Department for Work & Pensions

Government Social Research

Digital Skills, Channel Preferences and Access Needs

DWP customers

March 2024

DWP research report no. 1050.

A report of research carried out by Ipsos UK on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.

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First published March 2024.

ISBN 978-1-78659-641-3

Executive Summary

This research aimed to understand the level of digital skills of DWP customers. This includes which digital tools they use, which they would like to use and their ability to engage with digital products. It also aimed to quantify current access and support needs, including barriers to accessing digital channels and support needs required to access digital channels, and customer preferences by channel and self-serve.

This report presents the findings of DWP customers across 10 benefit lines: Attendance Allowance (AA), Bereavement Support Payment (BSP), Carers Allowance (CA), Disability Living Allowance for Children (DLAc), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Pension Credit (PC), Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Universal Credit (UC) and State Pension (SP).

Methodology

Ipsos conducted 7,998 interviews with DWP customers, between 20 March and 23 June 2023. 6,053 (76%) of these interviews were completed over the phone, and 1,945 (24%) were completed online. Customers were invited to take part in the online survey via email invite or by a push-to-web link included in a letter that informed them of the research. All who had not completed within two weeks were then contacted by telephone. All benefit customers for this research were sampled based on their latest benefit claimed.

Digital competency

- Overall, internet access was high amongst all DWP customers, with more than 8 in 10 (84%) accessing the internet at the time of the survey. However, this varied by benefit line, with the proportion of customers from each benefit who were accessing the internet shown below:
    - JSA: 97%
    - DLAc: 95%
    - UC: 93%
    - BSP: 93%
    - CA: 92%
    - SP: 86%
    - PIP: 84%
    - ESA: 81%
    - AA: 61%
    - PC: 55%

- However, there remained a minority (16%) of all DWP customers who said they were currently offline. This was made up of 9% who had never accessed the internet and 7% who no longer used the internet but had done so in the past.
- Over a third (36%) of PC customers and 3 in 10 (30%) AA customers reported that they had never used the internet.
- Self-reported internet usage had increased amongst all benefit lines in the last 12 months with the greatest increase seen amongst Work Related benefit customers. Customers claiming JSA, UC, BSP and DLAc showed the most increased use of the internet over the past year.
- The greatest self-reported decrease in internet usage in the last 12 months was seen amongst customers with a long-term sickness or disability. Customers claiming AA (21%), ESA (18%) and PIP (15%) were most likely to say they had decreased their internet usage in the last 12 months.
- Internet confidence was driven by customer age, level of education and social grade. Those who were younger (under 35), university educated or from higher social grades were the most confident. Long-term sick and retired customers reported lower internet confidence than other deeng;mographic subgroups.
- Confidence was also related to how often a customer accessed the internet, with confident users accessing the internet several times a day compared to unconfident users who were more likely to access the internet weekly or monthly. Customers with greater confidence were also more likely to access the internet outside of the home compared to unconfident users.
- Overall, customers mostly used their smartphone to go online, with Work Related customers significantly more likely than other benefit groups to report that they used one.

Barriers

- For those offline, a lack of digital confidence[1] and no interest in going online were the key reasons that they remained offline. This was a common factor across all benefit groups. There was a proportion of customers who simply will not engage digitally.
- However, cost and health conditions (that make using the internet difficult) were the key reasons some internet users do not have internet access at home.
- Concerns about fraud and security issues were the main barrier preventing more internet use amongst existing users.

Online Government Service usage

[1] Lack of digital skills / internet is too difficult to use / lack of confidence / worry about making mistakes

- Benefit customers that would struggle the most to 'apply for or manage their benefit online' included AA, PC, SP, ESA and PIP customers (at 54%, AA claimants had the lowest proportion saying they could do the task alone or with help). Work Related customers had the highest proportion who felt able to do this task either alone, or with the help of someone (at 95%, JSA claimants had the highest proportion). ESA and PIP customers relied on the help of others the most (46% of ESA customers and 45% of PIP customers).
- The majority of customers primarily managed their benefit claim by telephone. This is because this is often the only way to report a change in circumstance, with an online version not yet available. However, Work Related customers primarily contacted DWP via their online account (73% of UC customers contacted DWP online) or through a Jobcentre Plus (47% of JSA customers contacted DWP at a Jobcentre Plus, though the same percentage contacted by telephone). The telephone was significantly preferred by customers claiming ESA, CA, DLAc, PIP and PC. It is important to note for ESA, DLAc, PIP and PC, you cannot currently report changes online, so this preference is to be expected.
- Awareness of assistive or support services provided by DWP[2] was mixed. More than 2 in 5 Retirement & Bereavement customers and over a third of Carers customers were not aware of any support services at all.
- The main reason stopping DWP customers overall from accessing DWP services online was that they still preferred a level of human interaction-whether by phone or face-to-face.
- For simpler, more straightforward interactions, such as updating personal details and/or reporting a change in circumstances, there was a level of openness towards engaging with DWP digitally. However, channel preference was driven by the complexity of the engagement and customers were hesitant to move fully online. For activities like disputing decisions or resolving queries, customers still preferred to use the telephone. There was a preference for healthcare professional assessments to remain face-to-face.
- Openness to using an online portal to manage benefits online was closely linked to overall confidence in using the internet. JSA (88% would use a portal), BSP (79%), DLAc (79%), UC (78%) and CA customers (74%) were amongst the benefit customers most likely to use one if it was available. Customers who were offline at the time of the research were more likely to say they would use a portal in future if they had previously used the internet in the past.

[2] Assistive support services provided by DWP were face-to-face support at a Jobcentre, communication by email, a home visit from a visiting officer, text phone, video relay service and Relay UK

Support and Digital Skills

- It should also be noted that the more vulnerable customers (typically the long-term sick, retired and those with no formal qualifications) were more likely to prefer using the telephone when interacting with DWP for any reason. These customers typically had lower digital confidence levels than younger, more qualified benefit customers.
- Assuming customers wanted to use a DWP digital service, most would welcome over-the-phone support with a DWP advisor to help make or manage their claim. However, there is opportunity for targeted support for different customer groups. The phone was preferred for customers with long-term sickness/disability and those with no formal qualifications, whereas chat box/video guidance was more welcomed by younger (under 45) and Work-Ready customers.
- However, there remained a group of customers (from the most vulnerable groups) who reported that DWP could not make them more likely to use digital services in future (mainly a small proportion of AA and PC customers).

Cost of Living

- When combining customers who reported that they were experiencing “no impact” as a result of the cost of living crisis with those who were making savings elsewhere to enable them to use the internet /mobile data (or who were using the internet to help them reduce other costs), it is estimated that half (51%) of DWP customers have been able to continue using digital services as ‘usual.’
- However, around a third (32%) of DWP customers had already taken steps to reduce their expenditure on internet and mobile data usage so that they could continue to afford other bills. Over one in ten (11%) plan to give up using broadband internet or mobile data for the same reason.
- Awareness and take up of social broadband tariffs were relatively low. Only 2 in 10 (21%) of DWP customers who responded to the survey were aware that social broadband tariffs exist. Of these, only 1 in 10 (11%) had applied for one and received it. DWP continues to work with Department for Science Innovation and Technology (DSIT) who own the social broadband tariff policy to ensure DWP operational colleagues are aware of the latest broadband tariffs and can signpost customers to them.

Recommendations

- DWP might consider providing targeted support to help particular customer groups, namely:
    - Help to increase confidence of those long-term sick and retired
    - Provide phone assistance (assisted digital services) for those currently offline and with low confidence
    - Support previous internet users back online

    - Inform and educate customers of support available to them, including face-to-face Jobcentre support, home visits, email communications, text phone and video relay services

- Customers who used the internet but not at home were a small minority group (typically AA and ESA customers). The biggest barriers they reported was the cost of the internet, alongside relying on others to go online for them and a lack of interest. The advice would be for DWP to continue to raise awareness of the social broadband tariffs available, given the particularly low awareness seen in this research.
- Although a minority, the biggest barriers for offline customers was simply a lack of interest and fear that they lacked digital skills, and the internet was felt to be too difficult. Given the demographic profile of these customers, it would be a particular challenge to engage them all in digital services and DWP should be aware that many would simply not engage.
- For future digital services, it is important that DWP customers find them easy to use and they should be compatible on multiple devices. However, DWP may still need to offer alternative channels of support as human interaction is preferred for some more complex elements of a benefit claim, including resolving payment and non-payment related queries, or disputing decisions and making complaints.
- Typically, the majority of customers preferred to access the internet via a smartphone. A range of different devices were favoured by different customer groups, with older customers more likely to engage with tablets. If future DWP digital services were compatible with a range of different devices, it could lead to higher take up amongst all DWP customers. The report also highlights that Apps would engage younger customers and those with higher levels of digital skills. It is therefore worth DWP considering whether offering services via an App is viable.
- Overall, reassurances around website legitimacy and fewer online adverts would encourage customers to use the internet for more activities. Customers were more open to engaging with DWP online for easier interactions such as updating personal details, checking the progress of their claim, submitting supporting evidence or registering an initial claim. The activity that customers were most open to engaging with DWP online through a website was for updating their personal details such as bank or home address information.
- There is an opportunity for DWP to potentially signpost customers to other digital channels but with appropriate support going forward. But DWP should also be mindful that not all customers will want to engage digitally nor have internet access at home. Therefore, future service design should be reflective that a variety of channels are needed and ensure alternative non-digital options remain available to those who most need them.

1. Contents

Acknowledgements

This research was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). We were very grateful to the guidance and support offered throughout by the Research Team at DWP, and particularly to Ashley Overton-Bullard, Ailsa Redhouse (Disability Analysis Division) and Bryony Aird, Sophie Ferguson, Hazel Tetsill and Eliza Wojtas (Business Strategy). We would also like to acknowledge and thank all the research participants for giving up their time to participate in interviews and providing valuable information on their experiences and views.

Authors credits

Juliette Albone, Associate Director, headed up the Ipsos team responsible for the research. Jack Watson, Research Manager, was responsible for the day-to-day management of the study. Anna Challen and Esme Burrage, Research Executives, worked on the fieldwork, delivery, and analysis for this project.

Glossary and abbreviations

Attendance Allowance: help with extra costs if you have disability severe enough that you need someone to help look after you.

Bereavement Support Payment: paid to the husband/wife or partner of a person who had died in the previous 21 months.

Carers Allowance: paid to people who care for a disabled person at least 35 hours a week.

Disability Living Allowance for Children: paid to eligible claimants under the age of 16 who have personal care and/or mobility needs as a result of a disability.

Employment and Support Allowance: money to help with living costs if you are unable to work, support to get back into work if you are able to. You can apply for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) if you have a disability or health condition that affects how much you can work. You can apply if you are employed, self-employed or unemployed.

Health Transformation Programme: The HTP is transforming the Personal Independence Payment service, introducing a simpler application process, including an option to apply online, improved evidence gather and a more tailored journey for customers.

Jobseeker's Allowance: an unemployment benefit you can claim while looking for work.

New Style Employment Support Allowance: a contributory benefit, New Style ESA is a fortnightly payment that can be claimed on its own or at the same time as Universal Credit (UC).

Pension Credit: gives you extra money to help with your living costs if you are over State Pension age and on a low income.

Personal Independence Payment: can help with extra living costs if you have both a long-term physical or mental health condition or disability and difficulty doing certain everyday tasks or getting around because of your condition. You can get PIP even if you are working, have savings or are getting most other benefits.

Road to Digital and Data[3]: A common cross-government vision that by 2025, the UK government will be a transformed, more efficient digital government that provides better outcomes for everyone by exceeding public expectations, equipping civil servants for a digital future and enhancing government efficiency and security.

[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/roadmap-for-digital-and-data-2022-to-2025/transforming-for-a-digital-future-2022-to-2025-roadmap-for-digital-and-data#about-the-governments-2022-25-roadmap-for-digital-and-data

State Pension: a payment for those over state pension age with at least 10 qualifying years on National Insurance Record. You would be able to claim the new State Pension if you were: a man born on or after 6 April 1951, a woman born on or after 6 April 1953. If you reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016, these rules did not apply. Instead, you would get the basic state pension.

Universal Credit: a payment to help with living costs. Claimants may be out of work, working (including self-employed or part time), or unable to work, for example because of a health condition.

Abbreviations

AA: Attendance Allowance

BSP: Bereavement Support Payment

CA: Carers Allowance

DLAc: Disability Living Allowance for Children

DSIT: Department for Science Innovation and Technology

DWP: Department for Work and Pensions

ESA: Employment and Support Allowance

HTP: Health Transformation Programme

JSA: Jobseeker's Allowance

PC: Pension Credit

PIP: Personal Independence Payment

SP: State Pension

UC: Universal Credit

In this report, DWP's customers have been reported on in the following way:

Caring benefit customers: Those whose latest benefit received is CA and AA.

Disability benefit customers: Those whose latest benefit received is PIP, ESA and DLAc.

Retirement & Bereavement benefit customers: Those whose latest benefit received is SP, PC and BSP.

Work Related benefit customers: Those whose latest benefit received is UC and JSA.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

The recent COVID-19 pandemic accelerated individuals' use of online services, including amongst those who had previously been digitally assisted or digitally excluded.[4]

Many digitalisation and service transformation projects were already underway across the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

Developing digital services is a key priority area for the department, however, there was a lack of data related to the digital skills, access needs and preferences of customers across different benefit lines.

The findings from the research will be used to inform service design and channel strategies, which will shape the longer-term direction of DWP's transformation. This will include, but not limited to the Health Transformation Programme, Move to Universal Credit, and retirement service transformation including Get Your State Pension.

2.2 Research objectives

This research aimed to robustly quantify the level of digital skills of customers, including which digital tools they used, which they would have liked to use and their ability to engage with digital products. It looked at the access and support needs of customers, including the barriers to accessing digital channels and the support needs required to allow these customers to access digital channels provided by DWP. It also uncovered customer preferences by channel and self-serve, including which channels claimants preferred to engage with when contacting DWP and whether these preferences varied by reason for engagement and their overall preferences when accessing government services online. It provided an understanding of how customers with or without current internet access vary in their needs. In line with the cost-of-living crisis, customers' approaches to reducing internet and data usage costs were also outlined in this research.

2.3 Methodology

Ipsos conducted a multi-mode survey across online and telephone for this research. All customers in the sample for whom we had an email address (3,983 records) were invited to take part in the survey with an online invitation. The email provided information about the survey and how their data would be used. It contained a unique

[4] https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/essential-digital-skills-uk-2020

embedded link for respondents to complete the survey as well as an unsubscribe link to opt out. Customers were sent two email reminders over the course of fieldwork.

Customers without an email address (56, 341 records) were sent a letter informing them of the research and were encouraged to take part online through a push-to-web URL link included within the letter text alongside a unique code for them to access the survey online. This letter made clear that they would be contacted by a telephone interviewer after a specified date if they had not completed online or contacted Ipsos to opt out of the research. For records within the sample that were flagged as having an appointee who could act on their behalf (8,247 records), letters were addressed to the appointee. This appointee was also able to complete the telephone interview once contacted as part of the follow up. Customers contacted by telephone could also be signposted to complete the online survey, if they preferred to take part that way.

While efforts were made to be inclusive, by offering both online and telephone for people to respond to the survey and allowing for appointees to complete the survey on a customer's behalf, there may be some people in the population who were unable to answer the survey via either option. It is important to note the possibility of the responses being not fully representative due to this, and to consider that people who were not able to complete the survey may be more likely to have low digital skills. The demographic profile of respondents who completed the survey can be found in Chapter 10.2. Overall response rate to the survey was 13.2%.

A sequential multi-mode design was used because of the increased response rates it generates, improved representativeness of customers and reduced costs, as it encourages a substantial group of customers to take part online, rather than them being required to be called by a telephone interviewer. One of the motivations for offering the telephone mode in addition to the push-to-web survey was to provide those without digital access the opportunity to take part, particularly important for a survey related to digital skills of DWP customers.

Between 20 March and 23 June 2023, 7,998 interviews were conducted with DWP customers. 6,053 (76%) of these interviews were completed over the phone, and 1,945 (24%) were completed online. Table 1, showing the number of completes per benefit line, is included below.

Table 1: Number of completes per benefit line

Benefit	Number of completes	Benefit	Number of completes
ESA	551	CA	550
PIP	3,008	AA	556
DLAc[5]	553	SP	554

[5] For DLAc, we spoke to the adult responsible for the child and asked them about their experience of claiming DLAc and their own, personal digital capabilities

JSA	550	PC	551
UC	553	BSP	562

2.3.1 Sample

The sample was provided by DWP and stratified by type of benefit. To select the sample, each benefit customer was assigned to the benefit sampling strata based on their most recent claimed benefit. This therefore means that the definition of the study population is based on the last claimed benefit; in other words, the survey estimate for each benefit line is actually an estimate for customers for whom that benefit was the most recently claimed. DWP supplied the equivalent population estimates for the counts of customers also based on the last benefit claimed. Please note, that as customers were sampled based on their latest benefit claimed through DWP, customers from each benefit line referred to in this report may also be claiming other benefits. The demographic profile of those who responded to the survey can be found in Chapter 10.2.

2.3.2 Weighting

The weighting consisted of a single stage of random iterative method (RIM) weighting, carried out separately for the samples for each benefit to population totals provided by DWP. These population figures were based on the most recent benefit claimed not the total benefit population overall. Although not directly comparable to the general population of customers for each benefit line, the allocation to the latest benefit claimed was consistent between our achieved sample and the population counts and meant that we were able to weight directly to those counts (Section 10.4).

The PIP sample (3,008) was larger than any other benefit lines (ranging from 550-556), to allow for additional sub-group analysis on PIP customers only. An additional weight was added to the data included in this report to give equal weight to each benefit line, so that comparisons could be drawn and the overall sample was not skewed by the additional PIP customers.

The PIP sample was weighted to: age group by gender; original year of claim; region; daily living, mobility and current award; current award length. Other benefits were weighted to: age group; gender; original year of claim; and region.

Interpreting the data

Percentages referenced throughout the report may not always equal 100% due to rounding. Where subgroup analysis has been included this is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

3. All DWP Customers

This section summarises the key findings across all DWP benefit lines (JSA, DLAc, UC, BSP, CA, SP, PIP, ESA, AA and PC). It looks at digital capabilities, barriers to internet usage, and how this impacts customers being able to access government services online. Also included are findings related to customers' digital preferences and access needs, the impact of the cost of living on digital access and what would encourage DWP customers to use digital services in future.

Digital capabilities

Overall, internet usage of DWP customers was high. With the exception of AA and PC customers, more than 8 in 10 customers from all other benefits were accessing the internet[6] at the time of the survey.

Internet access at the time of the research per benefit:

- JSA: 97%
- DLAc: 95%
- UC: 93%
- BSP: 93%
- CA: 92%
- SP: 86%
- PIP: 84%
- ESA: 81%
- AA: 61%
- PC: 55%

Overall, internet usage has increased over the last 12 months, mainly driven by increased usage amongst Work Related customers. However, over a third (36%) of PC customers and 3 in 10 (30%) AA customers reported that they had never used the internet.

It must be remembered that the digital usage landscape is complex. Only a minority of customers remained offline. These were typically older customers, those with no formal qualifications and lower social grade (C2DE) customers. Digital confidence was lower amongst the long-term sick, retired, those with no formal qualifications and lower social grade (C2DE) customers, particularly those claiming ESA, PIP, PC and

[6] Internet use includes E-mail, web browsing/surfing and other online services such as downloading but does not cover time when you were connected but not using it.

AA. These benefit customers were also the most likely to have seen self -reported decreased internet usage over the last 12 months.

Current internet use was also closely linked to home broadband access; significantly fewer AA and PC customers had this. However, these two benefit lines also showed the greatest proportion of non-internet users who reported no need to access the internet or no interest in using the internet. For example, 1 in 10 AA customers reported having internet access, but never using it. Therefore, it should be acknowledged that there was a proportion of customers, particularly older customers claiming AA and PC, who would not engage digitally and would need alternative channel options when dealing with DWP.

Overall, the level of internet confidence was driven by customer age, level of education, social grade and how often a customer accessed the internet. In terms of benefit customers, lower internet confidence was seen amongst both AA and PC customers –which makes sense given AA customers were mostly aged over 75 and PC customers had the highest proportion of customers with no qualifications. In contrast, the most confident internet users were seen amongst Work Related customers and more than three quarters of DLAc, CA and BSP customers also reported they felt confident in their ability to use the internet. Confident users typically accessed the internet several times a day compared to unconfident users, who were more likely to access the internet weekly or monthly. Use of the internet outside of the home was also more prevalent amongst confident internet users.

It is important to design services that are targeted around different users. Customers were accessing the internet on different devices. While smartphones remained the most used device by all benefit lines to access the internet, a larger proportion of retired and bereavement customers would use laptops, desktops and tablets compared to other benefit lines. The implication for DWP is that online services should be compatible on multiple devices as customers are also using laptops, desktops and tablets to some extent. DWP should ensure that digital services are easy to use and accessible for all customers.

Overall, use of assistive technology was relatively low amongst all benefit customers. Disability benefit customers were the most likely to be using assistive technology to help them access the internet. However, only around 4 in 10 ESA and PIP customers were accessing such services, so there is potential opportunity for DWP to raise awareness and educate customers of the benefits these assistive services can offer.

Barriers

There are different barriers impacting internet usage. Lacking digital skills, having no interest in the internet, or having someone else go online on their behalf were the key reasons why the minority of customers were currently offline. As mentioned above, a higher proportion of PC and AA customers expressed no interest in accessing the internet and were the least digitally engaged customers. Disability customers were significantly more likely to cite their health condition as a reason for remaining offline as their health condition or disability made using the internet difficult.

Although a small proportion of the DWP customer base, internet users without access at home were most likely AA customers or ESA customers. For those internet users who did not have the internet at home but did use it elsewhere, cost was the biggest factor preventing them being online at home. To a lesser extent health concerns, having support from others to go online and feeling the internet was too complicated were also reasons given by this group of customers. There is potential opportunity for DWP to support this small group more and potentially promote awareness of social tariffs to help ease cost concerns of broadband use.

