as telephone delivery. Based on the consistent uptake of face-to-face advice throughout the reporting period along with anecdotal data from grant recipients, blended delivery of advice is foreseen to continue in the not-for-profit advice sector.

Grant recipients were asked how they delivered advice to clients between April 2021 and March 2022. They provided estimated proportions across the following list of service delivery methods, such that the total added to 100%:

1. Online delivery via website form (such as 'Contact Us' page form), email, online chat function or online video conferencing (such as Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, or other Video Conferencing technology)
2. Telephone
3. Face-to-face in offices through client visits or visits to other establishments (such as other third-sector establishments including soup kitchens, shelters, and so on)
4. Any other delivery methods

It is important to note that all data on delivery methods represents ‘estimated proportions’ and is not based on the actual number of cases. Moreover, as a result of the reporting cycle being dictated by internal deadlines at the MoJ, the data is based on estimates across a length of time. Therefore, any trends should be interpreted with a degree of caution.

Table 3 shows the number of delivery methods used by grant recipients in the reporting period from April 2021 to March 2022.

**Table 3: Number of Delivery Methods Used by grant recipients**

<b>Number of Delivery Methods (Telephone, Online, Face to Face, Other)</b>	<b>Number of organisations</b>	<b>Percentage of Organisations</b>
1 Method	0	0%
2 Methods	2	3%
3 Methods	45	68%
4 Methods	19	29%

At the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, organisations had shifted from predominantly delivering services in person to delivering them remotely. As seen in Table 3, 45 organisations (68%) used three methods of delivery, indicating that blended methods of delivering services were common in the reporting period. 19 organisations (29%) used four delivery methods while only 2 organisations (3%) used just two methods.

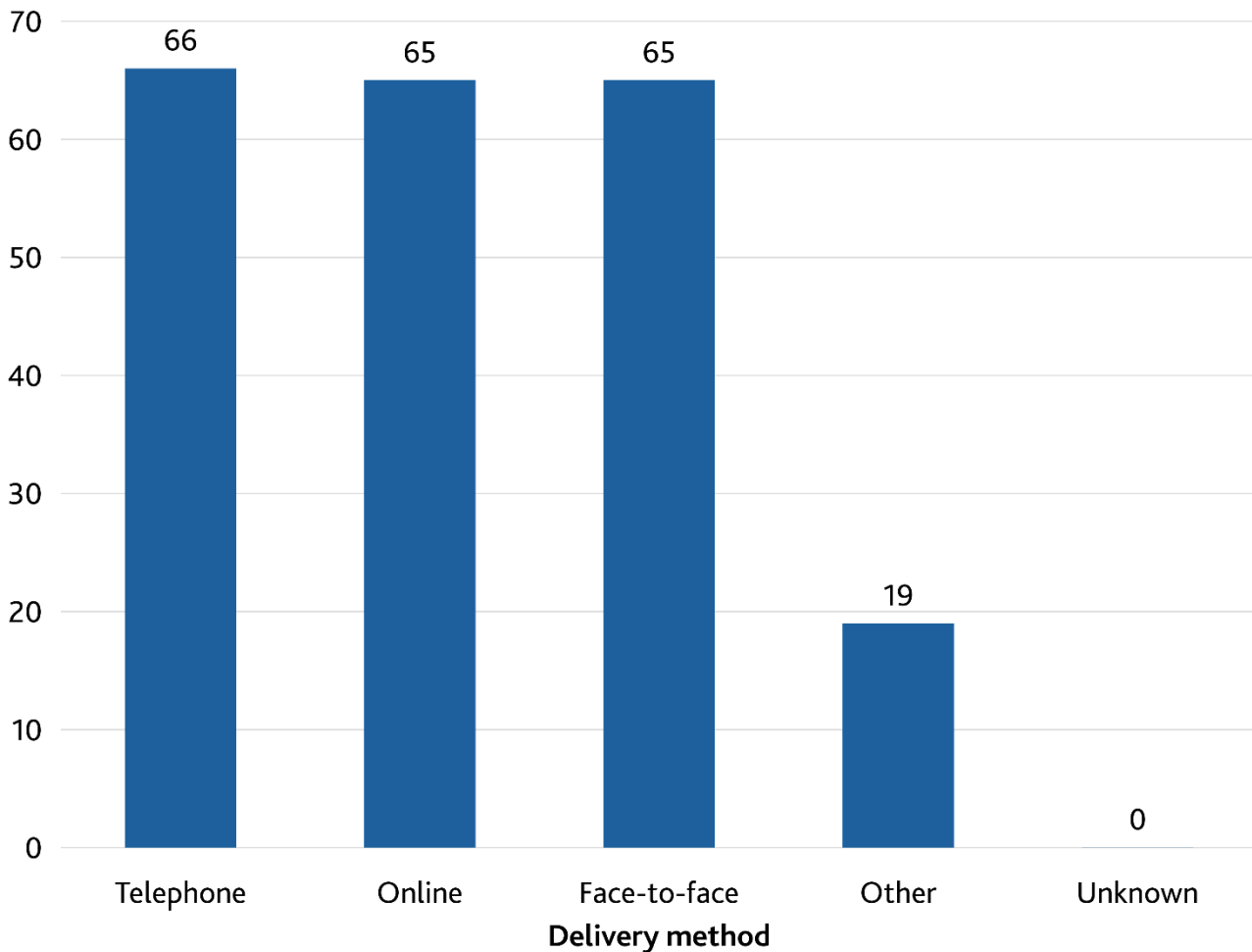
Similar evidence over the course of the CSASS grant period showed an increase in uptake of blended delivery methods from 29% of organisations in April 2020 to 42% in March 2021. Through interviews with CSASS grant recipients, it was anticipated that the blended delivery of services would continue based on client need and the SSG data confirmed this was sustained.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The reference to data from the CSASS grant has been used to contextualise the findings from the current SSG data. The two data sets (CSASS and SSG) however are not interchangeable or directly comparable as they involve different organisations as grant recipients, apart from 29 organisations who have been funded across both waves of the CJF. Further analysis on the subsample of organisations funded across both waves will be undertaken at the end of the SSG funding period to understand the narrative behind the trends discussed.



Further insight into the types of delivery methods used by grant recipients during the reporting period between April 2021 to March 2022 is illustrated in the figure below.