Amongst existing internet users, fraud and security issues were the main barrier preventing more internet use. Clear messaging and communication to reassure customers of internet security is key and could help DWP demonstrate its high levels of online safety and security. Overall, reassurances around DWP website legitimacy and generally having less online adverts would encourage customers to use the internet for more activities.

A lack of digital skills and their health conditions particularly prevent PIP, ESA and AA customers from using the internet more. Disability benefit customers were also the most likely to say improved accessibility would encourage further internet use.

Accessing Government services

There was consistency in customers who found it more difficult to carry out general internet activities without help. These were typically the long-term sick, retired and those with no formal qualifications, and therefore more likely claiming ESA, PIP, PC and AA. There is an opportunity to raise awareness of assisted services to this group. Higher than average proportions of both ESA and PIP customers reported use of assisted services would encourage them to use the internet for more activities in the future. Also, above average proportions of both ESA and PIP customers found it difficult to find the information they need on GOV.UK.

Benefit customers that would most struggle to ‘apply for or manage their benefit online’ included AA, PC, SP, ESA and PIP customers. In contrast, Work Related customers had the highest proportion who felt able to ‘apply for or manage their benefits online’ alone, or with the help of someone. PIP and ESA relied on the help of others the most compared to other benefit lines.

Customer experiences of using GOV.UK varied by benefit line. Customers claiming AA, SP, PC and ESA were significantly more likely than other benefit lines to report having never used GOV.UK. As some benefit customers find the site difficult to find the necessary information, DWP need to make things clear on the site for customers.

If a single portal[7] was available to manage all benefits online, almost two thirds (64%) of DWP customers would use it. Openness to using an online portal to manage benefits online was closely linked to overall confidence in using the internet and

[7] A ‘portal’ was defined in the survey as follows: “By portal, we mean a webpage or website that provides users an entryway to a variety of information, tools, links and more.”

customers who were offline at the time of the research were more likely to say they would use a portal in future if they had previously used the internet in the past.

Channel preferences and support needed

The majority of all benefit customers primarily managed their benefit claim by telephone; however, Work Related customers primarily contact DWP via their online account or through Jobcentre Plus. The phone was significantly more likely to be used by customers claiming ESA, CA, DLAc, PIP and PC. And nearly half of JSA customers (47%) contact DWP by attending a Jobcentre Plus. Therefore, it will be important to maintain a variety of alternative contact channels in the future for certain customers.

However, channel preference was driven by the complexity of the customer engagement. In terms of engaging with DWP, the importance of personal interaction was clear for more complicated issues. Overall, the telephone was the most preferred channel of interaction for resolving any payment related queries or issues, disputing decisions or making a complaint. The main reason stopping people from accessing services online was that they still preferred a level of human interaction.

Customers would prefer to engage with DWP online for easier interactions such as updating personal details, checking progress of claim, submitting supporting evidence or registering a claim.

It should also be noted that the more vulnerable customers (typically the long-term sick, retired and those with no formal qualifications) were more likely to prefer using the telephone when interacting with DWP for any reason. These customers also have lower digital confidence levels, so there is an opportunity for DWP to potentially sign post to other digital channels but to provide the appropriate support going forward.

As mentioned earlier, the importance of personal interaction should not be underestimated. Assuming customers wanted to use a DWP digital service, most would welcome over the phone support with a DWP advisor to help make or manage their claim. However, there is opportunity for targeted support for different customer groups. The phone was preferred for customers with long-term sickness/disability and those with no formal qualifications, whereas chat box/video guidance was more welcomed by younger (under 45) and Work Related customers.

However, there remain a group of customers (from the most vulnerable groups) who would not use digital services (mainly a small proportion of AA and PC customers).

To summarise, DWP should ensure support is targeted to help particular customer groups, namely:

- Help to increase confidence of those long-term sick and retired.
- Provide assistance (assisted digital services) for those currently offline and with low confidence.
- Support previous internet users back online.

Cost of living

At the time of the research, overall, a third of all customers had taken steps to reduce the costs associated with the internet as a result of the cost of living crisis. Action was most likely to be taken by those who were more educated. The most vulnerable groups (typically the long-term sick, retired and those with no formal qualifications) were least likely to have taken any action to reduce their costs.

Encouraging future digital use

Keeping in touch with family and friends was the most cited reasons amongst most benefit customers that would encourage them to develop their digital skills in the future. However, Work Related customers were most interested in free training and developing new skills.

Work Related customers and those under 55 were most likely to be encouraged to develop their digital skills further to access benefits through online Government services.

Overall, around 6 in 10 benefit customers would use a single portal to manage all their benefits online, if it was available, although take up would be significantly lower amongst the more vulnerable, particularly those claiming ESA, PIP, PC, AA.

Openness to using a portal was closely linked to overall confidence in using the internet. AA and PC customers were the least confident and least open to a portal. Work Related, BSP, DLAc and CA customers were the most confident and most open to using a single portal to manage all their benefits online.

A fifth of customers currently offline report they would use a single portal to manage all their benefits online, if it was available. These were typically customers who had used the internet in the past. Although a small proportion, there remained a minority of non-internet users who will not engage digitally.

4. Disability

This section covers Disability customers' internet usage; where they access the internet, and the devices and assistive technologies used to go online. It summarises customers' confidence in their ability to go online and barriers to internet access at home or in general. Comparisons are made between those receiving DLAc, PIP and ESA. In places throughout this chapter, it is possible to present more detailed information on PIP due to the boosted sample size for this benefit line.

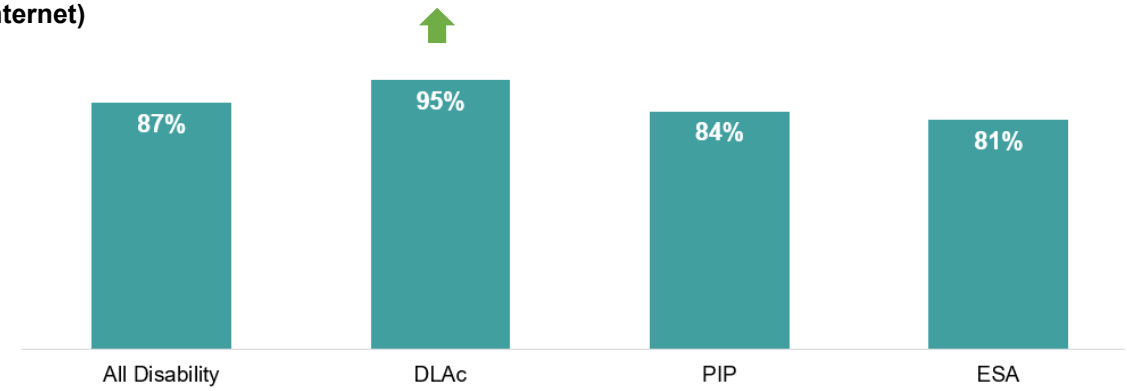
4.1 Digital capabilities

4.1.1 Internet usage

At the time of the survey more than 8 in 10 customers, whose latest benefit claim was a disability benefit, were currently accessing the internet. See Figure 4.1.1 below. A small proportion of customers had tried the internet in the past (either once or twice or more frequently) but don't use it anymore (7% for both PIP and ESA and just 2% for DLAc). Around 1 in 10 PIP and ESA customers had never used the internet (12% ESA and 9% PIP) and this falls to just 2% amongst DLAc customers.

Similar proportions of both ESA and PIP customers can therefore be considered as non-internet users (18% ESA and 16% PIP). This falls to a significantly lower proportion of DLAc customers reporting they were not current internet users (5%).

Figure 4.1.1: Have you ever accessed the internet? (Percentage currently accessing the internet)



Base: All customers DLAc (553), PIP (3,008), and ESA customers (551)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

The profile of those who were currently accessing the internet depended on a range of factors, including a customer's employment status and age.

Almost all employed customers were accessing the internet at the time of the survey (97% of employed DLAc customers, 97% of employed PIP customers) as well as a similarly high proportion of students (96% of PIP students, 91% of DLAc students).

Customers over 55 years old were less likely to be internet users (74% ESA and 78% PIP).

Those whose working status was long-term sick or disabled (68% of all ESA and 47% of all PIP customers) or retired (6% of all ESA customers, were the most likely to have never used the internet. 15% of retired ESA customers and 13% of long-term sick ESA customers had never used it, as well as 12% of long-term sick PIP customers.

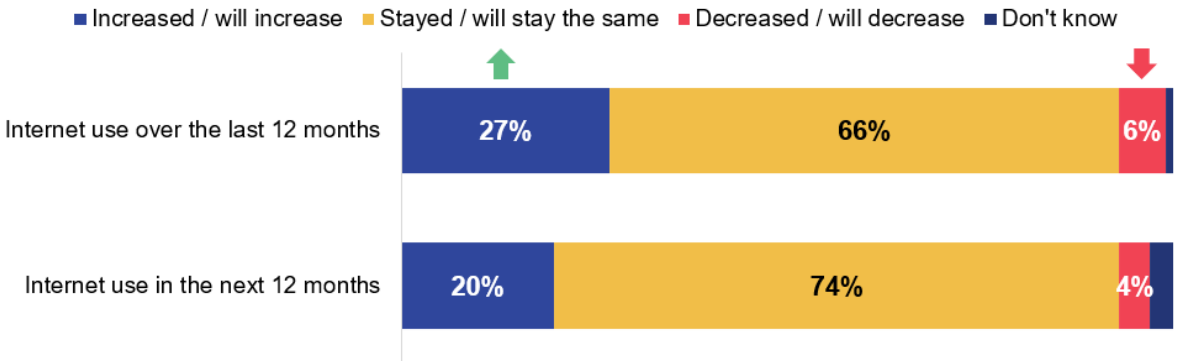
4.1.2 Usage trends

Over the past 12 months, over a quarter of DLAc customers who had used the internet (27%) reported that their internet usage had increased. This was significantly higher than for both PIP and ESA.

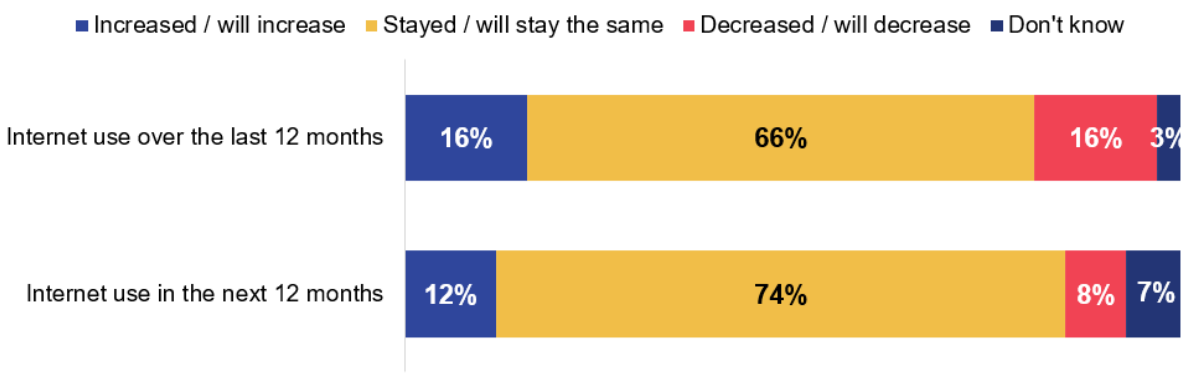
Similar proportions of both PIP and ESA customers reported that their internet usage had decreased over the past 12 months (16% and 18% respectively). See Figure 4.1.2. This shows that customers with a long-term sickness or disability were more likely to have decreased their internet usage than other customers.

Figure 4.1.2: In the last 12 months, has your personal use of the internet increased, stayed the same or decreased? In 12 months from now, do you think your personal use of the internet will increase, decrease, or stay the same?

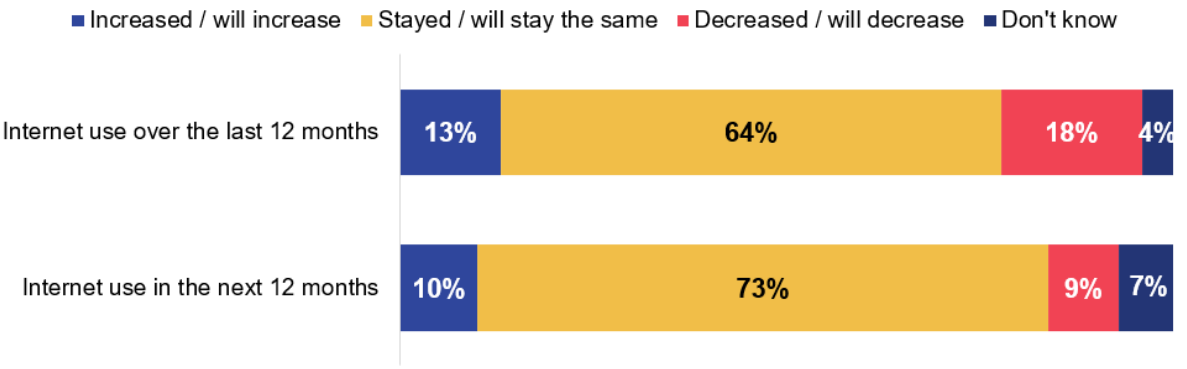
DLAc



PIP



ESA



Base: All who have used the internet in the last year (DLAc 539, PIP 2,706, ESA 485), all customers asked about future internet use (DLAc 553, PIP 3,008, ESA 551)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Looking ahead 12 months (Figure 4.1.2), almost three quarters of all disability benefit customers expect their personal use of the internet would stay the same (74%). However, a fifth of DLAc customers (20%) thought it would increase compared to around 1 in 10 PIP and ESA customers (PIP 12%, ESA 10%). This was likely due to the demographic profile, with the majority of both ESA and PIP customers (over 80%) reporting that their disability limits their day to day activities 'a lot'.

A minority of customers felt that their future usage would decrease (DLAc 4%, PIP 8% and ESA 9%).

4.1.3 Devices and assistive technology

Smartphone was the device used most frequently by disability benefit customers to access the internet. Given the high proportions of customers accessing the internet via their smartphones, it is important that DWP online services are mobile compatible, as this was the main way many customers accessed the internet.

Although smartphone usage was high, when looking at all customers who report any disability, those reporting a physical condition were significantly less likely to use a smartphone than those customers reporting a mental health condition (77%

compared to 83% respectively). In comparison, tablets (42%) and laptop, netbook or desktop computers (54%) were more typically favoured by customers who report a physical condition than those with a mental health condition (36% and 49%).

Just over half of customers used a laptop or desktop computer (DLAc 55%, PIP 53% and ESA 51%). A significantly higher proportion of DLAc customers used a tablet like an iPad, Kindle Fire or Google Nexus (43% compared to 38% PIP and 35% ESA).

Around 4 in 10 (42% PIP, 41% ESA and 38% DLAc) customers of each of the benefit lines used assistive technologies.

The most commonly used assistive technology amongst disability customers accessing the internet was a voice assistant such as Alexa, Siri or Google Assistant (DLAc 33%, ESA 32% and PIP 31%).

Amongst all customers who reported a disability[8], those who reported a mental health condition were significantly more likely to use any form of assistive technology compared to customers who reported a physical condition (40% compared to 36%). Usage was lowest amongst customers who reported a musculoskeletal or physical injury (36%) compared to all other physical conditions.

Screen magnifiers, such as ZoomText, Apple Zoom, Windows Magnifier were more likely used by ESA and PIP customers (15% and 11%), as was voice recognition software (7% ESA and 9% PIP).

4.1.4 Internet access inside and outside the home

A majority of DLAc customers (94%) who responded to the survey had internet access at home and used it via broadband. In comparison, internet access at home was lower for both PIP (80%) and ESA customers (73%).

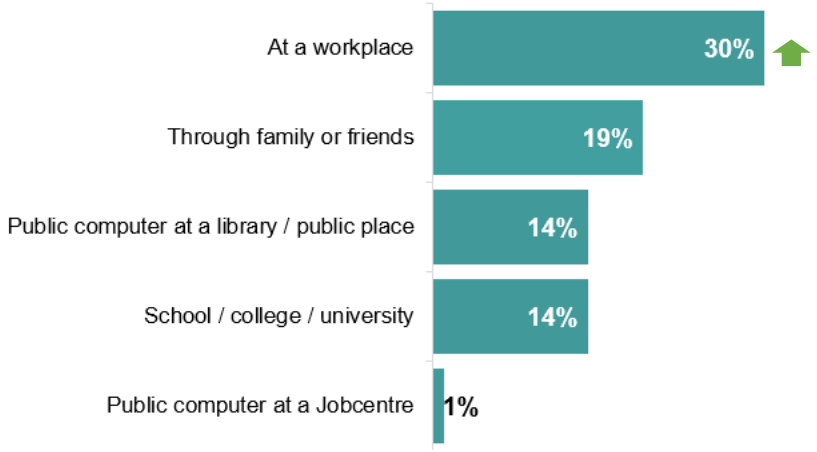
Customers claiming DLAc were more likely to access the internet outside the home. This tended to be at their workplace (30%) through family and friends (19%), on a public computer (14%) or in a school, college or university (14%).

Internet access outside of the home was much less frequent amongst ESA and PIP customers (Figure 4.1.4). Overall, 38% of ESA customers and 45% of PIP customers currently using the internet accessed it in a place other than their home. The most common ways to access were through friends and family (15% and 16% respectively).

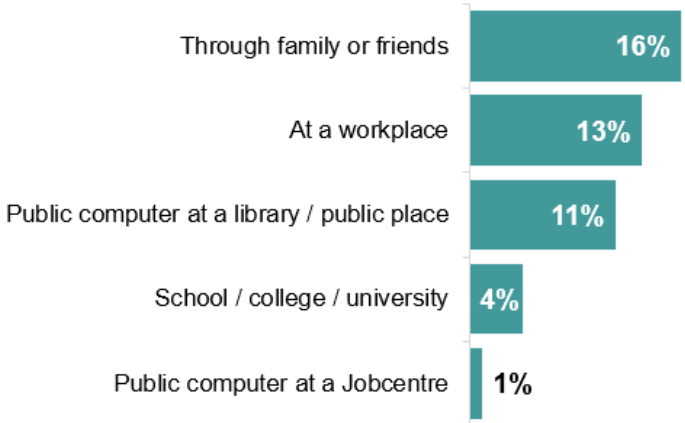
[8] Based on all customers self-reporting a disability from all benefit lines

Figure 4.1.4: Do you ever access the internet anywhere other than in your home at all?

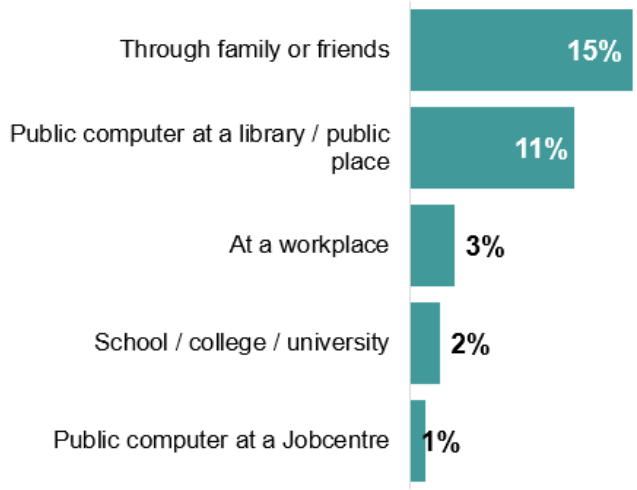
DLAc



PIP



ESA



Base: All customers who go online at home and/or elsewhere (ESA 440, PIP 2,494, DLAc 527) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

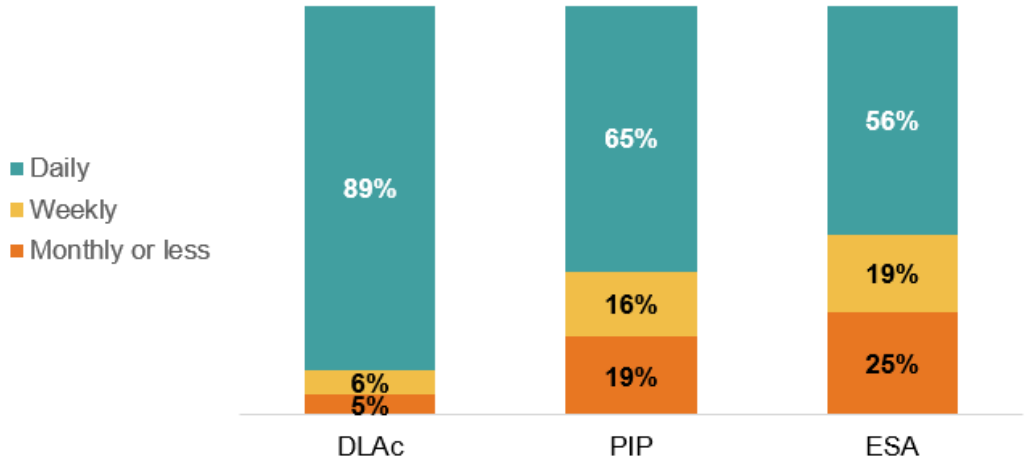
PIP customers who were claiming multiple benefits (compared to those customers who were only claiming PIP) were significantly more likely to report they did not access the internet away from their homes (59%). This was particularly noted amongst customers claiming PIP and ESA (64%).

4.1.5 Internet use

The majority of DLAc customers (89%) were accessing the internet on a daily basis. This was significantly higher than amongst PIP (65%) and ESA customers (56%).

Near a fifth of ESA customers (19%) used the internet on a weekly basis, with a similar proportion of PIP customers (16%) accessing the internet weekly. A minority of all benefit lines accessed the internet on a monthly basis, though both PIP and ESA had a higher proportion of customers to access it less often than monthly or never.

Figure 4.1.5: How often do / did you use the internet? (Including both work and personal use)



Base: All customers ESA (551), PIP (3,008), DLA (553)

Amongst all customers who reported a disability[9], those who reported a sensory impairment or communication problems were significantly less likely to use the internet on a daily basis (62%), compared to all other conditions.

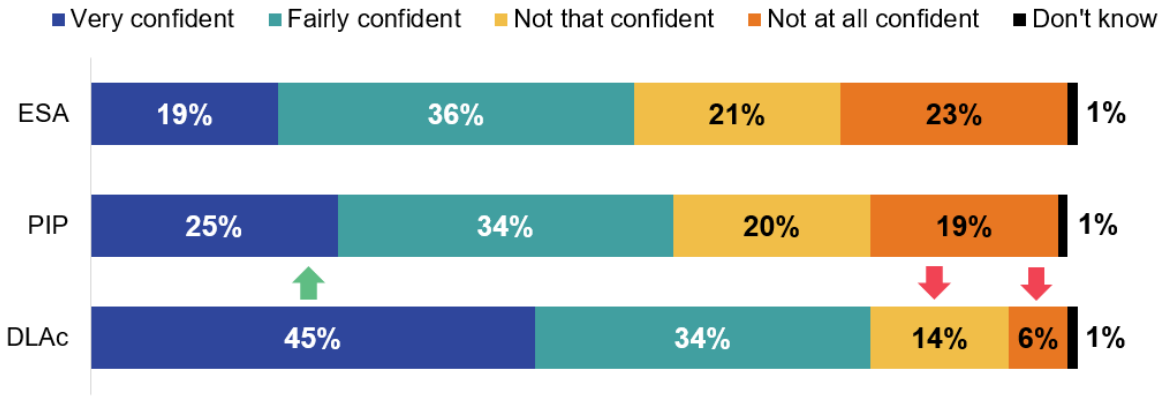
4.1.6 Internet confidence

Overall, almost 8 in 10 DLAc customers (79%) were confident in their ability to use the internet. This was significantly higher than both PIP and ESA customers (58% and 55% respectively).

Around two fifths of both PIP (39%) and ESA (44%) customers reported they were not confident in their ability to use the internet (Figure 4.1.6).

[9] Based on all customers reporting a disability from all benefit lines

Figure 4.1.6: How confident, if at all, do you feel in your ability to use the internet?



Base: All customers (PIP 3,008, DLAc 553, ESA 551)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Confidence was related to how often a customer accessed the internet, with confident users more likely accessing the internet several times a day compared to unconfident users. Customers with greater confidence were also more likely to access the internet outside of the home compared to unconfident users.

Amongst all customers who self-reported a disability[10], those customers who reported a physical condition were less confident in their ability to use the internet than customers who reported a mental health condition (57% compared to 53%). Confidence levels were lowest amongst customers who reported a musculoskeletal or physical injury (48% not confident) and those with sensory impairments or communication problems (51% not confident).

PIP Customers

Internet confidence amongst PIP customers was also closely associated with customer age and level of education. Three quarters (75%) of 16-24 year olds reported that they were confident. Internet confidence gradually declined by age range, falling to 45% for those aged over 60. Those under 35 were more likely than the average PIP customer to be employed or actively looking for a job, both situations in which they might be required to use certain digital skills.

The most confident PIP customers were those who were university educated. Of these customers, 85% were confident internet users with the majority being “very confident” users. In comparison, those customers with no formal qualifications had much lower confidence levels, with 39% reporting they were not confident at all in using the internet. Customers with no formal qualifications were more likely to be older so there was a level of interaction between these two factors impacting confidence. Two thirds of PIP customers (66%) with no qualifications reported that they were not confident in using the internet to some degree.

[10] Based on all customers reporting a disability from all benefit lines

4.1.7 Needing support when accessing the internet

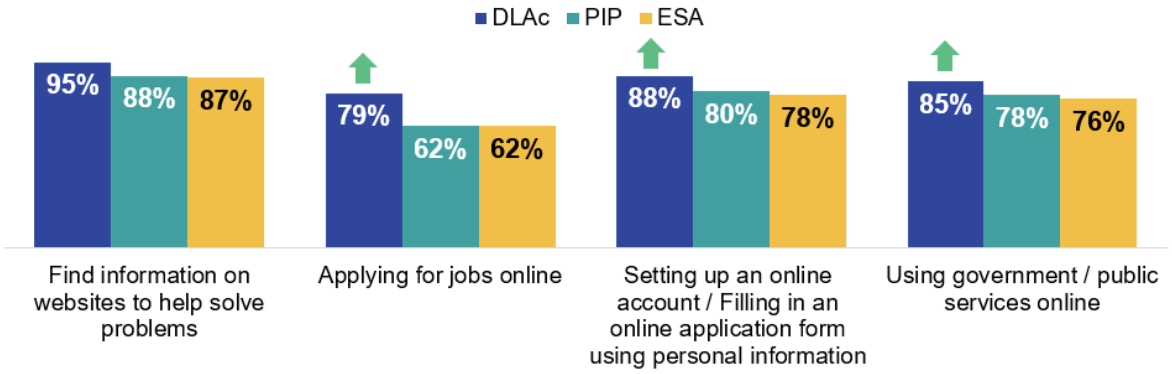
Customers who had used the internet at any point were asked whether they could perform certain activities online, either with or without help (Figure 4.1.7). As shown below, a significantly higher proportion of DLAc customers were able to perform these activities either alone or with help, compared to PIP and ESA customers.

However, relatively higher proportions (over 8 in 10) of all disability benefit groups were able to look for information on websites either with or without help. Three quarters (75%) of DLAc customers felt they could do this alone, as did 57% of PIP customers and 54% of ESA customers. Around a third of both ESA (33%) and PIP (31%) said they could do this with help.

Applying for jobs online was the activity where most support would be needed for each of the benefit lines. Only around a third of PIP (35%) and ESA customers (32%) felt they could do this alone, without help.

Figure 4.1.7: Thinking now about the following general activities that you can do on the internet. Which, if any, of the following activities could you do online either with or without help?

% that could do task either alone or with help



Base: All customers who have used the internet, currently or in the past (ESA 485, PIP 2,706, DLAc 539)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

For those that identified they needed help with some online activities, both PIP and DLAc customers said they would usually turn to family members who lived with them to help (56% and 64% respectively), whereas ESA customers would be equally likely to turn to family members who lived elsewhere as well as those who lived with them (both 40%).

ESA customers were also significantly more likely to receive support from a carer (11%) than PIP and DLAc customers. They were also more likely to receive support from a support organisation like Citizens Advice (10%).

4.2 Barriers to internet use

A series of questions intended to understand barriers to internet use were asked to all customers. These barriers uncovered reasons why offline customers did not use the internet, why online customers did not use the internet for more activities than they currently did and what would encourage further use in future for both users and non-users of the internet.

4.2.1 Offline customers

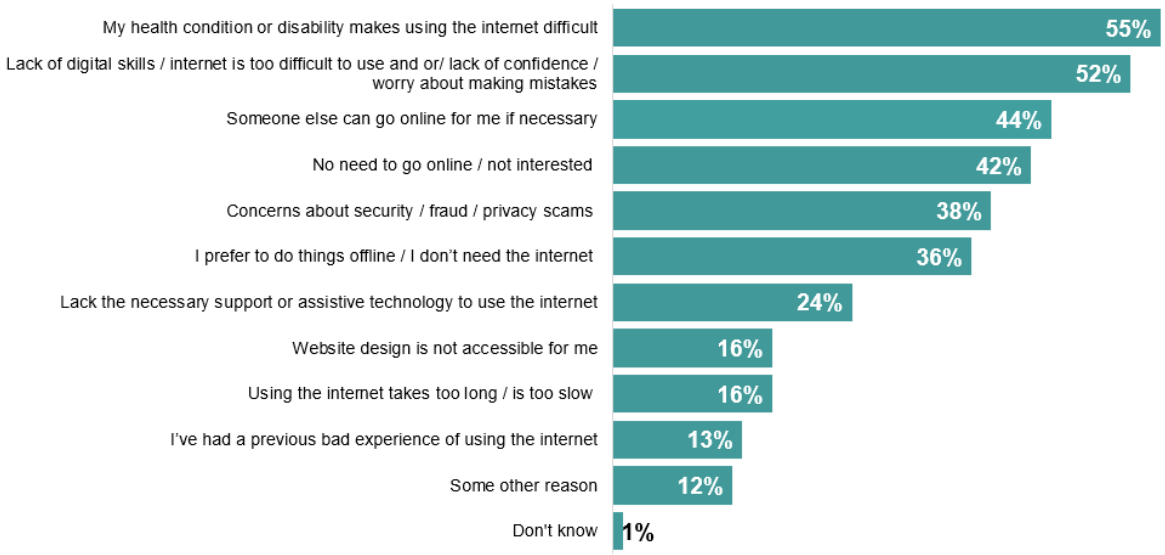
As so few DLAc customers were offline (5%), this section will just examine PIP and ESA customers.

Overall, more than 1 in 6 PIP and ESA customers (16% and 18% respectively) were currently offline (this includes those customers who have never used the internet, and those who had previously used but not anymore). These customers were asked for reasons why they do not use the internet (Figure 4.2.1).

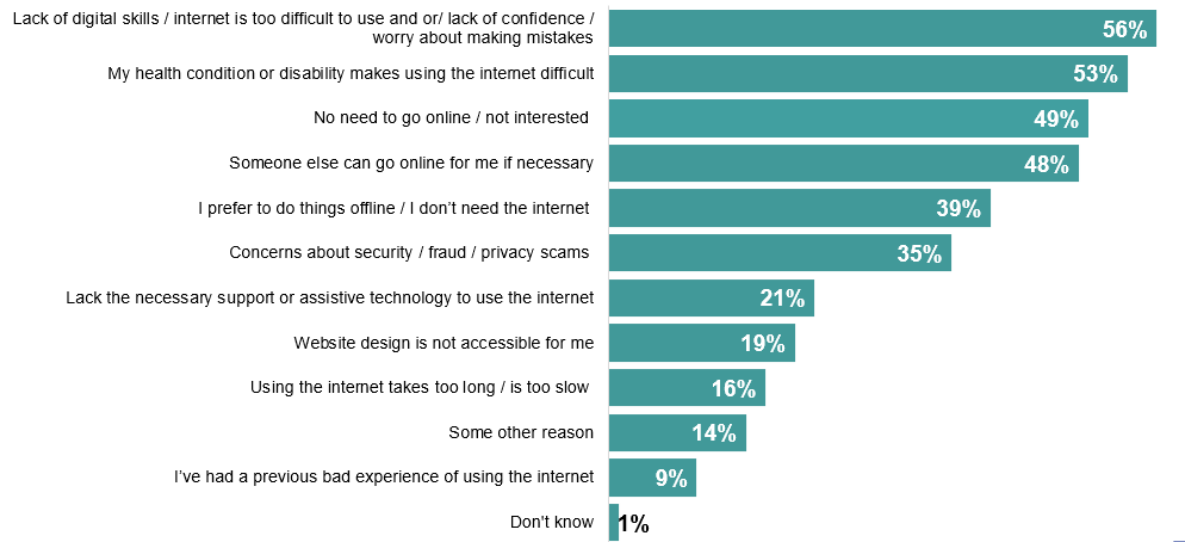
The most frequently given reasons were that for these customers they lacked digital skills, felt that the internet was too difficult to use, and they worried they would make mistakes (52% PIP and 56% ESA), or they felt their health condition or disability made it difficult for them to use the internet (55% PIP and 53% ESA).

Figure 4.2.1: Which of these, if any, are reasons why you do not use the internet?

PIP



ESA



Base: Customers who are currently offline (PIP 502, ESA 110) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

More than 4 in 10 PIP and ESA customers also felt that someone else could go online for them, if necessary (44% PIP and 48% ESA). However, a similar proportion of customers from both benefits were not interested in going online (42% PIP and 49% ESA).

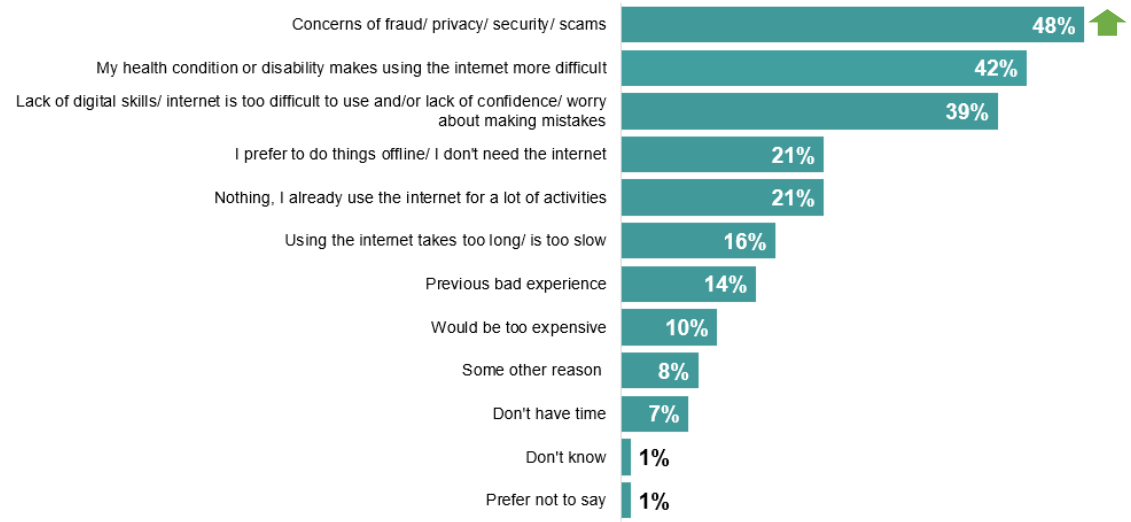
4.2.2 Current internet users

For everyone currently using the internet (84% of all PIP customers, 81% of ESA customers and 95% of all DLAc customers), we asked what was preventing them from using the internet for more activities than they currently were (Figure 4.2.2).

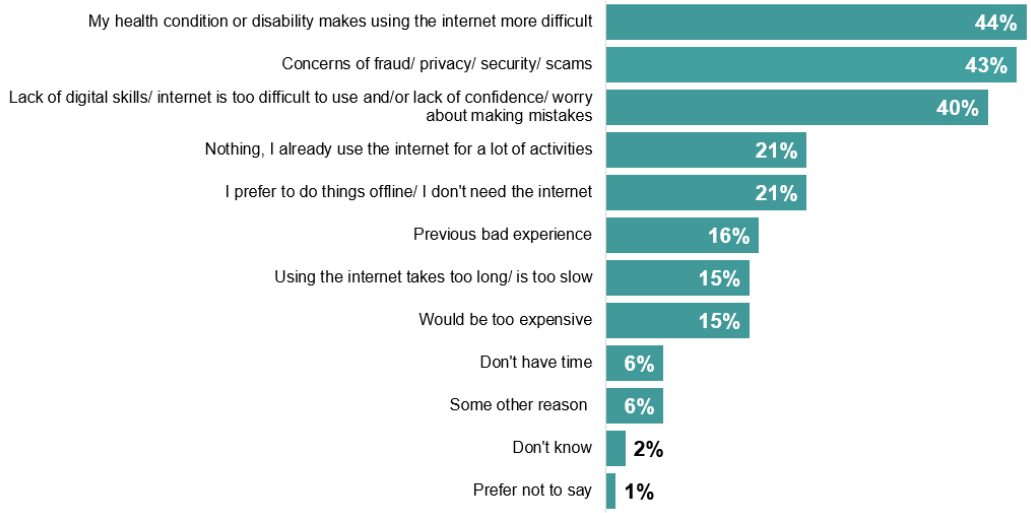
Figure 4.2.2: Which, if any, of the following reasons are stopping you from using the internet for more activities than you use it for now?

DLAc

PIP



ESA



Base: All customers who access the internet (PIP 2,494, ESA 440, DLAc 527) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Over a third of DLAc customers (35%) suggested that nothing was a barrier and that they already used the internet for a lot of activities. A lower proportion of both PIP and ESA customers also expressed this view (both 21% respectively).

The main concern for most was fraud, privacy, security and scams, with a higher proportion of PIP customers (48%) more concerned than both ESA and DLAc (43% and 35% respectively).

The second biggest barrier reported by both PIP and ESA was their health conditions (PIP 42% and ESA 44%). They were also significantly more likely than DLAc customers to mention preferring to do things online, the internet is too slow, have had a previous bad experience or felt it would be too expensive.

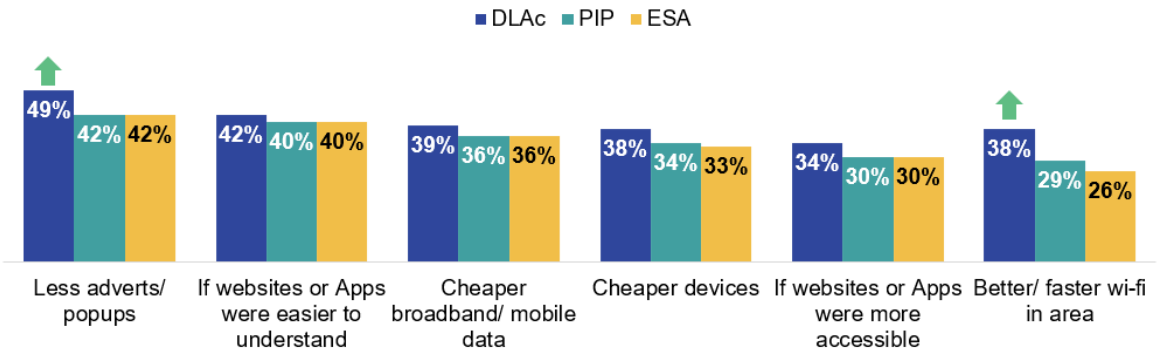
A significantly higher proportion of DLAc customers reported that they simply didn't have time to go online more (12%) compared to 7% of PIP customers and 6% of ESA customers.

When looking at all customers who reported a disability, those with learning difficulties and cognitive disorders were most likely to report that their health condition or disability made using the internet more difficult (52%) compared to all other disabilities.

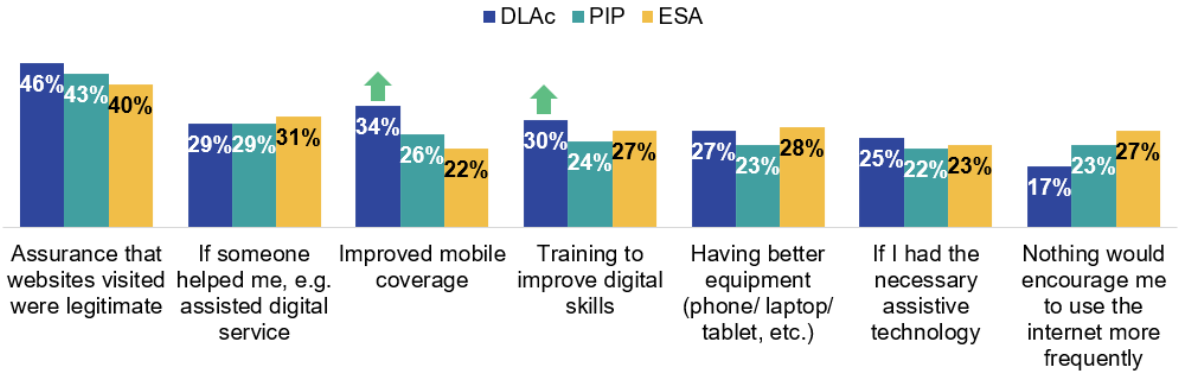
4.2.3 Encouraging further internet use in the future

All customers, including those who currently do not use the internet, were asked what would encourage them to use it for more activities in the future. (Figure 4.2.3).

Figure 4.2.3: Which, if any, of the following would encourage you to use the internet for more activities in the future?
Website content, IT infrastructure and costs



Skills, assistance and accessibility



Base: All customers (ESA 551, PIP 3,008, DLAc 553) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Although, several factors regarding IT infrastructure and costs are outside of DWP's control, the two key actions that would encourage more disability customers to use the internet for more activities in the future were less adverts/pop ups and reassurance that the website was legitimate. As shown in the above chart (Figure

4.2.3), DLAc customers were significantly more likely to mention both these actions compared to PIP and ESA customers. Additionally, there was a degree of consistency amongst all Disability customers with regards to websites being easier to understand and more accessible. DWP should be aware of these as actions they can take to encourage disability customers to make greater use of the internet in future.

DLAc customers were also significantly more likely to mention that better/faster Wi-Fi in their area would encourage them to use the internet more (38% compared to 29% PIP and 26% ESA). This was unsurprising given the higher levels of digital competency amongst the DLAc customer group.

Amongst skills and accessibility factors, similar proportions of each of the benefit groups (31% ESA, 29% PIP and 29% DLAc) also reported that if someone helped them (e.g. assisted digital service) they would be encouraged to use the internet more. Additionally, around a quarter of each of the benefit groups reported that if they had the necessary assisted technology that would encourage their internet usage (23% ESA, 22% PIP and 25% DLAc).

Around a quarter of both PIP and ESA current internet users (23% and 27% respectively) suggested that nothing would encourage them to use the internet more frequently. These were typically customers who report a physical condition.

4.3 Preferences for engaging with DWP

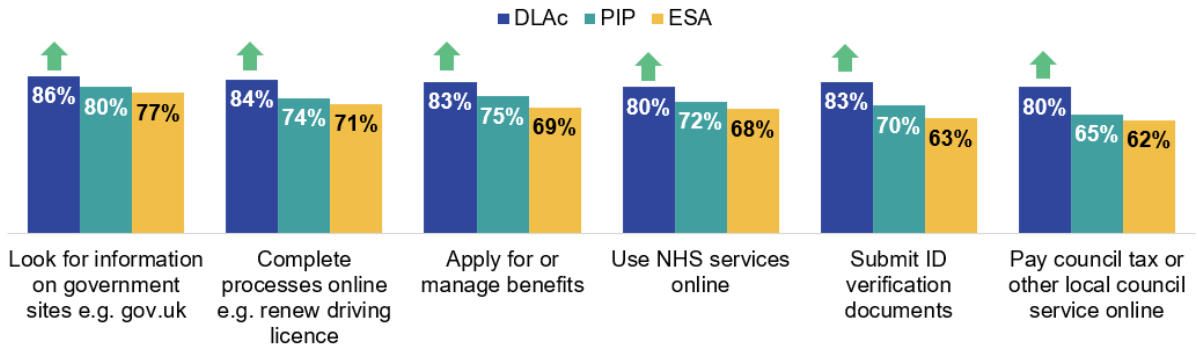
This section covers the extent to which Disability customers feel able to perform a range of online activities either alone, with help, or not at all. It details how customers currently prefer to contact and engage DWP, their awareness and use of assistive services provided by DWP and experiences of using GOV.UK. It outlines customer preferences for using an online portal, including what would stop them from accessing a portal online, as well as customer preferences by channel for engaging with DWP for a range of activities.