**Figure 6: Number of grant recipients using each delivery method**  
**Number of organisations**



Telephone delivery was used consistently by all 66 grant recipients. Insights from interviews during the CSASS grant period highlighted telephone delivery was largely driven by accessibility of telephone devices over other technology such as laptops, and its low cost compared to using online tools such as internet broadband. The noticeable difference in the use of delivery methods during this period as compared to the CSASS

reporting period is that online and face-to-face delivery were also used by nearly all organisations.<sup>14</sup>

During the SSG reporting period all grant recipients except one provided face to face support to clients, whereas this number fluctuated during the CSASS period due to national lockdowns. During the CSASS period, it was observed that in-person support decreased initially with the first lockdown, increased with removal of restrictions, and then reduced again with the second lockdown. Moreover, during the SSG reporting period, 58 organisations (88%) reported using their premises to offer face-to-face support to clients, while this ranged between 31 and 49 (43%-68%) during the CSASS reporting period. This comparative data indicates that organisations were operating fully or primarily from their office premises while also continuing with online, telephone, and other delivery methods. Towards the end of the SSG reporting period, 38 organisations (58%) were also seeing clients face-to-face at other premises (client homes, rented sites and so on).

The reasons for the return of face-to-face service delivery after June 2021 were elucidated by some organisations in open text box comments, pointing largely towards client need, characteristics of vulnerability, and dealing with emergency cases. At the time of data collection in October 2021, organisations emphasised that while they had resumed face-to-face support, they were also taking measures to ensure that their premises remained a safe space for clients to visit:

“Different subject areas and projects lend themselves differently to remote advice. But many of our clients are very vulnerable and wary, and need at least one face to face meeting in order to help establish a good working alliance. At the moment, around 70% get at least one face to face session. But after that, as much as possible will be done by telephone and by correspondence to ease strain on people in the building and reduce unnecessary contact etc.”

---

<sup>14</sup> Please refer to Figure 9, pg.28 of the CSSAS end of grant report for further detail, accessible at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1039750/csass-grant-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1039750/csass-grant-report.pdf).

Removal of social restrictions and serving clients who experienced language and communication barriers were also shared as reasons for the return to in-person advice delivery:

“As most of our clients speak very little or no English, and do not know how to use computers or IT, we have to see them face to face to help deal with their matters. During the lockdowns, our staff provided support using WhatsApp and telephone, but now that the restrictions have lifted, we have made our offices safe for seeing clients in person which helps them.”

Online delivery, including chat functions and video conferencing, were also used consistently across the reporting period by 65 organisations (98%). Within the various methods of online service delivery, 59 organisations (89%) used email most frequently. Online video conferencing (such as Skype, Zoom and FaceTime) was used by 51 organisations (77%), higher than in the CSASS reporting period where it was used by around 50% of organisations between April – November 2020 and in March 2021 when restrictions were at their strictest. Website forms were used by 26 organisations (39%).

19 organisations (29%) reported using ‘other’ delivery methods which included social media, letter/post, and mobile messaging services such as WhatsApp. One organisation reported using vans and buses to reach out to geographically isolated clients, while two others set up ‘community access points’ or ‘tech hubs’. These initiatives also align to the grant’s objectives of ensuring widespread access to justice including access to advice for people who could not otherwise access it:

“Video conferencing is proving particularly useful for BSL – users of our deaf advice service. We have commenced a pilot project for clients who don’t have the necessary skills or equipment to access advice: Community Access Points have been set up in 4 locations where clients can turn up, press the screen and speak to an adviser by telephone, but can be switched to video if needed. The screen has a high resolution camera where clients can place any letters which then get scanned to the adviser.”

In comparison to the CSASS data, whereby interviews with grant recipients revealed that remote delivery was used far less frequently or almost negligibly prior to the COVID-19

pandemic, the data for the SSG showcases that remote delivery was used in conjunction with face-to-face delivery to best serve clients:

“We conduct in-depth casework meetings via zoom or in person. We often deal with short queries from existing clients or update them via email. We provide some advice by letter - often copying this via email. We tend to deal with one-off queries by email, but occasionally by telephone.”

In conclusion, the data on delivery methods used by organisations in the reporting period showed interesting trends with increasing face-to-face and other remote approaches to delivery sustained with the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It cemented that hybrid or blended methods of delivery are the way forward for the not-for-profit advice sector based on what works best for clients, organisational resource, capacity, and technology:

“Advice does not need to be siloed...Hybrid is the way forward as we would often go to prison and not be able to help. Workshops will usually be many people in one go. Phonenumber or adviceline is good for quick checks. The combination is therefore complimentary.”

## 5.2 Website Visits

### Key Points

- Website traffic increased consistently across the reporting period, with the highest number of visits recorded in September 2021.
- Figures should be interpreted with caution as they comprise a subsample of only 31 grant recipients (47%).

Where possible, grant recipients were asked to provide information related to website traffic as it was likely to be indicative of concerns people may have had which led to advice seeking behaviour.