4.3.1 Online government service usage

All customers were asked, if government or public services were available online, which activities could they do alone, which they could do but with help, or could not do (Figure 4.3.1). As shown below, DLAc customers were significantly more likely than PIP and ESA customers to be able to use the below government or public services online either with or without help. Compared to both ESA and PIP, DLAc customers were more likely to be able to perform the below activities alone without help.

Figure 4.3.1: Thinking now about using government or public services online. If they were available, which, if any, of the following services could you do online either with or without help?

% that could do task either alone or with help



Base: All customers (ESA 551, PIP 3,008, DLAc 553)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Over three quarters of all disability benefit customers (86% DLAc, 81% PIP, 77% ESA) reported they were able to look online for public services information on government websites either with or without help. However, 69% of DLAc customers reported they were able to do this alone, whilst around 4 in 10 PIP and ESA customers (46% and 43% respectively) reported they could do this without help.

In terms of managing a benefit online if the service was available, PIP and ESA customers particularly needed support with this. Just 22% of ESA customers and 30% of PIP customers reported they would be able to do this without help. This compared to 58% of DLA customers who were able to do this action alone without help.

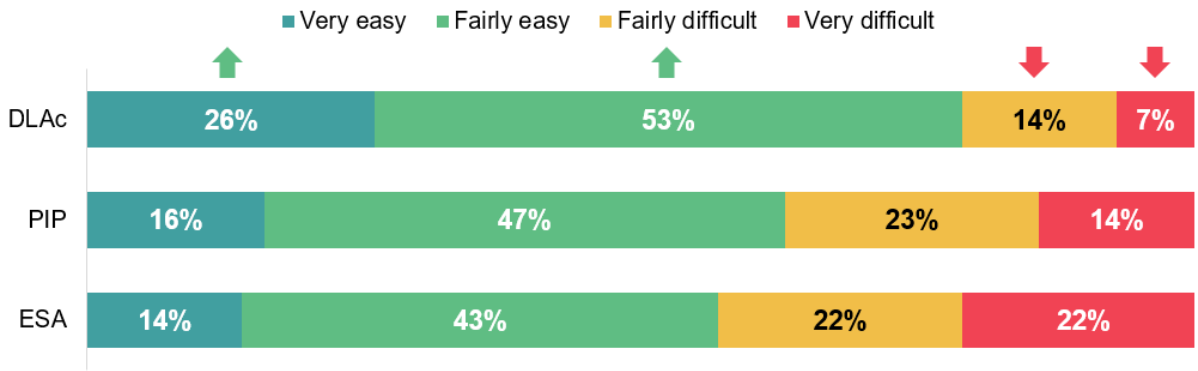
Across all customers who reported a disability, those who reported a learning difficulty and cognitive disorder, or sensory impairment and communication problems were more likely than customers with any other condition to state they would be unable to apply for or manage their benefits online (40% and 33% respectively).

4.3.2 Using GOV.UK

Overall, at least three quarters of each of the disability benefit customers had used the GOV.UK website (75% PIP, 74% ESA and 89% DLAc).

Over three quarters of DLAc customers who had used GOV.UK (79%) found it very or fairly easy to find the information they need on GOV.UK. 21% of DLAc customers found it fairly or very difficult. However, in comparison, 37% of PIP customers and 44% of ESA customers found the experience either fairly or very difficult.

Figure 4.3.2 Thinking back to when you last used the government website, WWW.GOV.UK, how easy or difficult was it to find all the information needed?



Base: All who had used GOV.UK excluding 'Don't know' and 'Prefer not to say' (452 ESA, 2,552 PIP, 452 DLAc)

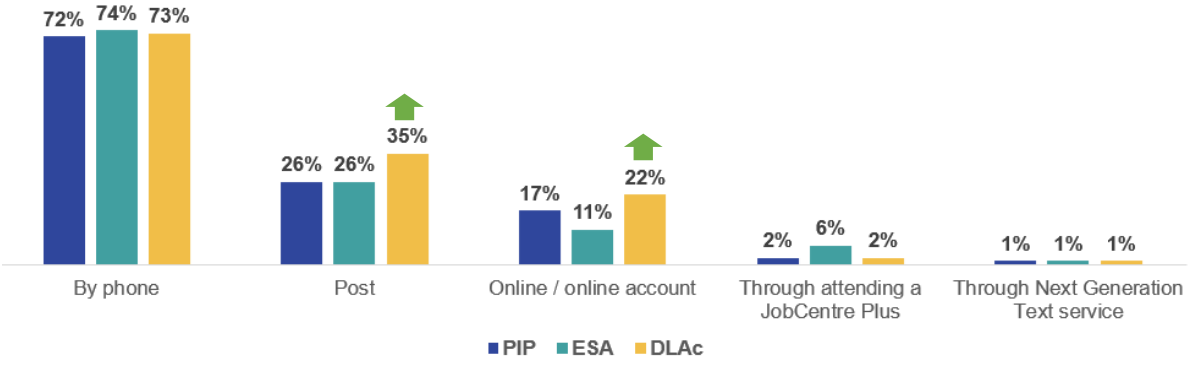
Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

4.3.3 Contacting DWP

Disability customers were significantly more likely than the average DWP customer to manage their benefits over the telephone. Similarly, Disability customers were also more likely than other customer groups to contact DWP by post. It is important to note that the options currently available to contact DWP about these benefits could be the reason for this. For DLAc, there is no online portal to apply for or manage the benefit. For PIP, there is an option to call DWP to start your application, then receive a link to complete your application online. For ESA, you can apply for the benefit online, however, you cannot manage (make any changes or update your information) online.

By managing their benefit, we meant making claims, reporting a change in circumstances, or providing evidence to keep records up to date.

Figure 4.3.3: How do you usually contact DWP in relation to managing your benefit claim?



Base: All customers (ESA 551, PIP 3,008, DLAc 553) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

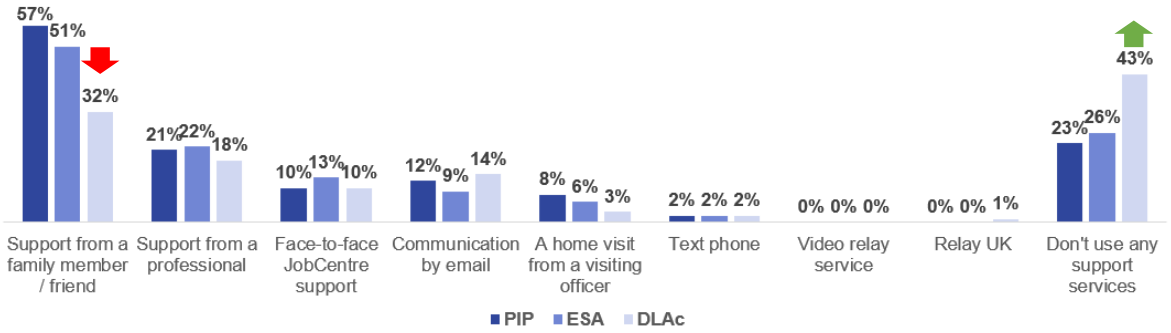
The pattern of contact with DWP was reflective of the current channels customers can use. At the time of the survey, contacting DWP online to manage a PIP claim was only in a testing phase, so we would not expect to see such a high proportion of PIP customers contacting DWP in this way. These customers were typically also claiming UC so would be using their online portal to manage that benefit and there may have been some conflation between managing their UC claim and managing their PIP claim.

4.3.4 Awareness and use of assistive services

Around a third of disability customers (29% ESA, 32% PIP and 36% DLAc) were unaware of any kind of assistive and support services provided by DWP. However, the most commonly known service was face-to-face support at a Jobcentre. This was mentioned by similar proportions of customers from each of the benefits (47% ESA, 40% PIP and 45% DLAc).

As illustrated by Figure 4.3.4, PIP and ESA customers (57% and 51% respectively) mostly used support from family and friends when contacting DWP about their claim in comparison to DLAc customers who often did not use any (43% compared to 26% ESA and 23% PIP).

Figure 4.3.4: When contacting DWP about your claim, do you use any of the following assistive or support services?



Base: All PIP (3,008), ESA (551), DLAc (553) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

4.3.5 Preferred ways of engaging with DWP

We asked customers their preferred methods for communicating with DWP for a variety of activities that occur throughout the duration of a claim. These included things such as registering an initial claim, completing the 'how your disability affects you' questionnaire, submitting supporting evidence, being assessed by a healthcare professional, checking the progress of a claim, disputing decisions or resolving payment and non-payment related queries, updating personal details, reporting a change in circumstances and receiving notifications related to a claim.

Customers gave their preferences for ways to engage with DWP for each of these activities and could select from online or through the website, through an app, by

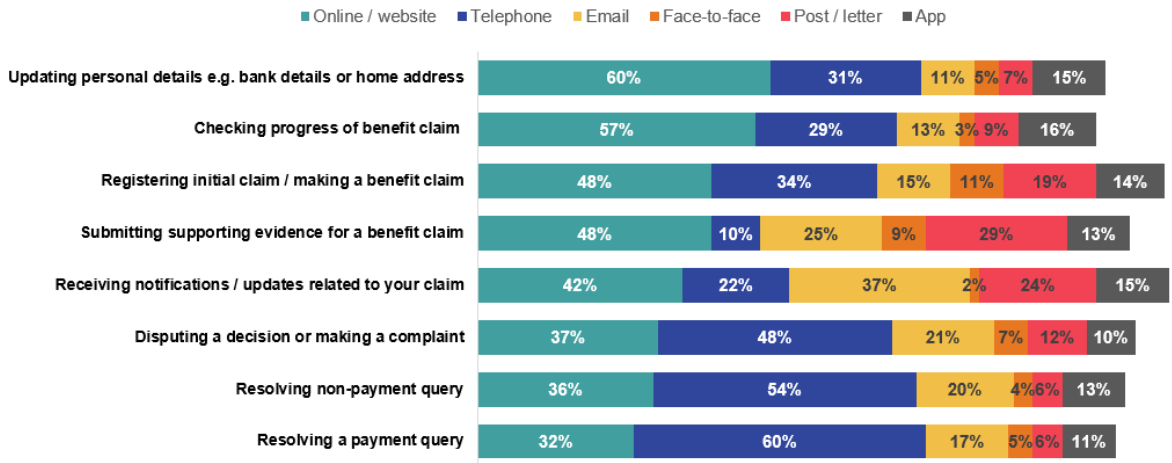
email, over the phone, face-to-face or by post or letter. Customers were able to choose all methods they would like to use, not just their first preference.

As shown in Figure 4.3.5, DLAc customers were much more receptive to engaging with DWP digitally and around 6 in 10 DLAc customers would prefer to engage with DWP online when updating their personal details (60%) or checking the progress of their benefit claim (57%). However, channel preference was typically driven by the complexity of the engagement with DWP. For the most complicated queries, such as disputing a decision, making a complaint, or resolving queries (both payment and non-payment related) interaction by telephone was the preferred approach for all disability benefits.

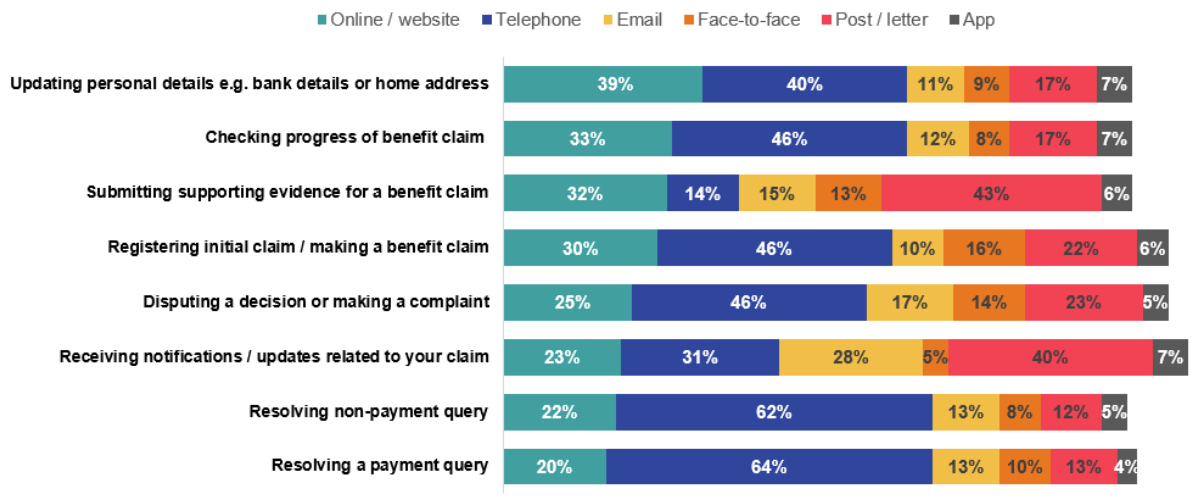
In contrast, for ESA and PIP customers, online was not the preferred option for any of the listed activities. Instead, telephone was the most preferred way of engaging with DWP for most activities. Post was the preferred method of contacting DWP when receiving notifications or updates relating to their claim or when submitting supporting evidence. More than two fifths of both ESA and PIP customers were aged over 55, impacting the levels of preference for methods such as using the post / letters. It was unsurprising that online was not a preferred option as amongst PIP customers, this channel had only recently been made available to new claimants when making an initial claim and submitting evidence.

Figure 4.3.5: If it were available, in which of the following ways would you most prefer to engage with DWP for each of the following activities that might occur as part of your [benefit name] claim? Most preferred channel %:

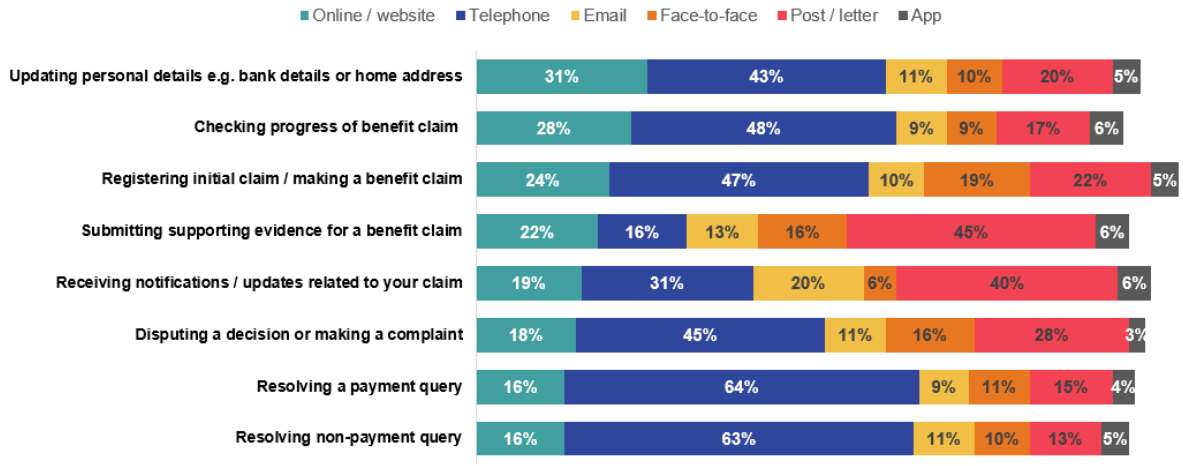
DLAc



PIP



ESA



Base: All customers (DLAc 553, PIP 3,008, ESA 551) NB: Percentages in the charts add up to more than 100% as multiple options allowed. Ranked based on proportion rating online/website

Amongst PIP customers who were also claiming UC, there was a significantly higher proportion who would prefer online options for all mentioned activities compared to those who were just claiming both PIP and ESA.

There were clear patterns amongst all disability benefit customers who were more receptive to engaging online with DWP, namely younger customers (under 35), customers with a university degree, those in higher social grades (ABC1) customers,

4.3.6 Potential online portal use

Within the survey, customers were asked their preferences on online portals. They were informed that a portal refers to a webpage or website that provides users an entryway to a variety of information, tools and links.

If a single portal was available to manage all of their benefits online, a significantly higher proportion of DLAc customers suggested they would use it (79%) compared to 53% ESA and 57% PIP (Figure 4.3.6).

A similar proportion indicated that they would use a single portal if it was available for all government services, for example to manage their benefits but also to manage their health and their tax (79% DLAc compared to 53% ESA and 58% PIP).

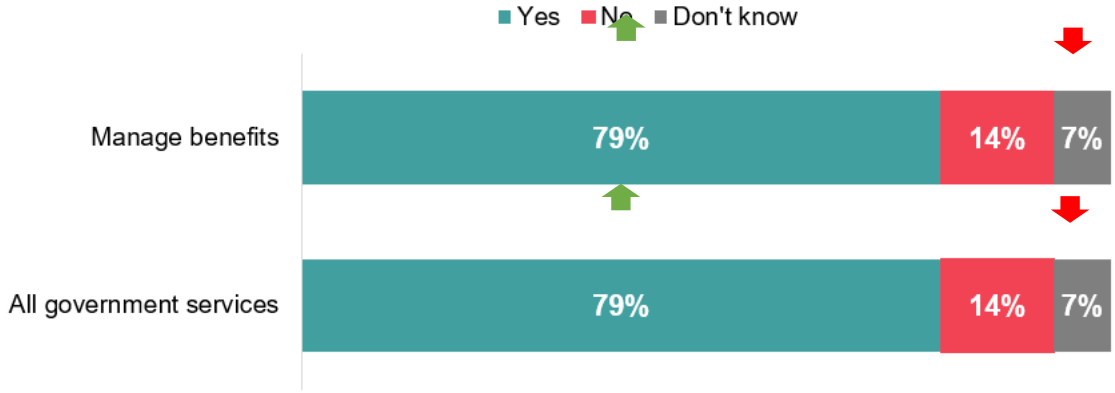
However, around a third of both ESA and PIP customers (35% and 33% respectively) would not be receptive to managing all their benefits via a portal and similar proportions would equally not use a single portal for all government services (36% and 33% respectively).

Therefore, there were not significant differences noted between customer preferences of managing their benefits or managing all government services via a portal.

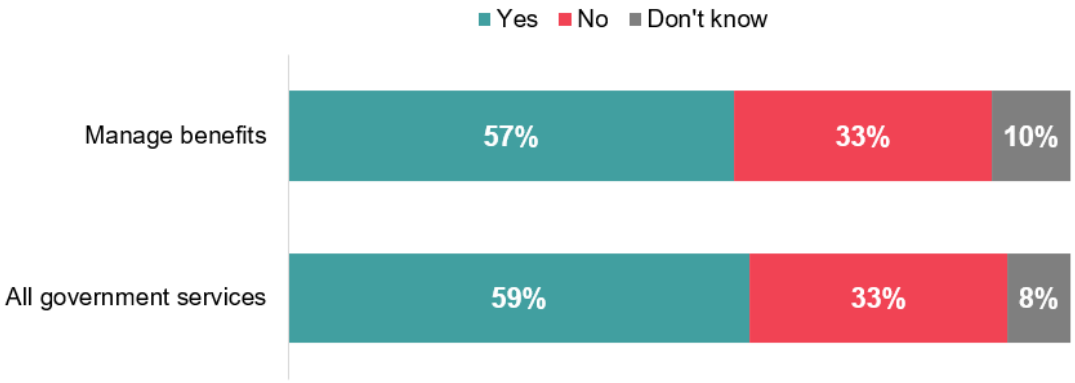
With PIP and ESA customers being less likely than other DWP customers to take up an online portal (Figure 4.3.6), they may require additional support to manage their benefits or other government services online.

Figure 4.3.6: If a single portal was available to manage all of your benefits online, would you use the portal? If there was a single portal available for ALL government services (e.g. managing your benefits, managing your health, managing tax) would you use it?

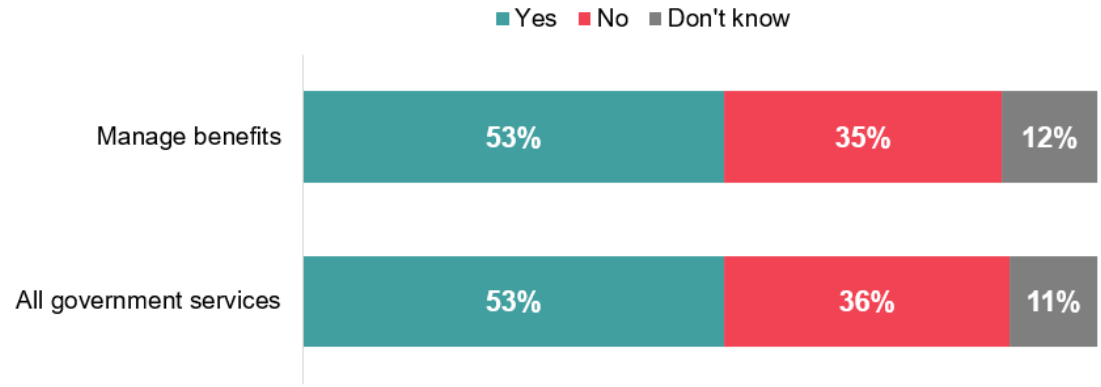
DLAc



PIP



ESA



Base: All customers (ESA 551, PIP 3,008, DLAc 553)

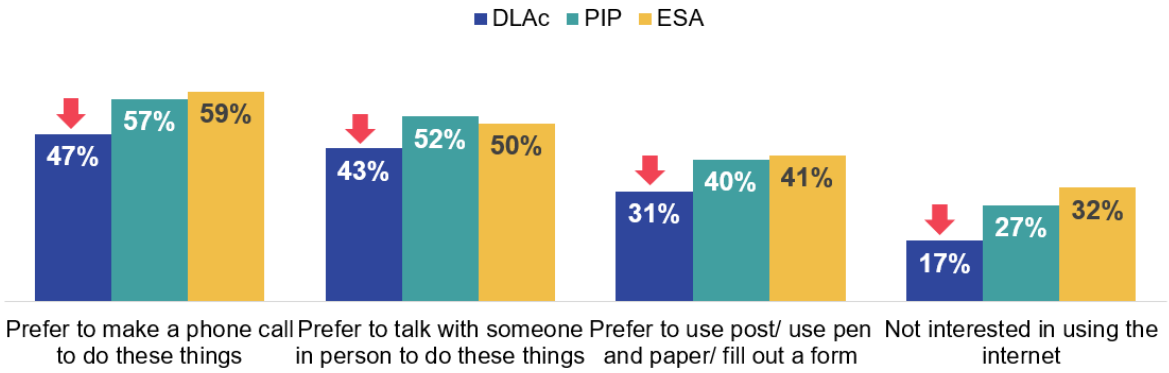
Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Customers claiming both PIP and UC were more likely to want to use a portal to manage all of their benefits (63%), perhaps due to interacting already with DWP through the UC online account but also perhaps because managing more than one benefit can already present difficulties as services are currently separate.