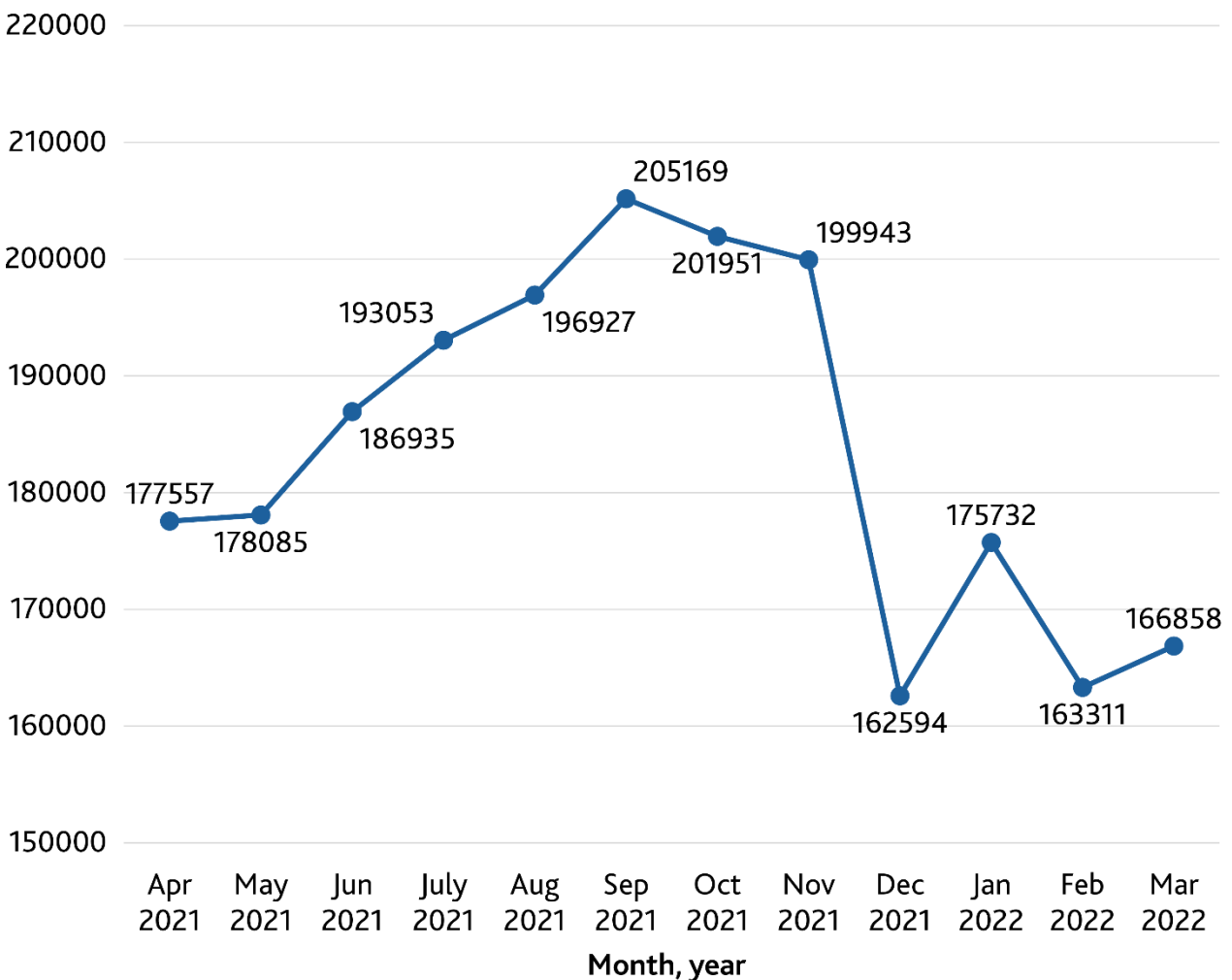
**For the purposes of this research, a website visit is described as one visitor who arrives at the website and proceeds to browse.**

Figure 6 shows monthly website traffic provided by grant recipients from April 2021 to March 2022.

**Note: as not all organisations were able to provide data on website traffic, the figure is based on data from a subset of 31 organisations that consistently provided this data across the reporting period.**

**Figure 7: Monthly Distribution of Website Visits from April 2021 to March 2022 (31 grant recipients)**

Number of website visits



The Figure demonstrates a consistent upward trajectory in website visits from April 2021 to September 2021 followed by a declining trend till December 2021 with the number of website visits remaining at similar levels by March 2022. The highest number of website visits at 205,169 was seen in September 2021, while the average number of visits across the reporting period from April 2021 to March 2022 was 184,010. **There are however**

**considerations around data quality as there are notable variations in data submitted by different organisations.** Two organisations in particular mainly operate digitally and therefore have high levels of website visits compared to the rest of the grant recipients. As website data was based on a smaller sample of grant recipients, large changes across two organisations had a disproportionate impact on overall trends.

As seen in the case of the CSASS, monthly website traffic could have been affected by seasonality due to the holiday period around Christmas where visits drop to 162,594 in December 2021 (a 21% decrease from September 2021).

### 5.3 Technology

While promoting justice through scaled digital delivery of services was one of the three outcomes for the SSG, it was noticed that grant recipients spent a relatively low amount of the total grant expenditure (£84,238 or 4%) on purchasing or upgrading I.T. and communications equipment. The reasons behind the low spend on I.T. were further discussed with the grant recipients interviewed. Primarily, organisations highlighted that since the SSG was flexible in nature, they chose to prioritise staff costs and other key organisational expenditure from this funding and used other grants that had more defined conditions for I.T. spend for technological expenditure. A few organisations noted that they had prioritised I.T. expenditure previously at the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic when making the switch to remote delivery, and therefore were now well equipped with the infrastructure needed for digital delivery of services. Equally, grant recipients noted the challenges around digital exclusion:

“The challenge around technology solutions is finding one that also works for all of our users. We used other funding which had a more tech focus for purchasing software that made hybrid meetings easier and did a crowdfunding drive for providing clients with devices, but digital exclusion is a massive challenge in our area of work...”

“We also had to think for clients’ accessibility to technology, download costs, smartphones, and how we could get tariff free video chatting for clients – client take up has not been widespread...”

A grant recipient that did spend part of the grant funding on technology expenditure noted that it was to enable a better work culture and environment in the organisation:

“We had some spending on I.T. mainly for a new case management database called ‘Lamplight’<sup>15</sup> to help us work better remotely. It coordinates people’s diaries etc. We also got mobile phones for colleagues as they work really hard and often out of work hours – they don’t need to have work on their personal phones. Colleagues’ mental health is important.”

---

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.lamplightdb.co.uk/>

## 6. Outcome 3: Ensuring widespread access to justice by awarding grants to improve access to advice for those who could not otherwise access it

Recognising that certain areas and communities in the UK have poorer access to specialist legal advice than others, the third aim of the grant was to improve access to advice for people who could not otherwise access it. The evaluation thus sought qualitative data through interviews to understand grant recipients' experiences of their client demographic and characteristics, particularly if there were newer categories of clients seeking advice over the reporting period. **Note that the data is therefore anecdotal and should be interpreted with caution as it is not generalisable beyond the data set.**

### Key Findings

- Grant recipients noted an increased number of client cases with complex and escalated needs, which led them to shift the focus of their services from early advice to de-escalation of client crises.
- This was particularly the case with grant recipients focusing on Immigration and Asylum as an area of law. They noted other newer categories of clients including asylum seekers from Afghanistan, unaccompanied minors (mainly adolescents) seeking asylum, and nationals of Ukraine and other EU countries enquiring about immigration status/schemes.
- Some grant recipients also noted more people between the age group of 20 to 40 years, particularly women, seeking advice around debt and employment issues.

### 6.1 Client Demographics and Characteristics

Broadly, grant recipients shared that while their client demographic had mostly remained the same since the COVID-19 pandemic, they were seeing more clients in some areas of law than others - Welfare Benefits, Immigration and Asylum, and Debt in particular. Grant



recipients also noted the emergence of an increase in clients with more particular or newer characteristics of vulnerability in the past year.