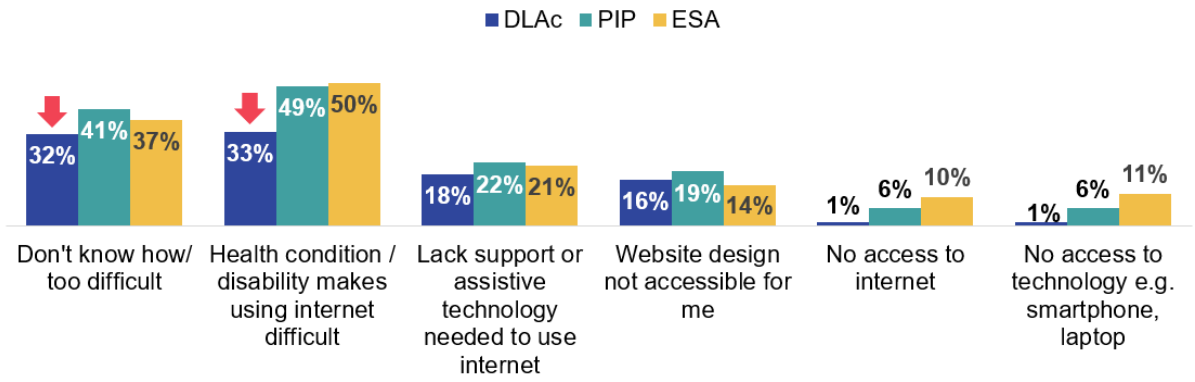
Around 4 in 10 ESA and PIP customers (42% and 38% respectively) reported that they would not use either a single portal to access all of their benefits or all government services online. There were similarities noted amongst all disability customers in terms of what would stop them accessing government services online (Figure 4.3.7). Preference to make a phone call to do these things was the key factor stopping these customers from accessing government services online. This was mentioned by 59% of ESA customers, 57% of PIP customers and 47% of DLAc customers. Amongst all disability customers, customers with a physical condition were significantly more likely to prefer to make a phone call when accessing government services.

Figure 4.3.7: Which, if any, of the following reasons would stop you from accessing government services online?

Contact preferences.



Skills, assistance and accessibility



Base: All PIP customers who would not use a portal to access government services online (230 ESA, 1,165 PIP, 98 DLAc) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

The health conditions of both PIP and ESA customers were also mentioned by around half the customers (49% PIP and 50% ESA) as it made using the internet difficult and would likely stop them from accessing services online.

Many customers with a disability also reported that they lacked the necessary support or assistive technology to use the internet (22% PIP and 21% ESA).

4.4 Future support needs

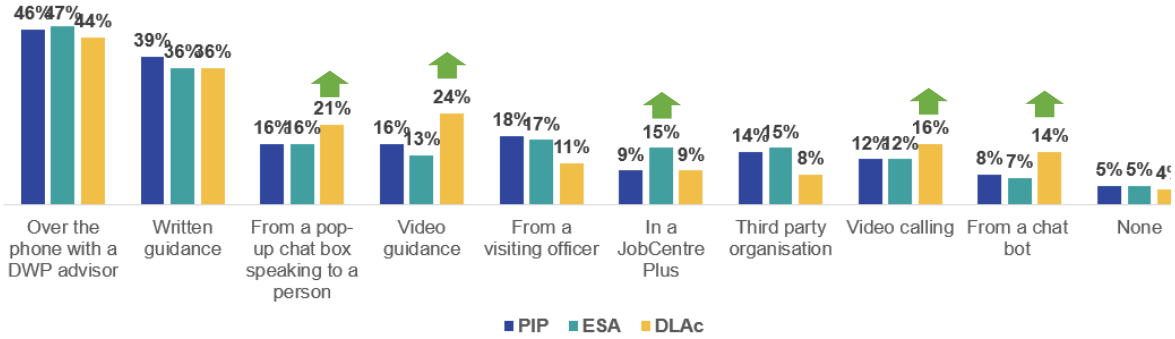
This section covers the ways in which customers would want to receive support or guidance on how to make and manage benefit claims digitally, including what DWP could do to make customers more likely to use DWP digital services. It covers situations which might encourage customers to further develop their digital skills.

4.4.1 Support and guidance for DWP digital services

For DWP to encourage more disability customers to transition to a digital service, support and guidance would need to be provided. We asked customers how they would want to receive support or guidance on making and managing a benefit claim through a DWP digital service (Figure 4.4.1).

The majority of all disability customers reported a stronger preference for telephone support with a DWP adviser (47% ESA, 46% PIP and 44% DLAc). This was followed by written guidance (36% ESA, 39% PIP and 36% DLAc).

Figure 4.4.1: Assuming you wanted to use a DWP digital service, in what ways would you want to receive support or guidance on how to make and manage a benefit claim?



Base: All Disability customers (ESA 551, PIP 3,008, DLAc 553)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

The greatest variation in support channel preference was seen amongst DLAc customers. They were significantly more receptive to receiving support or guidance from a chatbot on GOV.UK (21% compared to 16% of both PIP and ESA customers). They were also more likely to be open to video guidance (24% compared to 13% ESA customers and 16% PIP customers).

In contrast both PIP and ESA customers were significantly more likely to want to receive support and guidance from a visiting officer (17% ESA and 18% PIP compared to 11% DLAc). And also, from a third-party organisation (15% ESA and 14% PIP compared to 8% DLAc).

4.4.2 What DWP can do to make customers more likely to use digital services

Encouragingly, the majority of all disability customers reported there would be a role for DWP in making them more likely to use DWP digital services in the future. Only a minority (19% ESA, 15% PIP and 7% DLAc) reported that there was nothing that DWP could do to encourage them to use DWP digital services,

As shown in Figure 4.4.2, customers expressed a variety of things that DWP could do to make them more likely to use DWP digital services. However, around a quarter of all disability groups reported that telephone support with a DWP agent to talk

through the service would make them more likely to use DWP digital services (25% ESA, 28% PIP and 26% DLAc).

All customer groups also mentioned if DWP digital services were more accessible they would be more likely to use them (16% ESA, 20% PIP and 19% DLAc).

Similar proportions of both ESA and PIP customers (26% and 27% respectively) also mentioned that having a family or friend contact DWP on their behalf would make them more likely to use a DWP digital service.

DLAc customers (being more digitally competent) were also more likely than PIP and ESA customers to use the services if it was available via an App (25% compared to 14% ESA and 18% PIP), highlighting the importance of offering different channel options to customers.

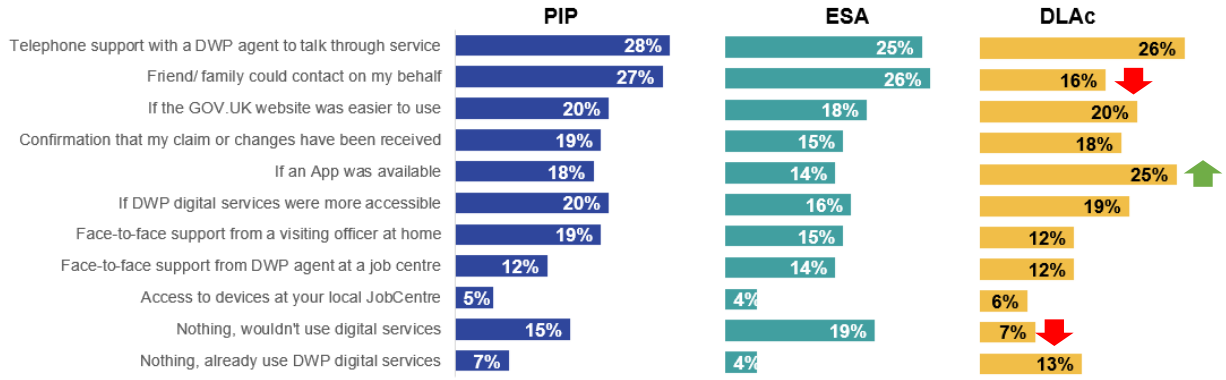


Figure 4.4.2: What, if anything, could DWP do to make you more likely to use DWP digital services?

Base: All Disability customers (ESA 551, PIP 3,008, DLAc 553) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

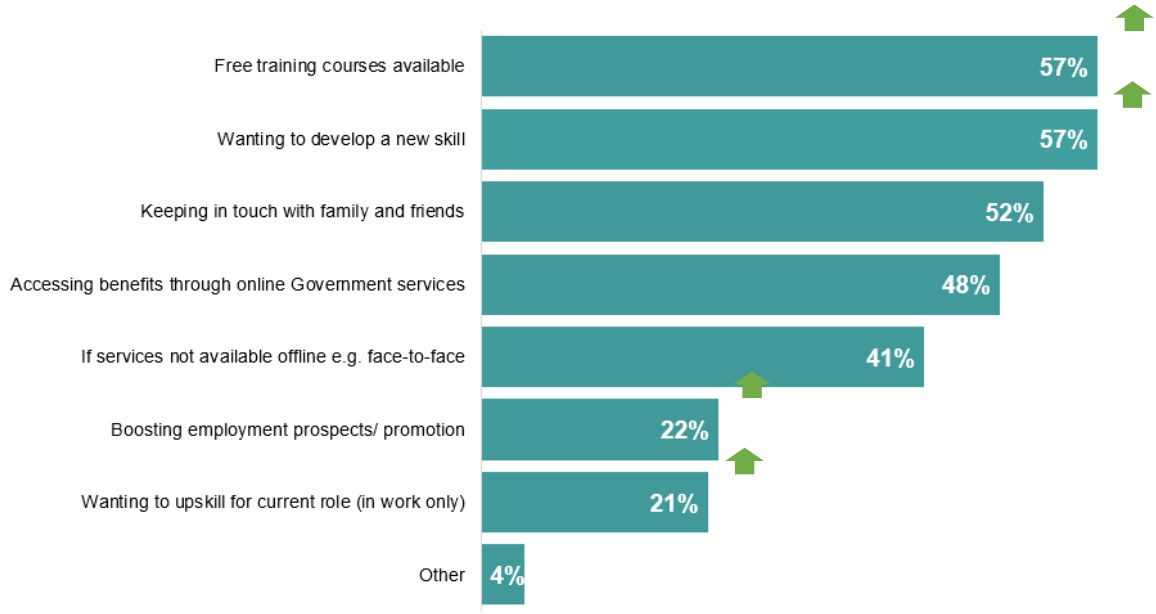
Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

4.4.3 Future digital skills development

Certain situations could encourage customers to further develop their digital skills in future (Figure 4.4.3). These include: helping them to stay connected with family and friends; if free training courses were available; if certain services were not available offline; if they could access their benefits through online government services and if they wanted to develop a new skill.

Figure 4.4.3: Which, if any, of the following situations would encourage you to further develop your digital skills in the future?

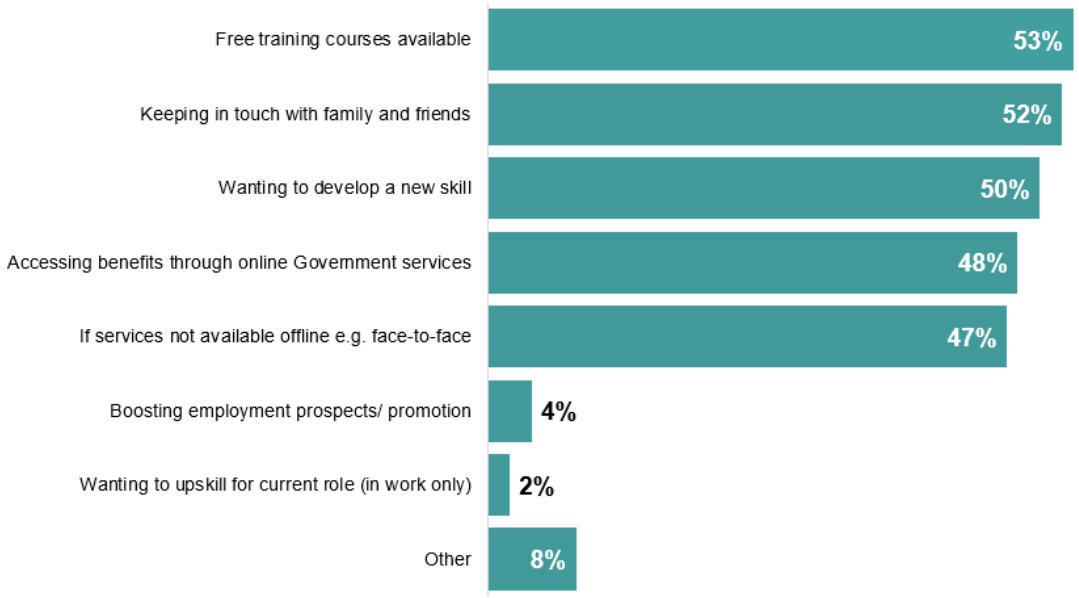
DLAc


Free training courses available
57%
Wanting to develop a new skill
57%
Keeping in touch with family and friends
52%
Accessing benefits through online Government services
48%
If services not available offline e.g. face-to-face
41%
Boosting employment prospects/ promotion
22%
Wanting to upskill for current role (in work only)
21%
Other
4%

PIP


Keeping in touch with family and friends
56%
Free training courses available
49%
If services not available offline e.g. face-to-face
46%
Accessing benefits through online Government services
46%
Wanting to develop a new skill
43%
Boosting employment prospects/ promotion
12%
Wanting to upskill for current role (in work only)
11%
Other
6%

ESA



Base: All Disability customers who could be encouraged to use their digital skills in the future (ESA 306, PIP 2,794, DLAc 420 – excluding those who said they didn't need to or want to develop skills, don't know and prefer not to say) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

There was some variation amongst the disability benefits in terms of what would encourage them to develop their digital skills in the future.

DLAc customers would be most encouraged by free training courses (57%), wanting to develop a new skill (57%), accessing benefits through online Government services (48%) and boosting employment prospects or promotion (22%).

However, there remained a significantly higher proportion of ESA and PIP customers who simply did not want to develop their digital skills in the future (20% ESA, 18% PIP compared to 7% DLAc). These were typically older customers (55+), those without formal qualifications and lower social grade (C2DE) customers.

5. Work Related

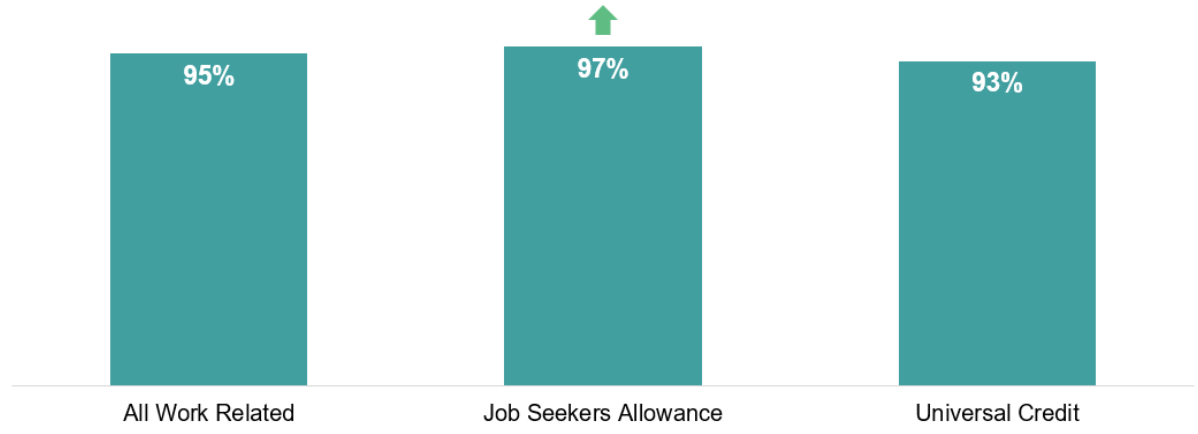
This section covers Work Related customers' internet usage; where they access the internet, and the devices and assistive technologies used to go online. It summarises customers' confidence in their ability to go online and barriers to internet access at home or in general. Comparisons are made between those receiving JSA and UC, with the overall takeaway being that both types of benefit customer are amongst the most confident internet users and receptive to engage with DWP in the digital space.

5.1 Digital Capabilities

5.1.1 Internet usage

Internet use amongst Work Related customers was high, with more than 9 in 10 JSA customers (97%) and UC customers (93%) accessing the internet at the time of the research (Figure 5.1.1). Although both types of benefit customer had a high proportion of internet users, JSA customers were significantly more likely than UC customers to be using the internet. As a result of high internet use, the proportion of Work Related to have never used the internet was low (3% of UC customers and 1% of JSA customers).

Figure 5.1.1: Have you ever accessed the internet? (Percentage currently accessing the internet)



Base: All Work Related customers (1,103), Job Seekers Allowance (550), Universal Credit (553).

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

UC also had a higher proportion of customers (4%) than JSA (1%) who had tried the internet once or twice in the past but didn't use it at the time of the research, or to have used it frequently in the past but to have since stopped. Overall, however, the proportion of non-users within this customer group was low and DWP's future digital

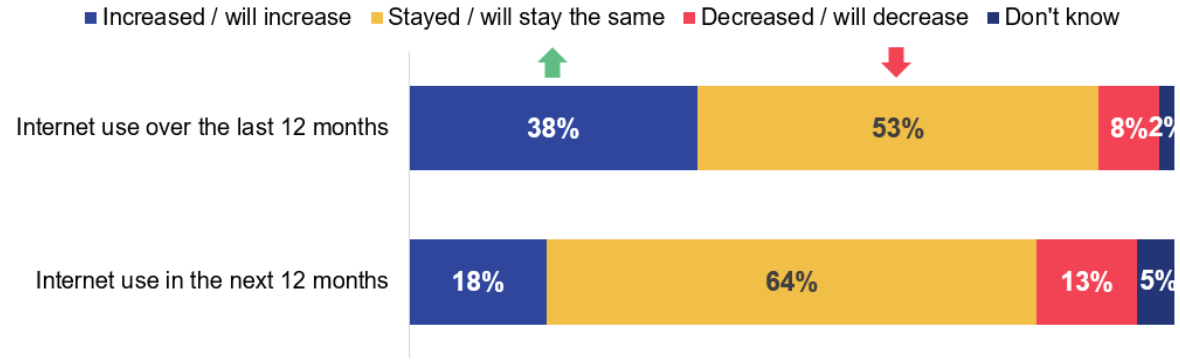
services could appeal to a wide range of both JSA and UC customers as they were already using the internet.

5.1.2 Usage trends

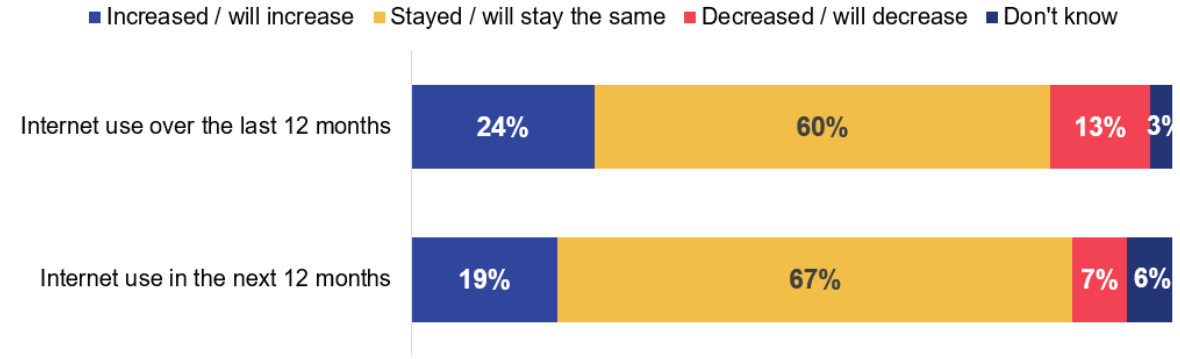
Nearly two in five (38%) JSA customers who had used the internet reported that their usage had increased in the last year (Figure 5.1.2). This was significantly higher than UC customers to report an increase (24%) and, in fact, was the highest of all benefit customers. However, most JSA customers (53%) still believed their use of the internet had stayed the same in the past year, although this was significantly lower than the proportion of UC customers to report no change in their level of use over the past year (60%).

Figure 5.1.2: In the last 12 months, has your personal use of the internet increased, stayed the same or decreased? In 12 months from now, do you think your personal use of the internet will increase, decrease, or stay the same?

Job Seekers Allowance



Universal Credit



Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group.

Base: JSA customers who have used the internet and were asked about last 12 months (541), and all asked about the next 12 months (550). UC customers who have used the internet and were asked about last 12 months (538), and all asked about the next 12 months (553).