### **Immigration and Asylum**

Within the area of Immigration and Asylum, grant recipients noticed increased cases with complex and escalated needs and shared that the grant allowed them to use capacity to meet those escalated needs:

“Prior to covid, we had 300 beds for asylum seekers, which tripled to 1000 beds in summer of 2020. In the past, people were dispersed and were more settled by the time they came to Bristol (had clothes etc). However, we now have people coming with nothing – no money, no clothes etc – and hence have higher level of basic needs and legal support. What has also continued post pandemic is the number of people presenting to us already in crisis. There has been an increase in volume of needs of people as well as the volume of people themselves. So rather than early advice, we have work on de-escalation from the point of crisis – how can we get them off the street, make sure they have a GP etc...”

A grant recipient noted that the number of cases they supported pre COVID-19 pandemic around immigration were divided broadly equally between those who had immigration status and those who did not. Post COVID-19 pandemic, they reported that 80% of their immigration clients did not have formal immigration status in the UK. One grant recipient in particular noted an increase in unaccompanied and separated minors (particularly adolescents around the age of 16-18 years) seeking asylum.

Grant recipients working on Immigration and Asylum also noticed an increased number of cases of Afghan asylum seekers: a mix of new arrivals and people who were already in this country because of the escalated situation in Afghanistan. Similarly, one grant recipient noticed an increasing number of people calling their free weekly immigration advice line to enquire about the Ukraine visa scheme. The grant recipient however highlighted that those calling were not refugees, but mostly Ukrainians with visas, inquiring for their families/relatives in Ukraine. Grant recipients also noticed an increase in EU nationals seeking advice on their immigration status:

“Looking at the figures for this period post June 2021, there is an increase in EU nationals (calling us) who are worried about pre settled status and their rights to maternity leave, pay, and NHS insurance fee. Many want to go back to their home country and are worried about the impact on maternity pay etc. There is a much bigger sense of insecurity in this group...”

## **Debt**

While debt was noted to be one of the top four areas of law where grant recipients experienced the highest number of clients/cases (see [section 4.2](#)), a few grant recipients interviewed noted that the number of people seeking debt advice in the past year were mostly in the age group of 20 to 40 years. One grant recipient noted that these were mostly people who had not faced debt issues before and therefore were not “financially clued up”. Within this bracket, grant recipients observed a higher percentage of women, particularly in the age group of 18 to 25 years:

“...We have seen an increasing number of people coming to us embarrassed and ashamed because of debt. These are clients with £14,000 of debt across 35 creditors (increase in loan sharks as well). In one of our regions, we noticed more women than men accessing debt service, so we set up a debt service group there....debt is a feminist issue and obviously sometimes mixed with immigration issues and domestic abuse has created higher risks of destitution for these women...”

## **Employment / Work based Discrimination**

A grant recipient working on women’s rights noted an increased number of cases surrounding employment and discrimination issues, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. They shared a case study that was reflective of the varied health and safety issues clients sought advice on:

## Case Study

Georgie [name changed for anonymity] worked as a community carer visiting elderly people in their own homes, and thus social distancing was impossible. She was provided with PPE and her risk assessment stated that it was safe for her to continue working. However, she was nearly 28 weeks' pregnant (pregnant women are considered higher risk) and was worried about high levels of covid cases in her area. There was no work she could do from home in her role, and she was refused a maternity suspension. Her employer was a large organisation with a local authority contract to provide home-based care. Her only options were to start her maternity pay nearly 3 months before the birth which would give her only 6 months of paid time off after the birth or to have no pay prior to the birth which she couldn't afford to do.

The grant recipient thus highlighted that during the COVID-19 pandemic, pregnant and post-natal women/persons, emerged as a particular vulnerable category of clients, not only because of their health but due to the particular nature of issues they faced at the workplace, ranging from discrimination to securing maternity leave. The grant recipients thus improvised on their advice to support drafting of letters and conversations that these clients could have with their employer to ensure problem resolution:

“Particularly pregnant and post pregnancy women tend to feel out of touch and lacking in confidence in the workplace, so having that support and keeping them out of employment tribunals was a valued service. Neither we nor they want to go through an employment tribunal – a huge step in the middle is confronting the employers by speaking to them, which if it works, can save a lot of court time. “

## 6.2 Innovating to provide services in remote areas

Grant recipients were also asked about any experiences of reaching out to geographically remote areas over the past year. Two grant recipients noted using vans and buses to reach isolated areas and individuals. One grant recipient shared:

“Buses/vans to access clients were the first thing we used during the pandemic – our partners love it as well – the buses have our magnetic logos which are temporary, so other organisations can also rent and rebrand if needed...now the vans get used by fire services, local charities, refugee action groups, etc.”

“The vans are also great for areas for those clients who don’t want to walk into a big formal office; the buses/vans give an approachable vibe.”

Drop-in advice workshops at locations in partnership with other organisations/institutions also became more common among organisations over the past year:

“We have drop-ins for advice at partnered locations like church halls. Because it’s in partnership, we pay no rent (during the lockdown, we sometimes paid a small £15 an hour for 2 hours though). It’s usually a multi-agency drop in...we have one with an organisation that houses asylum seekers and another one with a LGBTQ organisation (we didn’t realise that 43% of LGBT clients are asylum seekers) – hence these partnerships are also helping us see connection between issues.”

## 7. Feedback from grant recipients on grant process and delivery

### Key Findings

- Grant recipients found the flexible nature of the funding most helpful as it enabled them to prioritise spending where it was most needed. In particular, the funding helped with ensuring specialised advice services remained available to clients and, in some cases, helped increase advice capacity or adapt services to newer/more specialised cases.
- The evaluation of the SSG and CSASS illustrate that flexible grants are valuable for grant recipients as they showcase a level of trust from funders and allow grant recipients to best meet client needs across the range of specialisms, locations, and sizes of grant recipients. On the frontline, flexible funding enabled recipients to hire and keep experienced or specialist staff in order to provide specialist services in an unstable period. This was a key outcome for the SSG given the backlog of client cases that arose due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as the availability of specialist advice – the right help at the earliest point possible – supports resolution and avoids unnecessary escalation of client problems.
- Key lessons for future monitoring and data collection processes based on grant recipient feedback include allowing grant recipients to save survey responses, collecting case studies and client testimonials to enable grant recipients to showcase impact in multiple ways, and collecting demographic data for clients. Several grant recipients, through surveys and interviews, expressed the need for multi-year grants to overcome challenges in a sustainable manner. Grant recipients mentioned that multiyear grants would allow them to undertake strategic planning to meet the increased demand for advice across several areas of law, increase capacity, and foster local and regional justice partnerships.