Both more JSA customers and UC customers had increased their internet use over the past 12 months than had decreased, though significantly more UC customers

reported a decrease in their usage (13%) in comparison to customers receiving JSA (8%).

With regards to predicted future use, both UC (19%) and JSA customers (18%) had a similar proportion of customers who predicted they would use it more over the coming year. However, JSA customers were significantly more likely to suggest their use of the internet would decrease in the next year (13%) compared to those claiming UC (7%), perhaps as they expected to use the internet less once they had secured a job and would not have to complete as many online applications to secure employment.

5.1.3 Devices and assistive technology

For Work Related customers, smartphones (93%) were the predominately used device to go online, by both JSA (93%) and UC customers (92%). JSA customers were more likely to use multiple devices to access the internet and had a significantly higher proportion of customers in comparison to UC that accessed via a laptop (78% versus 46% of UC customers) or via a tablet (43% versus 27% of UC customers). Overall, JSA had the highest proportion of customers of any benefit line to access the internet via a laptop, netbook or desktop computer.

Assistive technologies were significantly more likely to be used by UC customers (37%) in comparison to JSA customers (29%) when accessing the internet. For both groups of customers, voice assistants such as Alexa, Siri or Google Assistant were the most frequently used type of assistive technology (UC: 27% and JSA: 24%). Other assistive technologies were used by fewer than 1 in 10 Work Related customers, though UC customers were significantly more likely to use screen magnifiers such as ZoomText or Windows Magnifier (9%) or voice recognition software like Dragon, Voice Control or Windows Speech (7%) than their JSA counterparts (both 5%).

5.1.4 Internet access inside and outside the home

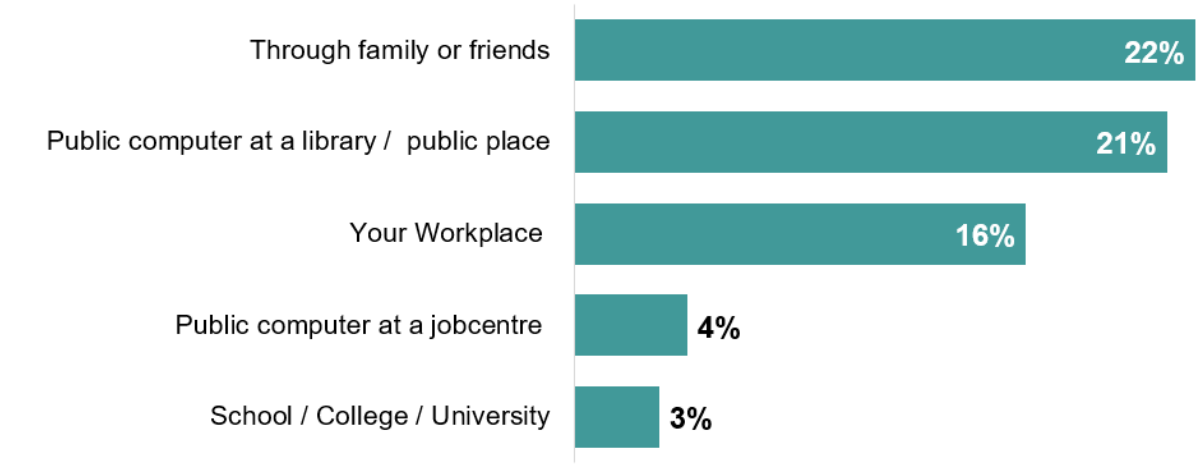
As has been shown, both JSA and UC had a high proportion of their customers currently accessing the internet. Internet users were asked whether they had internet access at home via home broadband and both benefit lines also had a high proportion of customers who had internet access at home, showing a close link between the two. More than 9 in 10 (95%) of all JSA customers had access to the internet and used it at home via home broadband. More than 8 in 10 UC customers (86%) also reported using the internet at home, which although significantly less than home access seen amongst JSA customers, still reflects that a high proportion of UC customers were both accessing the internet and doing so often at home.

Customers were also asked about internet access outside of the home. Work Related customers were amongst the most likely benefit customers to be accessing the internet outside of their residence, although internet use outside the home was not as widespread as internet use inside the home. This was a trend seen across all benefit customers. Almost two thirds (63%) of all JSA customers accessed the internet away from the home, as well as more than half of all UC customers (55%).

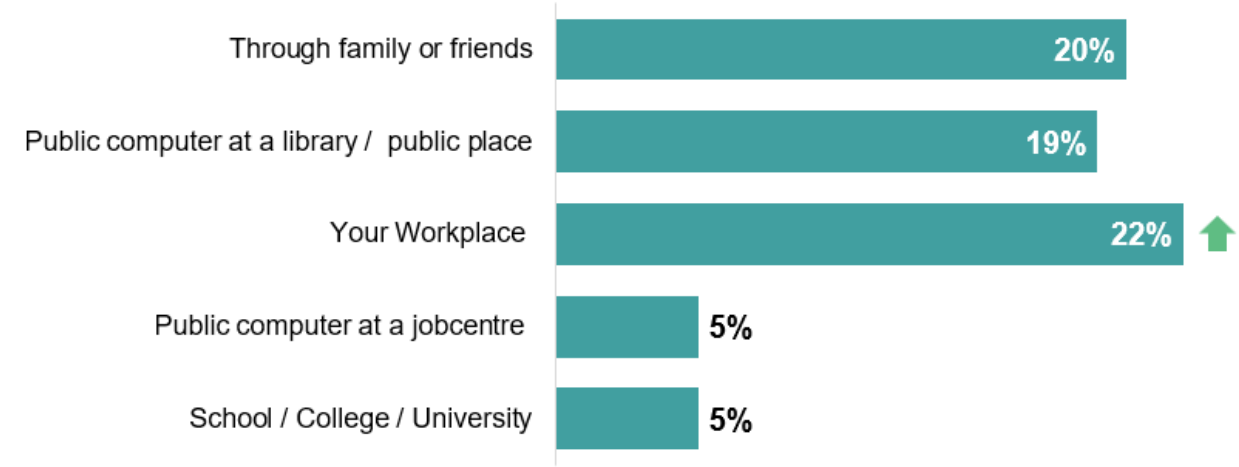
For those Work Related customers who were currently accessing the internet, the most popular way to access the internet outside of the home did not differ significantly based on whether the customer was claiming JSA or UC (Figure 5.1.4). The most popular way for JSA customers to access outside of the home was through family or friends (22%). For UC customers, more than 1 in 5 reported accessing the internet outside of their homes at their workplace (22%).

Figure 5.1.4: Do you ever access the internet anywhere other than in your home at all?

Job Seekers Allowance



Universal Credit



Base: All JSA (535) and UC customers (516) who use the internet– multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

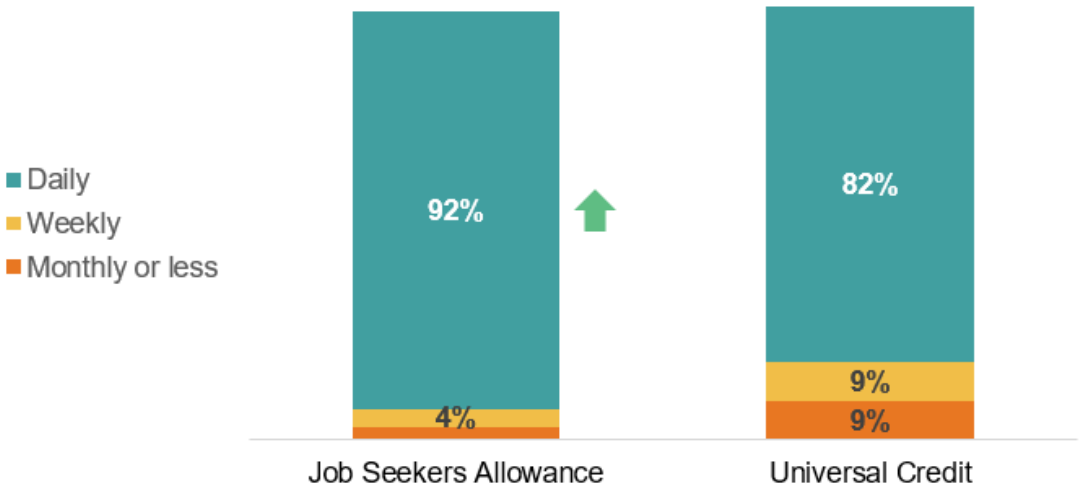
Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group.

5.1.5 Internet use

Of all JSA customers, more than 9 in 10 accessed the internet on a daily basis (Figure 5.1.5). 94% of this proportion who accessed the internet daily were doing so several times a day or more rather than just once per day, suggesting some level of proficiency amongst JSA customers to engage on multiple occasions. Although significantly less than JSA, 82% of UC customers also accessed the internet on a

daily basis. The same proportion of UC customers (both 9%) were accessing the internet on a weekly basis or a monthly basis or less.

Figure 5.1.5: How often do / did you use the internet? (Including both work and personal use)



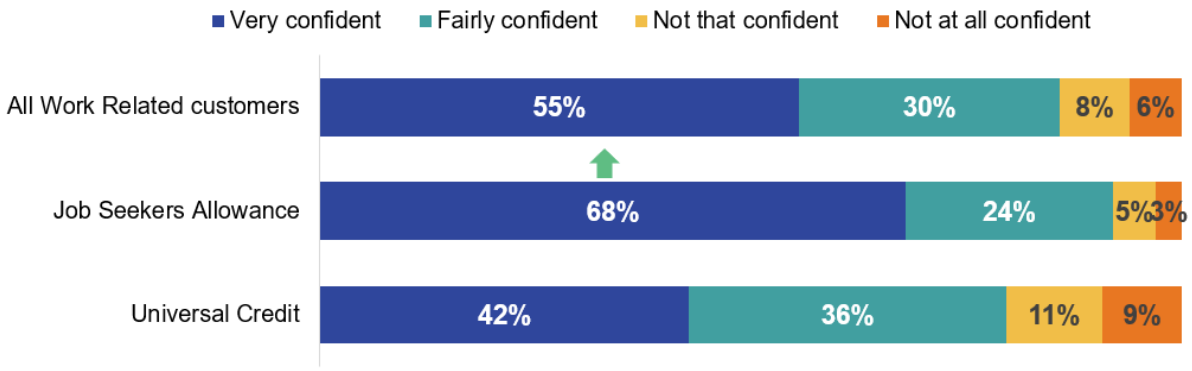
Base: All JSA (550) and UC customers (553)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

5.1.6 Internet confidence

The suggestion that extensive internet use had led to improved proficiency was reinforced by self-reported confidence in using the internet (Figure 5.1.6). More than two thirds of JSA customers (68%) reported feeling 'very confident' in their ability to use the internet, with more than 9 in 10 (91%) saying that they were confident to some extent. Although UC customers were significantly less likely than JSA customers to report feeling confident in their abilities to some extent, almost 8 in 10 (79%) did feel confident. This was the second highest proportion of customers feeling confident compared to any other benefit line, behind only JSA. The Work Related customer group do not require as much assistance or targeted support as other benefit customers to become more comfortable online.

Figure 5.1.6: How confident, if at all, do you feel in your ability to use the internet?



Base: All Work Related customers (1,103), JSA (550), UC (553).

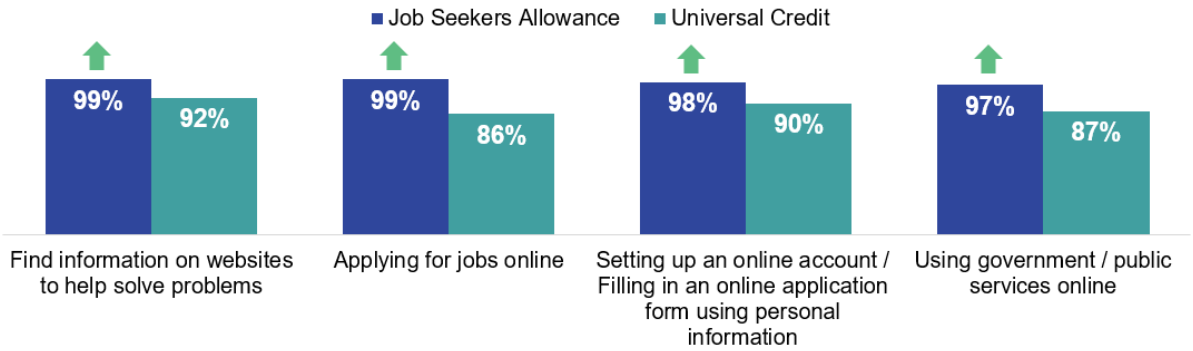
Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

5.1.7 Needing support when accessing the internet

Customers who had used the internet at any point were asked whether they could perform certain activities online, either with or without help. As summarised in Figure 5.1.7, nearly all online JSA customers felt they could do any of the four activities, either alone or with help. UC customers were slightly less able to complete each of the four listed activities, but 9 in 10 (90%) felt they could set up an online account and almost the same percentage (87%) felt they could use government services online. Online JSA customers were not only significantly more likely to be able to do these activities in comparison to UC, but also compared to every other individual benefit customer.

Figure 5.1.7: Thinking now about the following general activities that you can do on the internet. Which, if any, of the following activities could you do online either with or without help?

% that could do task either alone or with help



Base: All JSA (541) and UC customers (538) who use the internet

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Looking more closely at the proportion of online Work Related customers who felt able to carry out these activities alone, JSA customers were consistently more likely

than UC customers, and in fact any other benefit customers, to report confidence in being able to do things without assistance. More than 9 in 10 (92%) online JSA customers felt able to find information on websites alone, compared to just under three quarters of online UC customers (74%). The same proportion of online JSA customers felt they could apply for jobs online by themselves (92%) compared to just under two thirds of UC customers (65%). The majority of online JSA customers (91%) felt they could set up an online account alone compared with 9 in 10 (90%) of online UC customers who felt they could do this either alone or with help. Just under 9 in 10 (88%) online JSA customers felt they could use government services online, significantly more than the 62% of online UC customers who felt the same.

With a high proportion of online Work Related customers already feeling able to complete a range of online activities, those who were already online might require nothing more than a gentle encouragement towards future online provision.

Although a minority, those who require assistance in completing online tasks tend to be helped by family members who live with them. For UC customers, 44% of those who need help use this family support, 28% also use the help of family members who live elsewhere or a friend (24%). Support from organisations such as Citizens Advice (UC: 9%, JSA: 2%) or organisations / departments that were providing a service to them (UC: 5%, JSA: 6%) were less popular, but more often used by Work Related customers compared to other benefit groupings.

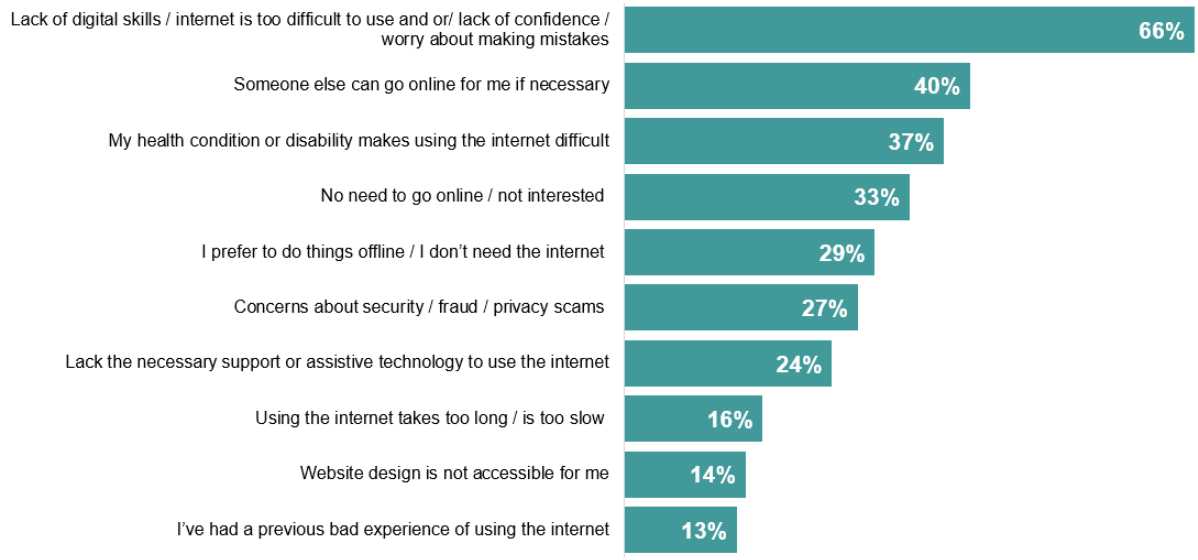
5.2 Barriers to internet use

A series of questions intended to understand barriers to internet use were asked to all customers. These barriers uncovered reasons why offline customers did not use the internet, why online customers did not use the internet for more activities than they currently did and what would encourage further use in future for both users and non-users of the internet.

5.2.1 Offline customers

A minority of both UC and JSA customers do not currently use the internet (7% UC compared to 3% JSA). Overall, the main reason why Work Related customers remained offline was that they lacked confidence or were worried about making mistakes, which was cited by around two thirds (66%). See Figure 5.2.1.

Figure 5.2.1: Which of these, if any, are reasons why you do not use the internet?



Base: All Work Related Customers who are currently offline (52*small base) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Other reasons given by offline Work Related customers for why they do not use the internet included someone else being able to go online for them, if necessary (40%), their health condition or disability making using the internet difficult (37%) and for a third (33%), having no interest in going online.

5.2.2 Current internet users

As shown in Figure 5.1.1, the majority of both JSA and UC customers currently access the internet. The reasons for these customers not making more use of the internet are detailed in Figure 5.2.2.

Almost 6 in 10 (58%) JSA customers suggested that they already use the internet for a lot of activities, so nothing was preventing them from using it more. For those JSA customers who faced barriers to using the internet more, the main barrier was concerns around fraud, privacy, security and scams (reported by 29% of online JSA customers). The second most significant barrier for JSA customers was a perceived lack of digital skills, though the proportion of customers citing this barrier (13%) was fewer than half those citing concerns around security and privacy. Any other barriers were mentioned by fewer than 1 in 10 JSA customers.

In comparison, UC customers were more likely to report a range of barriers preventing them from using the internet more widely. Concerns about security, privacy, security and scams (38%) were also the main reason why online UC customers did not make more use of the internet, suggesting that trust was somewhat of an issue amongst Work Related customers and DWP need to ensure that customers feel safe online when dealing with the department digitally.

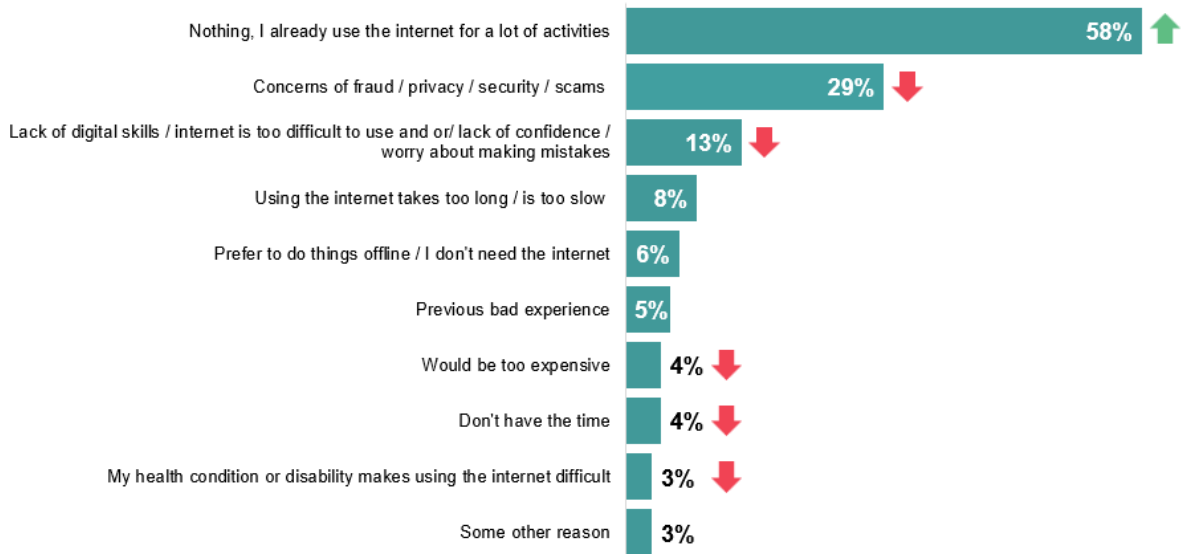
More than 1 in 5 online UC customers also felt their lack of digital skills or lack of confidence was a barrier to them using the internet more. DWP might target practical assistance on improving these skills and confidence so that concerns over making

mistakes were reduced and a greater proportion of UC customers feel able to manage their claim digitally by themselves.

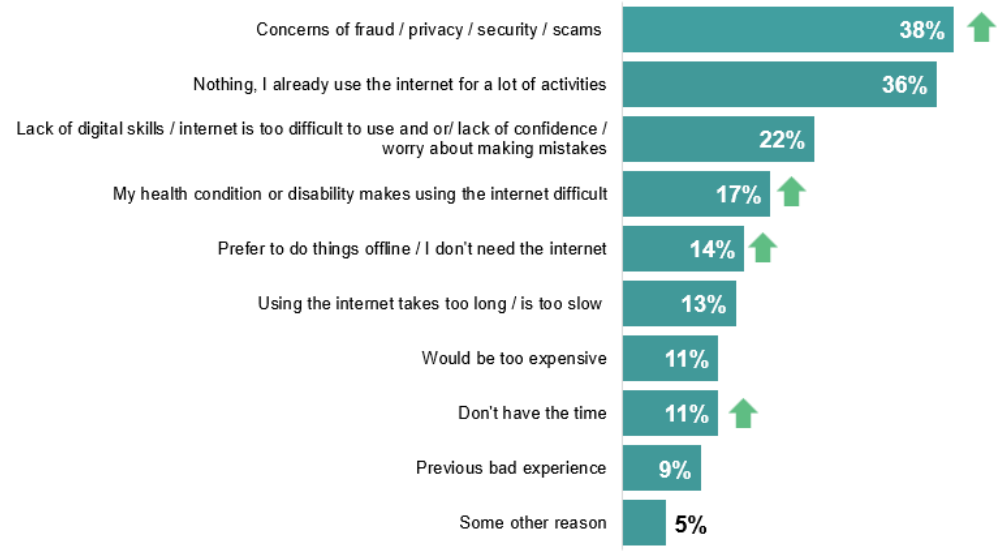
Although not to as great an extent as JSA customers (58%), more than a third (36%) of online UC customers reported no barriers to further internet use as they already use it for a lot of activities.