The “vital” nature of the funding was highlighted, allowing organisations to remain operational, particularly at a time of reduced income for the not-for-profit legal advice sector and considering the impact of the winter months on issues such as housing:

“I just want to reiterate how vital this funding is for us. In recent years, more than a quarter of our funding has come from housing legal aid and this remains very hard to come by at present as the number of eligible cases coming to court remains quite low. However, I met with the Homeless Strategic Group of the local council and DWP just today, and housing associations and the local authority all expected that issues with (welfare) benefits, debt, and housing will become more pronounced through the winter months. Without this funding, it is hard to see how we would have kept going and have a service on the road, ready to respond, as we do today.”

To further iterate the impact of this funding, a grant recipient shared the following case study:

### Case Study

This grant recipient has been helping foreign nationals in prison. The grant funding helped the organisation to assist a client at a crucial point when his Humanitarian Protection/Asylum and Human Rights claim was refused.

Mr. X is a long-term client of our organisation. His asylum claim was refused in 2005 and he lived in the UK for many years without papers. He suffered immeasurably from a long period in a young offenders’ unit and immigration detention which affected his physical and mental health. He married in 2012 but the marriage broke up due to financial pressures as he was not allowed to work or claim benefits. His wife was also unable to cope with his mental health issues. He endured a long period of homelessness but finally obtained a placement in Section 4 accommodation for refused asylum seekers. This restored his relationship with his wife and living separately they became good friends. He was able to have contact with his stepchildren and grandchildren and continue family life.

In 2021 his fresh claim was refused, and he received a deportation order; this was a catalyst for a further decline in mental health and suicidal ideation. The Home Office had not been able to deport him since 2005 as they could not obtain a travel document. This in addition to his mental health issues and family life gave him grounds for his appeal but he was unrepresented.

He contacted us in a state of agitation as he faced an imminent case management meeting at the Tribunal without legal support. Our immigration advisor assisted him through the telephone advice line. He was then able to confidently request an adjournment of his full hearing. This allowed us to assist him in making a successful application for Exceptional Case funding. He was then able to find a legal representative. We were also able to fund travel to the court for several of his friends who were refugees from his country and key witnesses to his nationality. This challenged an assertion that he was lying to the Home Office to avoid deportation. He recently attended his full hearing with legal representation in place and in the presence of his family and friends. The specialist advice we provided gave him hope and stabilized his mental health in a time of crisis. The key factor was that he was no longer facing complex legal proceedings that would determine his future without professional help.

One organisation noted that the funding assisted in planning a safe return to the office premises after June 2021 while its flexible nature allowed them to best serve the organisation's needs:

“This funding is vital for us. We face some significant challenges, not just increases in client numbers, but also preparing for some significant recommissioning of services by funders for 2022/23 and planning a safe return to our new offices. It enables us to continue to provide all our services and spend the money where we have identified it is most needed.”

Other organisations highlighted the role of the SSG in enabling them to serve their most vulnerable clients and increase capacity or seek specialist advisers when needed:

“The funding received has played a major role in supporting those who are struggling with language barriers, lack of IT knowledge and also the system. We have seen many people suffering trauma, isolation and continue life without knowledge of local support. To receive funding for such a great project is to support everyone regardless of race, faith, and nationalities.”

In general, besides the flexible nature of the funding, grant recipients appreciated that the funding enabled them to focus on specialised services and advice, and strategic thinking/organisational priorities, which as a grant recipient highlighted “was positive and gave a multiplier effect for outcomes.” For many grant recipients, the funding provided a sense of relief from a time of persistent crisis since the COVID-19 pandemic:

“...As a CEO, it’s been the hardest thing to manage the organisation during the pandemic and move offices during the lockdown – harder than bringing up my daughter. When I got this grant, I felt like I could breathe for a moment and not fire fight constantly. It gave me the chance to step back and plan better... it was massive at a time when everything was overwhelming...”

### **Key Lessons for Monitoring and Data Collection**

Most grant recipients found the grant application, and monitoring and data collection process straightforward. Grant recipients appreciated the support provided by the Access to Justice Foundation through the grant evaluation. Feedback from grant recipients to be taken forward in future grant evaluations included:

- Allowing grant recipients to save their responses to surveys.
- More qualitative data collection through case studies and testimonials that enable grant recipients to showcase impact in multiple ways.
- A few grant recipients noted that data on protected characteristics of clients could be collected to generate more insights into client demographics and vulnerable groups, as these statistics are often asked by other funders.

Grant recipients also expressed the need for multi-year flexible funding which would allow them to focus on strategic planning to meet increased casework across areas of law, growing capacity, and developing local partnerships:



“...Moving forward it’s important that the MOJ think about the data from these grants and understand that there is no ‘Post COVID’ and look at multi-year funding. We need to also think about collaboration and counsel from groups like the Access to Justice Foundation and The Legal Education Foundation... Remember that some organisations like ours are in remote areas and get forgotten about ...so the ‘one size fits all’ approach doesn’t work. Local partnerships work really well, rather than regional or national and lead to nuanced impactful work...”

## 8. Conclusion

Overall, the data shows that the SSG funding helped the 66 not-for-profit advice providers remain operational and endure the sustained impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This fulfils the primary aim of the grant. Fundamentally, this report demonstrates how the SSG has enabled recipients to tackle staff costs such as wages, recruitment, and training to ensure the continued delivery of legal advice at a time when the not-for-profit legal support sector has been weakened through reduced income and capacity (Legal Services Board, 2019), further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic (Heppell & Sharma, 2021).

The SSG had several key successes with grant recipients. Operationally, the flexibility of the grant meant recipients were able to deliver services in a way that best met client needs across the range of specialisms, locations, and sizes of grant recipients. On the frontline, the funding enabled recipients to hire and keep experienced or specialist staff in order to provide specialist services in an unstable period. This was a key outcome given the backlog of client cases that arose due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as the availability of specialist advice – the right help at the earliest point possible – supports resolution and avoids unnecessary escalation of client problems. At the same time, grant recipients noted that demand for their services had increased since the previous year, and that clients were coming in with more complex, escalated problems. Organisations reported increased advice seeking activity from December 2021 onwards – a trend worth further exploration in future research particularly with the advent of the cost-of-living situation which has exacerbated legal advice seeking behaviour among people (Citizens Advice, 2022).

There were also newer, more vulnerable categories of clients observed after the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic including, but not limited to, asylum seekers from Afghanistan, unaccompanied adolescent asylum seekers, and people within the age group of 20 to 40 years seeking financial/debt advice, particularly women.

As social restrictions were removed during the reporting period after June 2021, the funding also enabled organisations to resume in-person service delivery while retaining remote approaches. As forecasted in the CSASS report (Heppell & Sharma,

2021, pp.25-29), hybrid/blended delivery of services were sustained and will likely continue. Face-to-face delivery of services has been deemed particularly valuable for clients with characteristics of vulnerability and to tackle emergency cases more effectively by organisations. Organisations are also considering innovative ways of reaching out to geographically or otherwise excluded clients, such as community hubs and vans/buses.

Excerpts from grant recipient interviews and open text feedback in surveys showed that the SSG had a valuable impact on grant recipients and their clients, at a time when the sustained impact of the COVID-19 pandemic alongside the cost-of-living situation is being felt. As with the CSASS grant, the MoJ aims to benefit from this improved access to insight and data from the SSG, to inform its policy interventions in the early legal support and advice space.

## 9. References

Citizens Advice. (2022). CA cost of living data dashboard. Retrieved September 14, 2022, from <https://public.flourish.studio/story/1634399/>

Citizens Advice. (2022, March 31). Citizens Advice crisis support record broken again in March. Retrieved September 14, 2022, from <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/about-us1/media/press-releases/citizens-advice-crisis-support-record-broken-again-in-march/>

Community Justice Fund. (2021). *Grants Awarded*. Retrieved from Community Justice Fund: <https://www.communityjusticefund.org.uk/grants-awarded/>

Franklyn, R., Budd, T., Verrill, R., & Willoughby, M. (2017). *Findings from the Legal Problem and Resolution Survey, 2014-15*. London: Ministry of Justice. Retrieved from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/596490/legal-problem-resolution-survey-2014-to-2015-findings.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596490/legal-problem-resolution-survey-2014-to-2015-findings.pdf)

Heppell, E.-M., & Sharma, R. (2021). *COVID-19 Specialist Advice Service Scheme: End of Grant Report*. London: Ministry of Justice. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specialist-advice-service-scheme-end-of-grant-report>

Institute for Government. (2022). *Cost of living crisis*. Retrieved September 14, 2022, from Institute for Government: <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/explainers/cost-living-crisis>

Institute for Government Analysis. (2021). *Timeline of UK coronavirus lockdowns*, March 2020 to March 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/timeline-lockdown-web.pdf>

Legal Services Board. (2019). *2019 Individual Legal Needs Dashboard*. Retrieved from Legal Services Board: <https://legalservicesboard.org.uk/2019-ilns-dashboard>

Legal Services Board. (2019). *Coronavirus impact dashboard development*. Retrieved from Legal Services Board: [https://legalservicesboard.org.uk/coronavirus\\_impact](https://legalservicesboard.org.uk/coronavirus_impact)

Legal Support Research Team. (2021). *COVID-19 Specialist Advice Service Scheme – Interim Report, January 2021*. London: Ministry of Justice. (Internal Resource)

Moorhead, R., Margaret, R., & Consultancy, M. R. (2006). *A trouble shared -legal problems clusters in solicitors' and advice agencies*. United Kingdom: Department of Constitutional Affairs and Cardiff University. Retrieved from [https://orca.cardiff.ac.uk/5184/1/Moorhead\\_et\\_al\\_2006\\_A\\_Trouble\\_Shared.pdf](https://orca.cardiff.ac.uk/5184/1/Moorhead_et_al_2006_A_Trouble_Shared.pdf)

Pleasance, P., Balmer, N., Patel, A., Cleary, A., Huskinson, T., & Cotton, T. (2011). *Civil Justice in England and Wales: Report of Wave 1 of the English and Welsh Civil and Social Justice Panel Survey*. United Kingdom: Legal Services Commission and Ipsos MORI. Retrieved from [http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7643/mrdoc/pdf/7643\\_csjps\\_wave\\_one\\_report.pdf](http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7643/mrdoc/pdf/7643_csjps_wave_one_report.pdf)

## Appendix 1

### Methodology

All funds received by the 66 grant recipients were subject to monitoring and evaluation. Given the sustained pressures organisations were under as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, a key principle of the evaluation was to generate insight while minimising additional burdens on grant recipients and any user of the support services. Therefore, data gathered by grant recipients aimed to determine whether the grant funding met the objectives outlined in the introduction. Where available, grant recipients were also asked to provide retrospective data for the period between the end of the CSASS grant and the beginning of the SSG grant (April 2021 to July 2021). While this data did not allow for comparative analysis between the CSASS and SSG data as different organisations were being funded through the SSG, it did enable a general overview of trends and similar themes across both grants.

In addition to collecting information directly relevant to demonstrating the value of the grant, the MoJ used this as an opportunity to generate greater insight into the not-for-profit specialist advice sector.

Data was gathered via a standardised template, developed by MoJ analysts, in October 2021. Using an excel workbook and an online survey, grant recipients provided:

- Information of organisations who have been supported
- Award amounts
- Expenditure data across each month of funding
- The number of cases supported by the organisations during the reporting period, within specific areas of law
- The number of cases supported by the organisations prior to the reporting period, within specific areas of law
- The delivery methods used to provide clients legal support throughout the funding period
- Website traffic data during the funding period and in the year prior

Additionally, a subsample of seven grant recipients' organisations were interviewed based on grant size, location, nature of services provided, client demographic, and expenditure to gather greater insight into certain trends and innovations by organisations.