Figure 5.2.2: Which, if any, of the following reasons are stopping you from using the internet for more activities than you use it for now?

Job Seekers Allowance



Universal Credit



Base: All JSA (534) and UC customers (516) who use the internet– multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

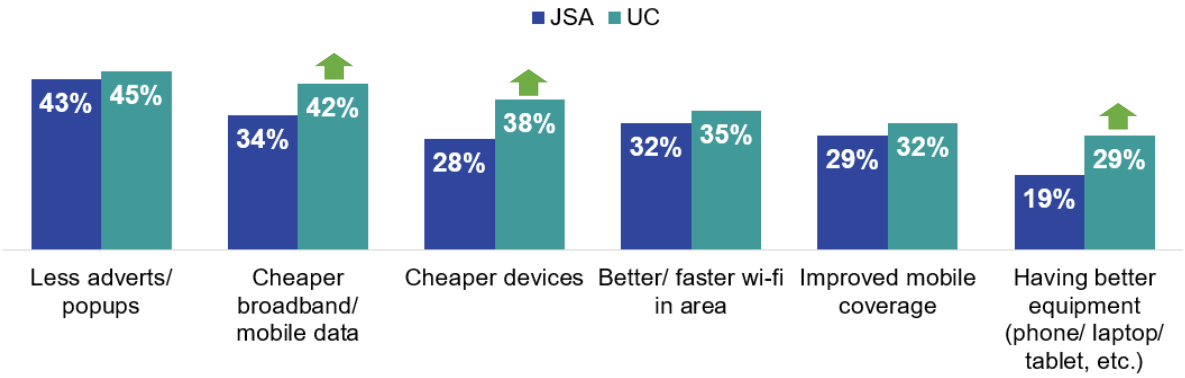
Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

5.2.3 Encouraging further internet use in the future

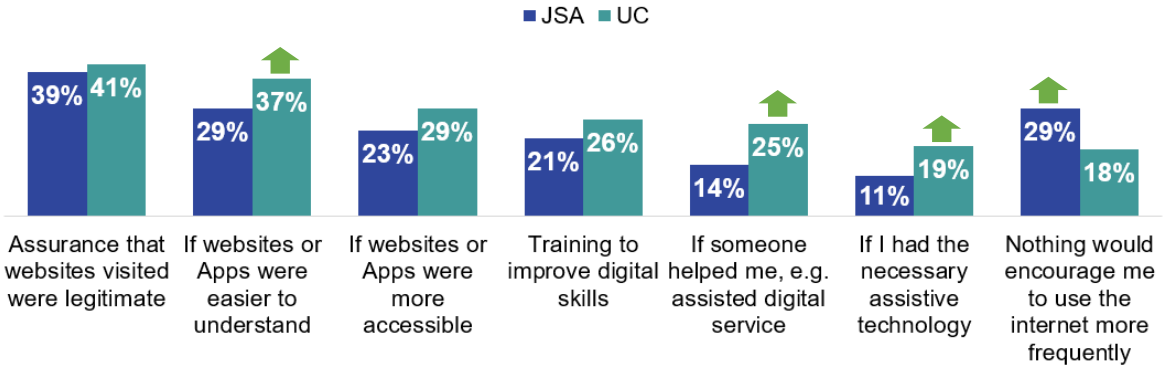
All Work Related customers, including those who currently do not use the internet were asked what would encourage them to use it for more activities in the future. Almost a third of JSA customers (29%) suggested that 'nothing would encourage them to use the internet more frequently', but as shown in Figure 5.2.3 in comparison, nearly 18% of UC customers suggested that nothing would encourage them to use the internet more frequently.

Figure 5.2.3: Which, if any, of the following would encourage you to use the internet for more activities in the future?

Website content, IT infrastructure and costs



Skills, assistance and accessibility



Base: All JSA (550) and UC customers (553) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

The factors presented to customers in the survey that could encourage greater use fall into two broad categories. Firstly, those which were structural and potentially fell outside DWP's sphere of influence or control. This included mobile coverage, broadband speeds and the cost of data and devices. The second group contained

factors that DWP could potentially help with, and included skills, assistance and accessibility.

To a greater extent than any other benefit customer, UC customers could be encouraged by cheaper broadband and mobile data plans (42%). Although potentially outside of DWP's control, these customers could be educated around social tariffs to enable them to secure home internet access. This would allow them to become more frequent users of the internet, build their digital confidence and leave them in a good place to manage their benefit online without help.

Both sets of customers would be most encouraged by less adverts or pop-ups and assurances that websites they visited were legitimate. DWP could help to reinforce notions amongst Work Related customers that the digital space in which these customers might manage their claim were safe and trusted sites.

More than a third (37%) of UC customers would be encouraged to use the internet more if websites or apps were easier to understand, significantly more so than JSA customers, though almost 3 in 10 (29%) JSA customers would also be encouraged by this. DWP should look to simplify its content to make sure it is understood by all customers, even the Work Related customers who in comparison to other benefit lines, are more confident and adept internet users.

Other targeted DWP interventions that would encourage more than a quarter of UC customers included making websites more accessible and user-friendly (29%) and offering training to help improve customers' digital skillset (26%).

5.3 Preferences for engaging with DWP

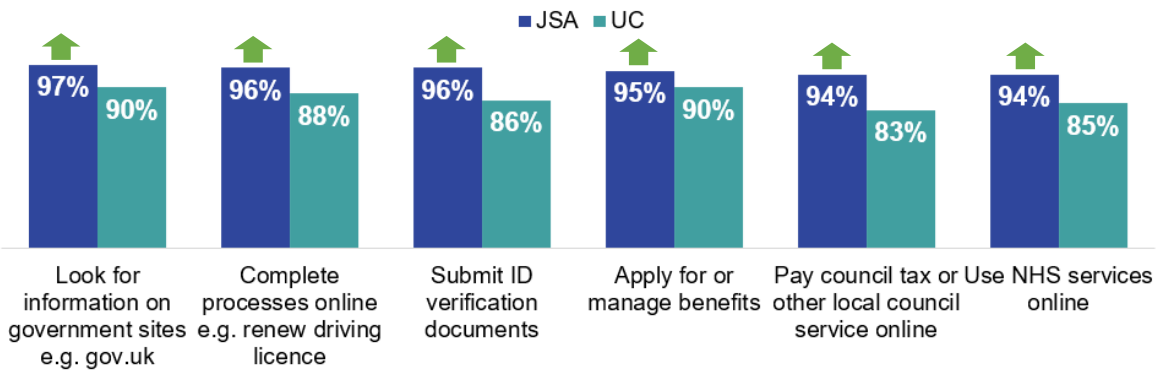
This section covers the extent to which Work Related customers feel able to perform a range of online activities either alone, with help, or not at all. It details how customers currently prefer to contact and engage DWP, their awareness and use of assistive services provided by DWP and experiences of using GOV.UK. It outlines customer preferences for using an online portal, including what would stop them from accessing a portal online, as well as customer preferences by channel for engaging with DWP for a range of activities.

5.3.1 Online government service usage

Customers were asked whether they could use specific government or public services online, either with or without help. As summarised in Figure 5.3.1, both benefit lines reported a high proportion of customers able to complete the activities either alone or with help. However, JSA customers were significantly more likely than UC customers to say they could complete each of the six activities.

Figure 5.3.1: Thinking now about using government or public services online. If they were available, which, if any, of the following services could you do online either with or without help?

% that could do task either alone or with help



Base: All JSA (550) and UC customers (553)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

For all six activities shown above, at least 9 in 10 JSA customers felt able to do them online either alone or with help. In comparison, at least 8 in 10 UC customers said they could complete each activity on their own or with assistance, rising to 9 in 10 (90%) for looking for information on government sites or applying for or managing their benefit.

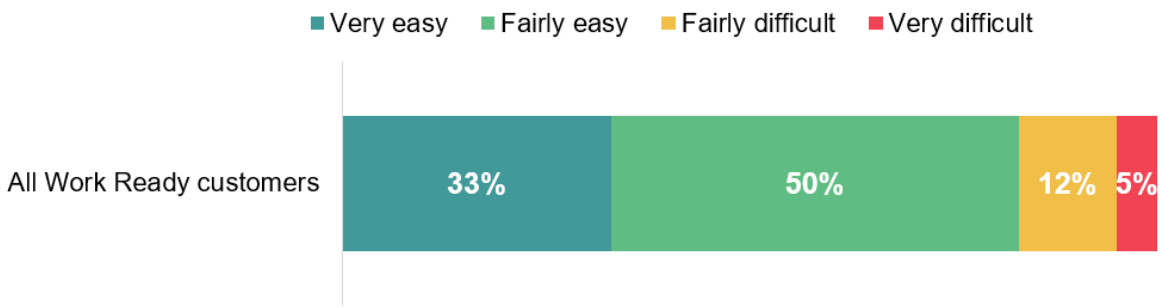
Of most relevance to DWP was customer confidence in applying for or managing their benefits online, which a large proportion of both JSA and UC customers felt able to do. Of all benefit lines, JSA had the highest proportion of customers who felt able to manage or apply for their benefit online alone without help (82%). The proportion of UC customers who felt able to do this alone was significantly lower (57%) than JSA, but still high in comparison to other benefit customers. A third of UC customers (33%) felt they could do it with help. Many of these customers reported they were at least 'fairly confident' internet users, so with the right support and training, could feel enabled to do this alone in future.

5.3.2 Using GOV.UK

More than any other benefit line customers, JSA and UC customers were the most likely DWP customers to have used the GOV.UK website. Overall, 96% of JSA customers and 95% of UC customers have used the website.

There were little differences between JSA and UC customers on how easy they found the government website to locate the information they needed (Figure 5.3.2). On balance those that have used the government website found it easy to locate the information they needed, with a third (33%) finding it 'very easy' and half (50%) finding it 'fairly easy'.

Figure 5.3.2: Thinking back to when you last used the government website, WWW.GOV.UK, how easy or difficult was it to find all the information needed?

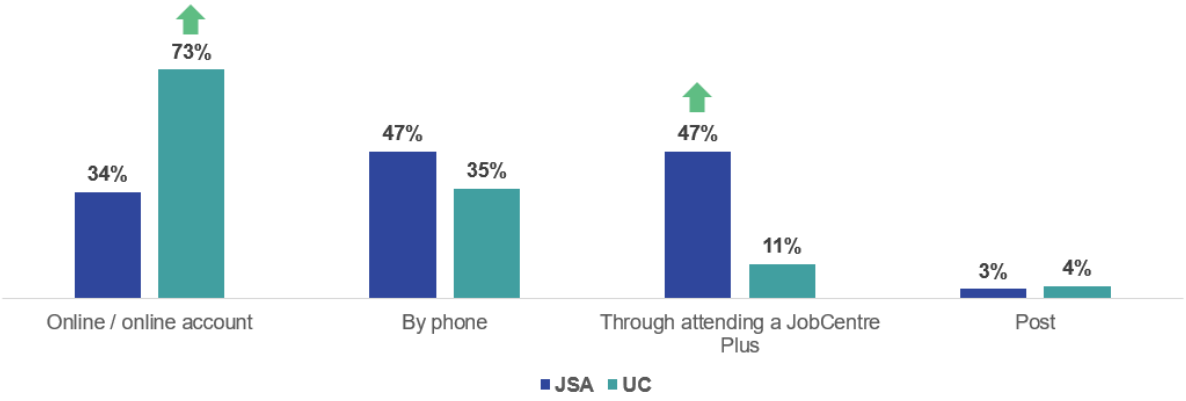


Base: All Work Related customers who had used GOV.UK (1,004)

5.3.3 Contacting DWP

There were significant differences between JSA and UC customers in the ways they currently usually contact DWP in relation to managing their benefit claim. UC customers have access to the UC account, so despite their lower internet confidence (Figure 5.1.6) in comparison to JSA, had nearly three quarters (73%) currently managing their claim digitally (Figure 5.3.3). Around a third of UC customers (35%) were contacting DWP by phone, illustrating that some customers were using multiple methods to contact DWP and that some still had a preference for the telephone when dealing with and engaging with DWP.

Figure 5.3.3: How do you usually contact DWP in relation to managing your benefit claim?



Base: All JSA (550) and UC customers (553) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

More so than any other benefit customer, JSA customers were significantly more likely to engage with DWP by attending a Jobcentre Plus (47%), and most likely to meet with a Work Coach face-to-face. The same proportion of JSA customers were also currently using the phone (47%). Currently, just over a third (34%) were using some kind of online method (e.g., email) to contact DWP, though with internet usage amongst these customers very high, and their confidence higher than any other benefit line, they could be more easily encouraged towards a more online engagement with DWP if the online platform or account existed.

Work Related customers on the whole were no longer relying on post to contact DWP, with this being used by a minority of customers.

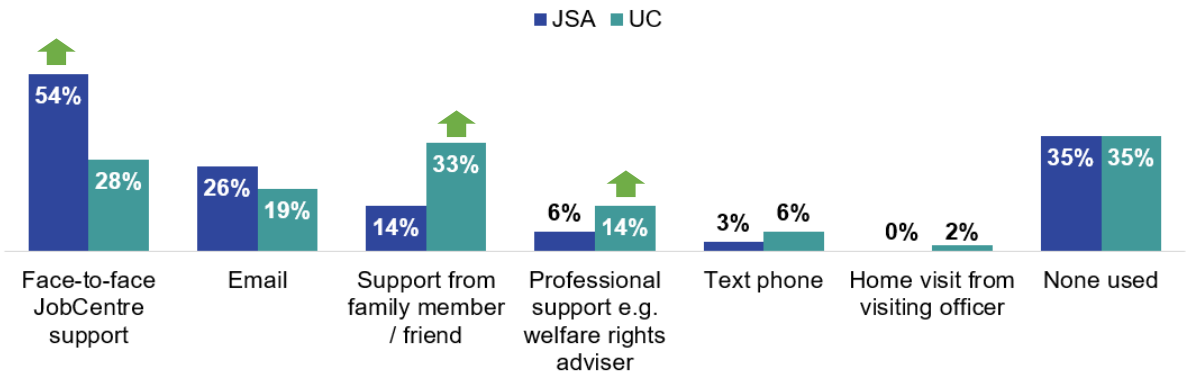
5.3.4 Awareness and use of assistive services

Despite being the benefit group potentially least in need of assistive services compared to those living with disabilities, those with caring needs or retired customers, Work Related customers had the highest awareness of support services provided by DWP.

Customers from both benefit lines were most aware of face-to-face support provided in a Jobcentre Plus (JSA: 83% aware, UC: 66% aware), followed by email communications (JSA: 51% aware, UC: 44% aware) and text phone services (JSA: 21% aware, UC: 23% aware).

As illustrated by Figure 5.3.4, around a third of both JSA and UC customers (35%) were not using any support services when contacting DWP about their claim. The most used type of support was different depending on whether a DWP customer's latest claim was for JSA or UC. As shown in Figure 5.3.3, almost half (47%) of JSA customers usually contact DWP by attending a Jobcentre Plus and a similar proportion (54%) were making use of face-to-face support provided there. This was a significantly higher proportion than any other benefit line, including UC which had the second highest proportion (28%) of customers using face-to-face support in a Jobcentre Plus.

Figure 5.3.4: When contacting DWP about your claim, do you use any of the following assistive or support services?



Base: All JSA (550) and UC customers (553) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

A third of UC customers (33%) were using support from a family member or friends, a significantly higher proportion in comparison to JSA (14%). They were also significantly more likely than JSA customers to use assistance from a professional, like a welfare rights adviser.

5.3.5 Preferred ways of engaging with DWP

Customers were asked to indicate their preferred methods for communicating with DWP for a variety of activities that occur throughout the duration of a claim. These included things such as registering an initial claim, submitting supporting evidence, updating personal details, checking the progress of a claim, disputing decisions or

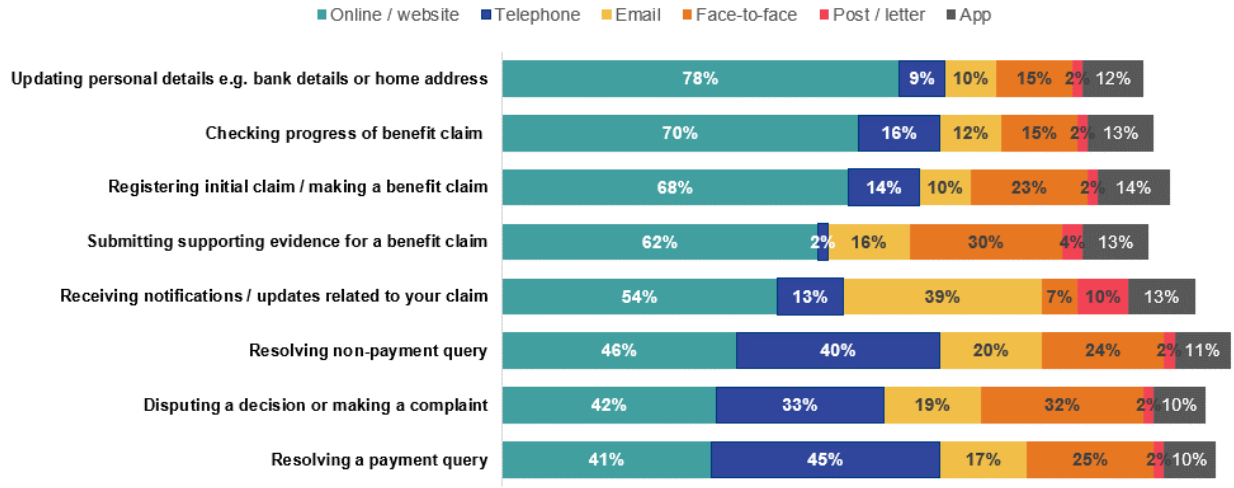
resolving payment and non-payment related queries, and receiving notifications related to a claim.

Customers gave their preferences for ways to engage with DWP for each of these activities and could select from a range of communication channels including both digital and traditional analogue methods such as telephone, face-to-face or by post or letter. Customers were able to choose all methods they would like to use, not just their first preference.

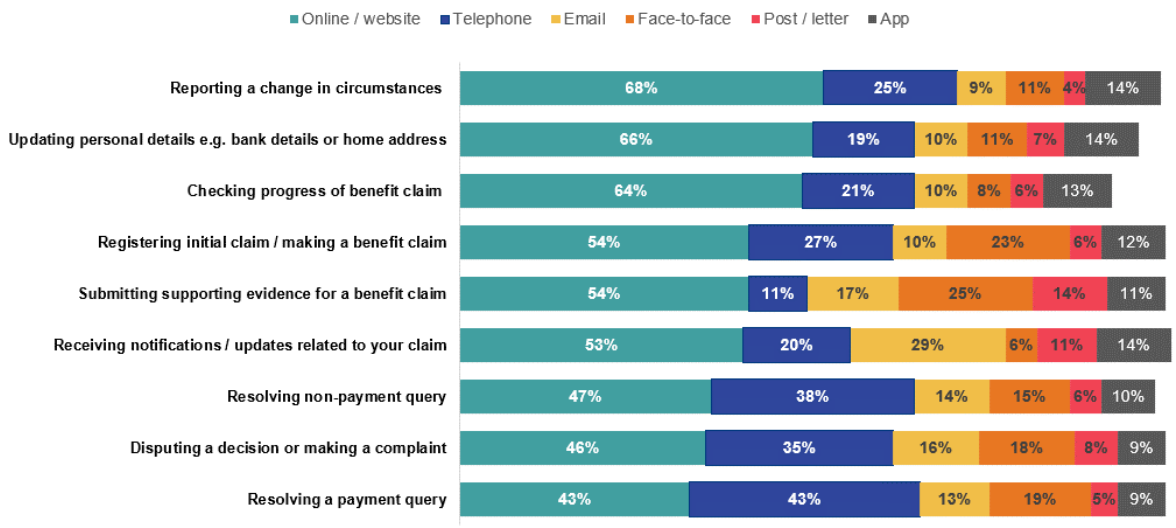
Both JSA and UC customers indicated a strong preference for dealing with DWP online for the whole range of activities that might occur as part of their benefit claim, (Figure 5.3.5).

Figure 5.3.5: If it were available, in which of the following ways would you most prefer to engage with DWP for each of the following activities that might occur as part of your [benefit name] claim? Most preferred channels %:

Job Seekers Allowance



Universal Credit



Base: All JSA (550) and UC customers (553)

NB: Percentages in the charts add up to more than 100% as multiple options allowed. Ranked based on proportion rating online/website

The activity that a majority of both JSA and UC customers would prefer to engage online with DWP was when updating their personal details (78% JSA and 66% UC). This was followed by checking the progress of their claims (70% JSA and 64% UC) and more than half of both JSA and UC customers would prefer to engage online with DWP when registering their initial benefit claim (68% JSA and 54% UC). Additionally, UC customers also had a strong preference for reporting a change in circumstances online (not asked to JSA customers).

Customers from both benefit lines were typically more likely to prefer to engage either by telephone or face to face for more complex needs such as resolving queries (both non-payment and payment related and disputing decisions or making complaints. Although online was still preferred by more than 4 in 10 customers for these interactions, there was strong indication that human interaction was preferred for these more complex interactions and DWP should ensure that more personal contact (telephone and face to face) remain available to customers.

What was encouraging, however, was that UC customers (who might already be using the UC Account) have retained their preference for online in how they wish to communicate with DWP in future. JSA customers, too, have an even stronger preference for online for some activities than UC customers, and seem ready to make the step towards digital interactions with DWP in the future.