**Table 3: Reporting Schedule**

<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Data Provided</b>
5 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online surveys with monitoring data (covering current quarter and historical data) by all organisations</li> <li>• Expenditure sheets by all organisations</li> </ul>
20 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ATJF quality assure expenditure data and send MOJ individual expenditure sheets of each grant recipients</li> </ul>
31 December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim report of grant evaluation findings</li> </ul>
April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actual spends by grant recipients</li> <li>• Online surveys with performance data</li> <li>• Details of any unspent funds (if relevant)</li> <li>• Details of any funding clawed-back (if relevant)</li> </ul>
June 2021-August 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative research through semi-structured interviews with seven grant recipients</li> </ul>
October 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final evaluation drafted</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2

### Grant Recipients and Grant Value

Organisation Name	MOJ Grant Received
Advice4Renters	£16,425.00
Anti-Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit (ATLEU)	£39,420.00
Asylum Justice	£39,420.00
Brighton Housing Trust	£39,420.00
Bristol Law Centre	£39,420.00
Bristol Refugee Rights	£16,425.00
Brixton Advice Centre	£16,425.00
Cambridge House	£26,280.00
Canterbury Housing Advice Centre	£13,797.00
Central England Law Centre	£39,420.00
Citizens Advice Barking and Dagenham	£26,280.00
Citizens Advice Central and East Northamptonshire	£19,710.00
Citizens Advice Lincoln & District	£28,742.00
Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire	£29,565.00
Citizens Advice Sheffield & Law Centre	£32,850.00
Citizens Advice Shepway	£27,594.00
Community Advice and Law Service	£32,850.00
Community Law Service Northampton and County	£31,864.00
Cumbria Law Centre	£39,420.00
Derbyshire Law Centre	£37,308.00
Disability North	£27,765.00
Dostiyo Asian Women and Girls Organisation	£32,850.00
Ealing Law Centre	£39,420.00
Equality Action Limited	£31,405.00
Friends, Families, and Travellers	£39,420.00



<b>Organisation Name</b>	<b>MOJ Grant Received</b>
Fusion Housing Kirklees LTD	£34,033.00
Fylde Coast Advice & Legal Centre	£39,420.00
Great Yarmouth Refugee and Outreach Support (GYROS)	£32,850.00
Greenwich Housing Rights	£26,280.00
Harlow Advice Centre	£39,249.00
Hillingdon Law Centre	£32,850.00
Hope Projects	£26,280.00
Justice First - Tees Valley	£26,280.00
Kanlungan Filipino Consortium	£19,710.00
Kent Refugee Help	£13,140.00
Kirklees Law Centre - Dewsbury	£28,663.00
Luton Law Centre	£39,420.00
Manuel Bravo Project	£39,420.00
Maternity Action	£39,420.00
Merseyside Law Centre	£36,792.00
Migrant Legal Action	£19,710.00
Norfolk Community Law Service	£45,990.00
North East Law Centre	£39,420.00
North Kensington Law Centre	£32,850.00
Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council	£19,710.00
Nottingham Law Centre	£32,850.00
Oasis Cardiff	£36,135.00
Paddington Law Centre	£39,569.00
Peterborough Asylum and Refugee Community Association	£26,280.00
Project for the Registration of Children as British Citizens (PRCBC)	£19,710.00
Refugee and Migrant Forum of Essex & London (RAMFEL)	£16,425.00
Refugee Support (Devon) Ltd	£27,528.00
Refugee Women's Association	£19,710.00
Revive CIO	£32,620.00

<b>Organisation Name</b>	<b>MOJ Grant Received</b>
Riverside Advice	£39,420.00
Shelter Cymru	£39,420.00
Slough Immigration Aid Unit	£6,570.00
South London Refugee Association	£26,280.00
South West London Law Centres	£39,420.00
Southwark Law Centre	£19,710.00
Speakeasy Law Centre	£31,536.00
Spitfire Advice and Support Services Ltd	£19,710.00
Suffolk Law Centre	£22,995.00
Vauxhall Community Law and Information Centre	£36,135.00
Wanstead and Woodford Migrant Support	£6,570.00
Youth Legal & Resource Centre	£16,425.00

## Appendix 3

### Distribution of issues supported across areas of law

Areas of law	Asylum & Immigration	Community Care	Debt	Disability	Discrimination	Education	Employment	Housing	Mental Health	Public and Administrative Law	Welfare Benefits
Apr-21	3252	310	1745	877	177	194	1157	3781	715	197	4634
May-21	3489	399	1735	920	172	176	1095	3513	658	188	4632
Jun-21	3978	412	2088	1070	152	166	1231	3981	720	247	5270
Jul-21	3572	406	1872	1067	176	147	1212	3992	689	222	5143
Aug-21	3106	344	1866	1029	163	163	1050	3385	767	144	4551
Sep-21	3623	328	2052	1050	164	228	1163	3718	652	182	4853
Oct-21	3330	234	1343	204	141	148	1093	3490	345	264	4817
Nov-21	3903	276	1447	180	154	117	1175	3804	343	310	5571
Dec-21	2563	255	1081	167	119	81	769	2773	273	231	4167
Jan-22	3037	277	1383	152	143	103	1080	3680	358	310	5234
Feb-22	3567	287	1405	181	191	98	1094	3671	339	312	5340
Mar-22	3545	328	1530	208	250	106	1224	4117	372	298	6063

## Appendix 4

### Topic Guide for grant recipients' interviews

#### **SSG End of Grant Evaluation: Semi-Structured Interview Topic Guide**

In March 2021, £2m of funding was contributed by the MoJ to wave two of the Community Justice Fund (CJF): a pooled fund with other independent funders, managed by the Access to Justice Foundation. This funding was called the Sector Sustainability Grant (SSG) and has supported 66 not-for-profit legal advice organisations in England and Wales for the financial year 2021-22 to:

1. Sustain advice services to address the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Increase access to justice through strategic innovation; and
3. Ensure widespread access to justice by awarding grants to improve access to advice for people who cannot currently access it (including vulnerable individuals who are unable access online support).

This grant follows the COVID-19 Specialist Advice Services Scheme (CSASS) grant (wave one of CJF) where the MoJ and DCMS provided £5.4m to not-for-profit providers of specialist legal advice to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020. The impact of the CSASS grant was captured in the end of grant report.<sup>16</sup> While the CSASS grant funding period ended in March 2021, the not-for-profit legal advice sector continued to feel and deal with the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic, which served as rationale for the renewed seed funding through SSG.

As part of the grant conditions, recipient organisations have been required to report on how they have used the funds, and track levels of service provision. As the grant funding period has elapsed, semi-structured interviews are being conducted with a small sample of seven grant recipients to:

1. Assess whether the grant met its objectives.

---

<sup>16</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1039750/csass-grant-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1039750/csass-grant-report.pdf)

2. Understand organisations' experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic until now and assess sectoral trends on advice sector expenditure, delivery methods, and technology uptake in comparison with the CSASS grant data as baseline (for those funded across both waves).
3. Gather feedback on data gathering process to take forward learnings on grant evaluation.

A key principle of the evaluation work has been to generate insight while minimising additional burdens on recipients and their clients. Thus, the sampling for the interviews is purposive based on organisational characteristics and monitoring data provided focusing on organisations whose data seems 'unique' in some way (i.e., large proportion of funding spent on one deliverable, changes in activity in 2020 vs 2021, serving a particularly vulnerable group(s) or geographical location etc).

**To grant recipients:** Many thanks for taking out the time to speak with us. We appreciate your efforts in providing us with consistent and reliable monitoring data that has enabled this evaluation of the Sector Sustainability Grant. The questions within this document are a guide and ahead of each interview, a review of the data submitted by your organisation and reasons for selection will be factored in when considering what questions take priority. While there is no need of advance preparation, being familiar with this indicative list of questions as reference might help us optimise our time together.

### **Overall Thoughts**

1. What have you seen to be the key benefits achieved for clients as a result of the SSG funding? Any case studies or narratives? (you can also send us a case study later if preferred)

### **Theme 1: Demand for Services**

2. Have you seen an increase in the demand for services since June 2021? Have you been able to service this demand, if so?
3. What areas of law has this demand spiked in or what are the types of issues people are presenting with?

## **Theme 2: Organisational Capacity**

4. More recently since after June 2021, have you been able to increase capacity in your organisation? If so, how?
5. What were the barriers to increasing capacity?

## **Theme 3: Delivery Methods**

6. What are your key delivery methods now and are they different from what you used primarily before the COVID-19 pandemic?
7. As a result of the change in delivery methods, have you had to reduce service?
8. What have been the learnings around delivering services remotely: positive and negative?
9. After the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, how do you foresee your strategy around delivery of specialist advice (and any docs you can signpost us to)?

## **Theme 4: Technology and Innovation**

10. Would you have any insights on why there has been a relatively small proportion of this grant spent on technology despite the shift to remote delivery over the COVID-19 pandemic?
11. Are there newer ways of reaching out to your clients, particularly those not who can't easily access your services, that you have adopted over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic?

## **Theme 5: Demographics of clients**

12. Could you give us any insight into the demographics of the clients you serve usually?
13. Have you noticed any new categories of clients seeking specialist advice as compared to pre COVID-19 pandemic times? What kind of issues are they facing?

## **Theme 6: Feedback on grant process and delivery**

14. How was your experience of this MoJ funding?
15. What are your thoughts on the nature of the grant and the data reporting process?
16. In delivering future advice and support of this kind, what would you consider essential to replicate, scale up, or do differently?

## Appendix 5

### Grant Recipients Survey Questionnaire

Please note that the same questionnaire was shared with grant recipients for mid grant data collection for the period of April 2021 to September 2021.

#### **Sector Sustainability Fund – Grant Monitoring October 2021 to March 2022**

##### **1. Introduction**

As part of receiving funding from the Community Justice Fund in 2021/22, your organisation is required to provide expenditure and monitoring data. This data will feed into Government reporting in order to provide financial assurances and demonstrate how grant funding has met its objectives. The monitoring data provided in this survey is important and should only take a short amount of time to complete.

Please submit the survey by **29 April 2022**. It is possible to save your progress and return to the survey using the 'Save and Continue Later' button at the bottom of the page. If you have any issues, please contact at the Access to Justice Foundation ([cjf@atjf.org.uk](mailto:cjf@atjf.org.uk)).

##### **2. Administrative Data**

Please select your organisation from the list provided below.

##### **3. Location of Organisation**

- (i) Please select the region where the main headquarters of your organisation are located from the list provided below. If the location is not available, please select 'Other' from the dropdown options and enter details into the 'Other' box provided below.
- (ii) Please select all locations where the grant funding is providing support. Please select 'N/A' if support is only being used in the region your organisation's headquarters is based.

#### 4. Monitoring Data (October 2021 - March 2022) - Activity Levels

This section covers activity and monitoring data within your organisation over October 2021 - March 2022. Where questions relate to “support”, please note: By “support”, we are referring to the number of individual cases you have provided advice/guidance to in relation to their legal problems, rights, and entitlements where they cannot afford a lawyer. Where one client is supported across multiple areas of law, please provide a single count across each (i.e. if someone has sought advice in relation to debt and employment, please count them under both areas of law). The same should apply where someone has sought support across months (i.e. if someone has sought advice in both August and September, please report them under both months)

- (i) Please report the number of individual cases that have been supported by your organisation as a whole each month between October 2021 and March 2022, and across areas of law listed below. Figures should be whole numbers.

#### 5. Monitoring Data (October 2021 - March 2022) - Delivery Methods

We are interested in how you are currently providing advice and guidance to your clients. Please provide an estimate of the proportion of support sessions that are taking place via the delivery methods below between October 2021 and March 2022. Please provide a whole number against each method below ensuring the ‘Total’ box adds up to 100. Please enter ‘0’ in boxes that are not applicable.

Telephone	%
Online Video Conferencing (i.e. Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, or other Video Conferencing technology)	%
Email	%
Website Form (e.g. “Contact Us” page form)	%
Face-to-Face - organisation’s office/premises	%
Face-to-Face - visits to clients or to other establishment (i.e. other third-sector establishments such as soup kitchens, shelters, etc.)	%
Other	%
Unknown (please enter “100” if you do not have this information)	%
Total:	%



Please provide details of other delivery methods or any commentary on delivery methods in the box below.

### **6. Monitoring Data (October 2021 - March 2022) - Website Visits**

If available, please provide information on the numbers of people visiting your website over the months listed below. A website visit is defined as one individual visitor who arrives at your web site and proceeds to browse. If data is not available for a certain month, please leave blank.

### **7. Feedback on Grant**

Please use the following text boxes to share your thoughts on the nature and delivery of this grant.

- (i) What worked well in terms of the nature and delivery of the grant?
- (ii) What did not work so well in terms of the nature and delivery of the grant and could be improved?

### **8. As part of the grant funding, your organisation is required to send through regular annotated expenditure reports to the Access to Justice Foundation.**

Please tick this box to confirm you are returning the expenditure report for the full grant spend till March 2022 to [cjf@atjf.org.uk](mailto:cjf@atjf.org.uk).

**Thank you for providing this data! If there is any other feedback or information that you would like to provide, please do so in the box provided below.**