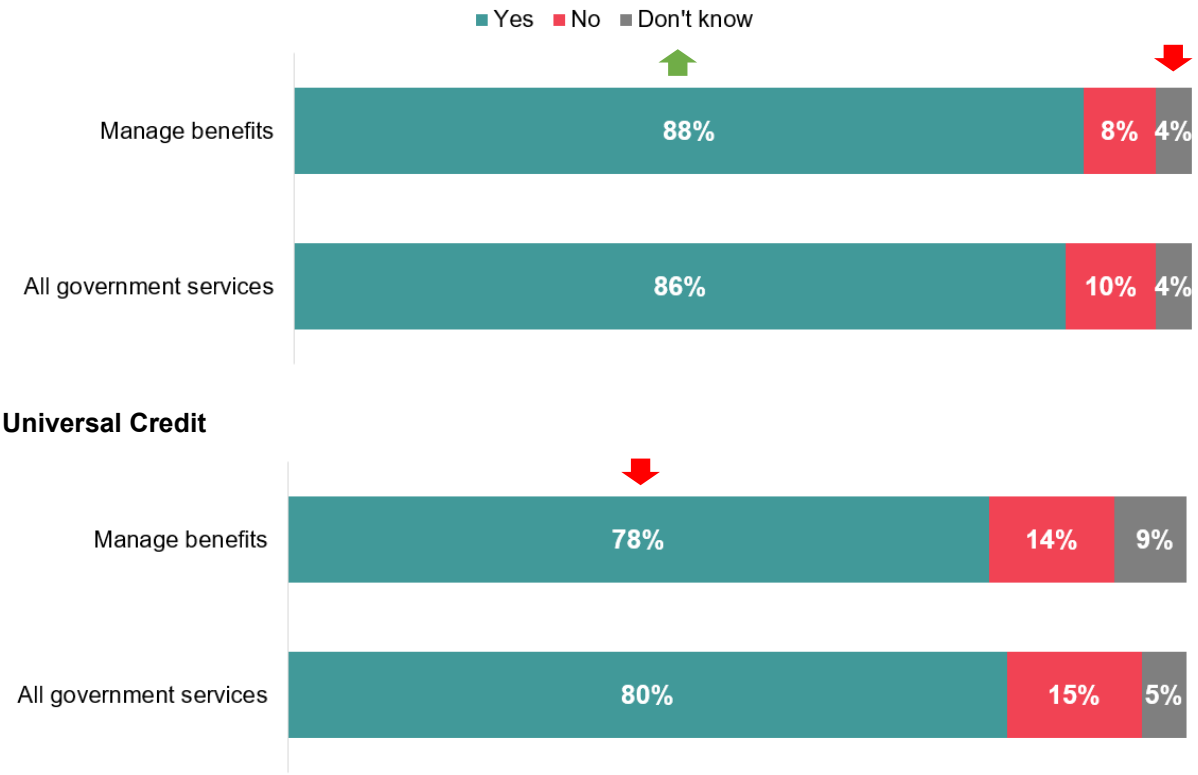
5.3.6 Potential online portal use

Having first been told that portals were a webpage or website that provides users an entryway to a variety of information, tools and links, customers were asked to indicate their interest in using one. Customers were asked about both a portal that could manage all of their benefits online, and one that would be available to access all

government services, for example to manage not only their benefits but also their health and tax affairs.

The results for the two portals were very similar (Figure 5.3.6), though JSA customers were slightly more open to a portal to manage just their benefits whereas UC customers were slightly more open to a portal that incorporates all government services. Compared to any other benefit line customer, JSA customers were the most open to either type of portal.

Figure 5.3.6: If a single portal was available to manage all of your benefits online, would you use the portal? If there was a single portal available for ALL government services (e.g. managing your benefits, managing your health, managing tax) would you use it?



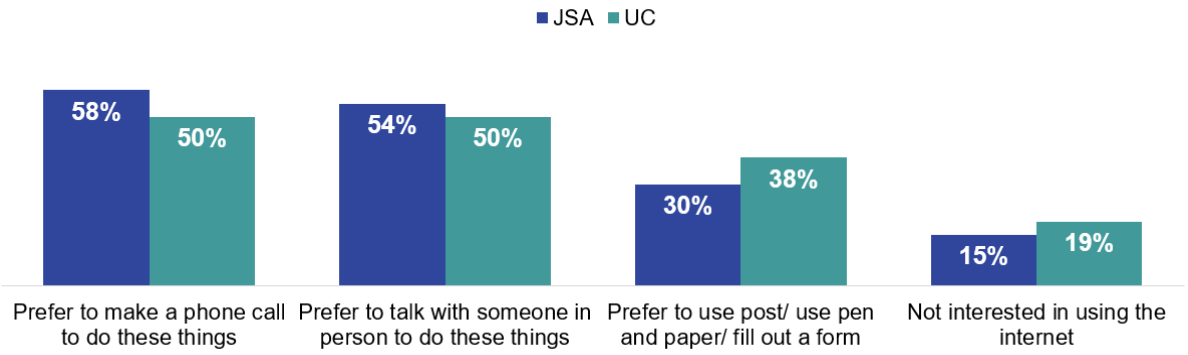
Base: All JSA (550) and UC customers (553)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

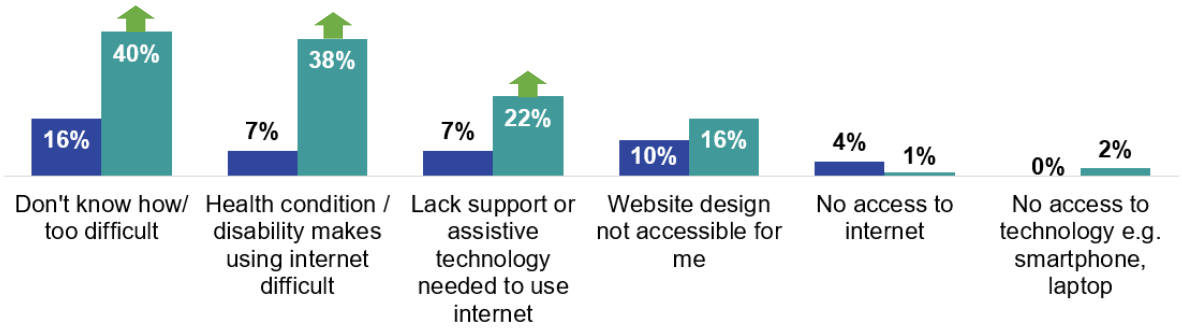
15% of UC customers and 10% of JSA customers expressed an unwillingness to use a single online portal to manage either their benefits or government services in general. Barriers that prevented Work Related customers from using government services online were similar to those for why customers did not make more use of the internet generally. As shown in Figure 5.3.7, the first set of reasons comprised personal preferences for how customers conduct their affairs. The second set related to issues of personal ability, accessibility and assistance.

Figure 5.3.7: Which, if any, of the following reasons would stop you from accessing government services online?

Contact preferences.



Skills, assistance and accessibility



Base: All JSA (77) and UC customers (109) who would not use a portal to access government services online. – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

For those unwilling to use a portal, either to manage their benefit or for all government services, both JSA and UC customer groups reported they preferred to make a phone call to do these things or preferred to talk in person with someone rather than accessing the service online. Preferring a phone call was reported by 58% of unwilling JSA customers and 50% of UC customers. Similar proportions said they preferred to talk with someone in person (54% and 50% respectively). The third most frequently mentioned factor preventing customers from using online government services was a preference for using post, pen and paper or filling out forms (JSA: 30% and UC: 38%).

With respect to skills, accessibility and assistance, UC customers were significantly more likely than JSA customers to cite a range of reasons that would stop them accessing services online. 2 in 5 (40%) UC customers who did not want to use a portal thought that doing so would be too difficult, with a similar proportion (38%) of those unwilling suggesting that their health condition would make using a portal difficult. More than 1 in 5 (22%) UC customers also felt they lacked the necessary supportive or assistive technology needed, something that DWP could address by

helping to provide that support and reduce any barriers associated with customers needing more help.

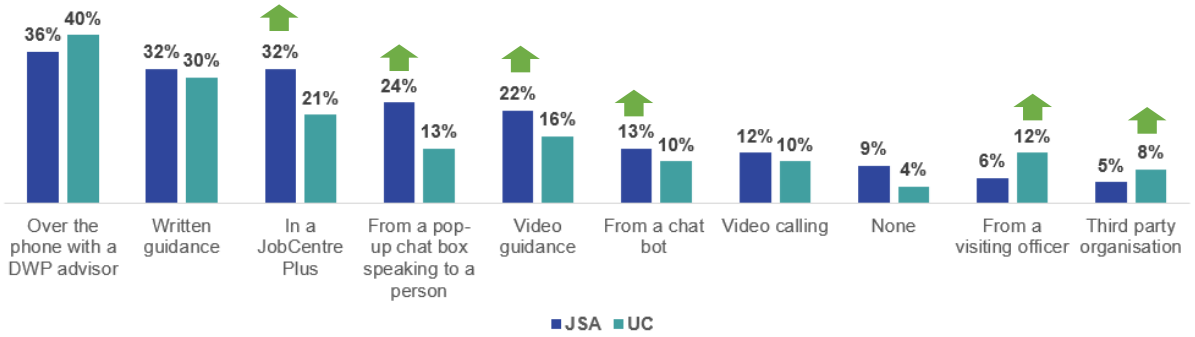
5.4 Future support needs

This section covers the ways in which customers would want to receive support or guidance on how to make and manage benefit claims digitally, including what DWP could do to make customers more likely to use DWP digital services. It covers situations which might encourage customers to further develop their digital skills.

5.4.1 Support and guidance for DWP digital services

Based on evidence related to the digital capabilities of Work Related customers and their preferences for engaging with DWP via digital methods in the future, those claiming JSA and UC were amongst the customers most prepared for a transition to digital engagements with DWP. If these customers do need support, however, their preferred ways in which to receive this support are detailed in Figure 5.4.1.

Figure 5.4.1: Assuming you wanted to use a DWP digital service, in what ways would you want to receive support or guidance on how to make and manage a benefit claim?



Base: All JSA (550) and UC customers (553) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

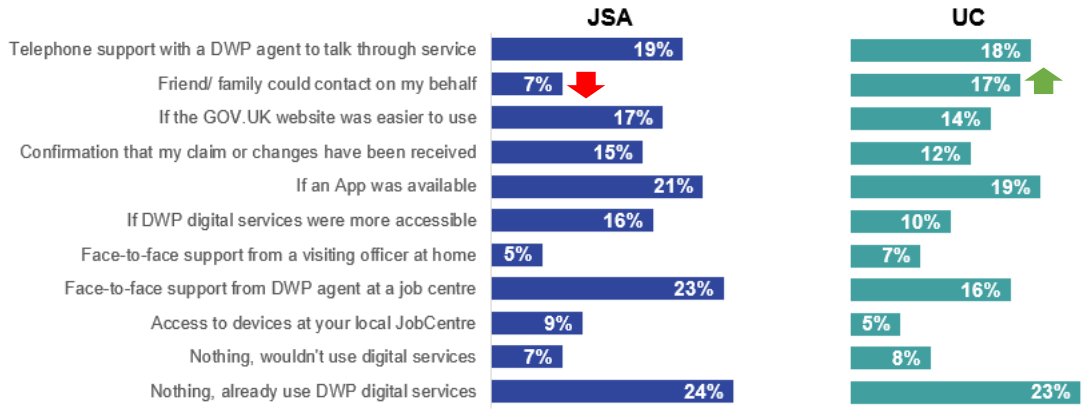
Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Both JSA and UC customers would prefer telephone support with a DWP adviser (UC: 40% and JSA: 36%). JSA customers were significantly more likely than UC customers to be receptive to support in a Jobcentre Plus (32%), pop-up chat box support speaking to a person on the other end (24%), video guidance (22%), or from a chat bot on GOV.UK (13%). UC customers were significantly more like than JSA customers to be receptive to support from a visiting officer (12%) or from a third-party organisation like Citizens Advice (8%), although neither of these types of support were amongst the most popular for UC customers.

5.4.2 What can DWP do to make customers more likely to use digital services

Around a quarter of both JSA (24%) and UC customers (23%) reported that DWP could not do anything to make them more likely to use DWP digital services as they were already using them (Figure 5.4.2). Less than 1 in 10 from each benefit line suggested that they would not use digital services in future (JSA: 7%, UC: 8%).

Figure 5.4.2: What, if anything, could DWP do to make you more likely to use DWP digital services?



Base: All JSA (550) and UC customers (553) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Where Work Related customers did outline the initiatives DWP could take to increase their likelihood of using its digital services, these tended to focus on personal support such as that provided by telephone support with a DWP agent or face-to-face in a Jobcentre Plus, the latter being particularly desired by JSA customers (23%).

Many UC customers already had their online account but would be receptive to support from an adviser within that account (21%).

The GOV.UK website should also be made as simple to use as possible. Figure 5.3.8 showed that most current users of the website find it easy, but as JSA and UC customers were amongst the customers most likely to have used the website, further improvements will only improve the customer experience.

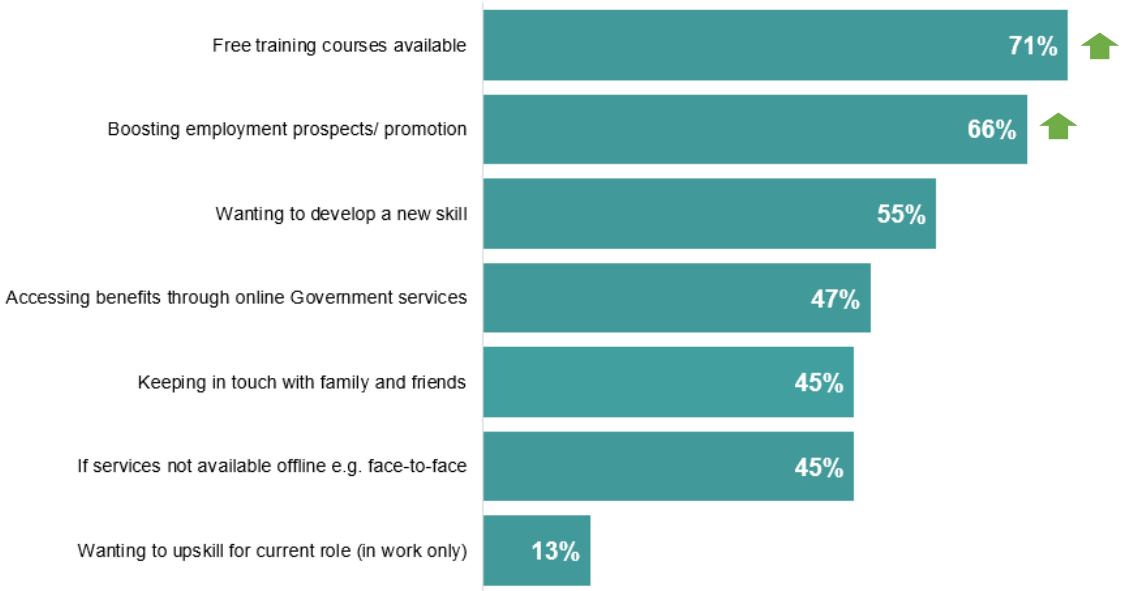
It was of note that around 1 in 5 Work Related customers (JSA: 21%, UC: 19%) also believe that making an App available would encourage them to use digital services more.

5.4.3 Future digital skills development

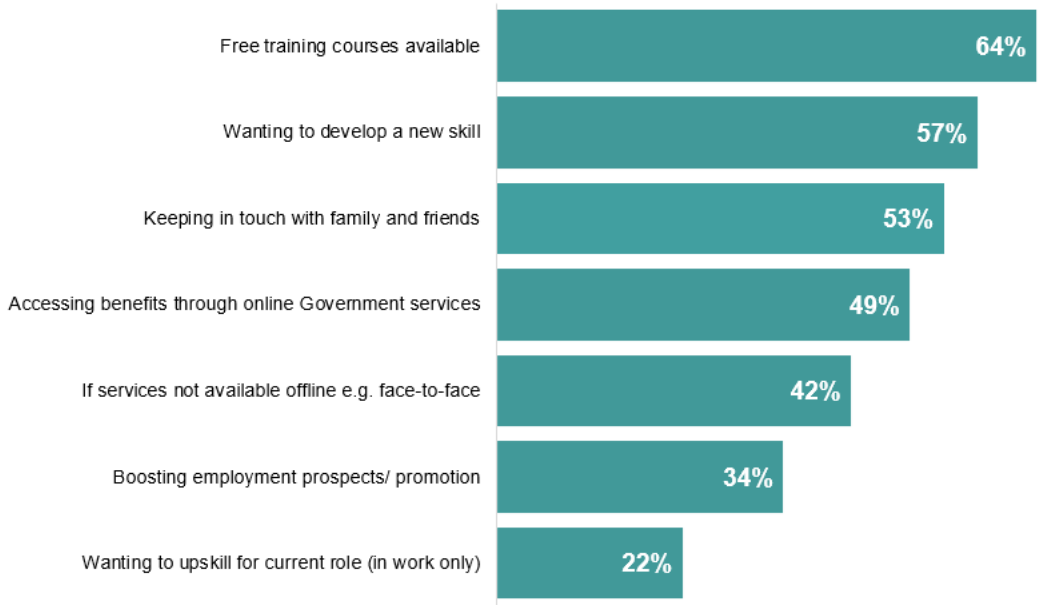
Certain situations could encourage Work Related customers to further develop their digital skills in future. The main motivator for both JSA (71%) and UC (64%) customers to develop their digital skills would be free training courses being made available (Figure 5.4.3).

Figure 5.4.3: Which, if any, of the following situations would encourage you to further develop your digital skills in the future?

Job Seekers Allowance



Universal Credit



Base: All Work Related customers who could be encouraged to use their digital skills in the future (UC: 405, JSA: 421– excluding those who said they didn't need to or want to develop skills, don't know and prefer not to say) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Outside of free training courses, Work Related customers would be encouraged by being able to develop a new skill, wanting to upskill for their current role if they were already in work and, in particular for JSA customers searching for employment, wanting to boost their prospects of securing that employment. For Work Related, DWP should focus their attention on how digital skills can help with not only a work search, but also once the customer has found employment. If any training courses are made available, it is likely that Work Related customers take advantage of them to further develop their skills in the future.

However, there remained a similar proportion of both UC and JSA customers who did not feel they need to develop their digital skills any further (17% JSA and 12% UC).

6. Carers

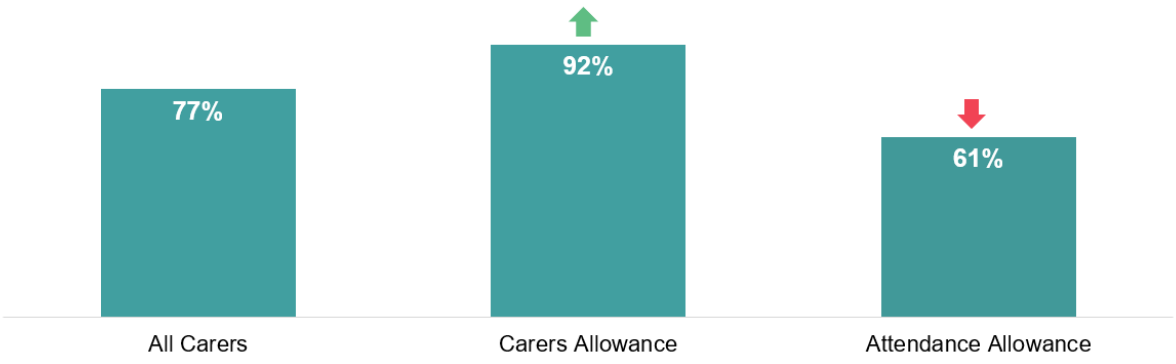
This chapter covers Carer customers' internet usage; where they access the internet, and the devices and assistive technologies use to go online. It summarises customers' confidence in their ability to go online and barriers to internet access at home or in general. Comparisons are made between those receiving CA and AA with the overall picturing being that the latter have less access to the internet and use it less often than the former. AA customers also have lower levels of confidence in their ability to use the internet. When interpreting the data and the very clear differences in the experiences and behaviours of CA and AA customers, it is worth noting their very different profiles. Among other things, AA customers tend to be much older, are more likely to have a disability (physical and / or mental), and less likely to have any formal qualifications.

6.1 Digital capabilities

6.1.1 Internet usage

At the time of the survey over three-quarters (77%) of all Carers customers were currently accessing the internet, while just under two in in ten (17%) had never used it. The proportion using the internet was much higher among those receiving CA (92%) than for those receiving AA (61%). See Figure 6.1.1.

Figure 6.1.1: Have you ever accessed the internet? (Percentage currently accessing the internet)



Base: All Carers customers (1,106), Carers Allowance (550), Attendance Allowance (556)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Three in ten of those receiving AA (30%) had never used the internet. This was almost eight times the equivalent figure for recipients of CA (4%). When also considering those customers that previously used the internet frequently but had

stopped, or who no longer used the internet having tried it once or twice in the past, the data suggested that almost four in ten (38%) AA customers could have been considered non-users of the internet. This was nearly five time higher than the equivalent figure for CA customers (8%). In summary the data suggest those receiving AA have significant internet access issues and will require a lot of support if they are to attain the same level of internet access as other customers.

When interpreting the large variation between CA and AA customers' level of internet use, it is worth noting the significant differences in their demographic and personal profiles. In comparison to CA customers, those receiving AA were more likely to described themselves as retired (91% versus 5%), to have a physical and/or a mental disability (81% versus 46%), or to lack any formal qualifications (33% versus 20%). AA customers were also very much older. Over eight in ten AA customers (83%) were aged over 75 while most CA customers (53%) were under 45.

As these data illustrates, CA and AA customers were two very distinct groups of people. These differences did not necessarily cause the variation in internet use, but they could be explanatory factors and therefore useful to consider when designing interventions that might help AA customers get more from the internet in general and DWP's digital services in particular.

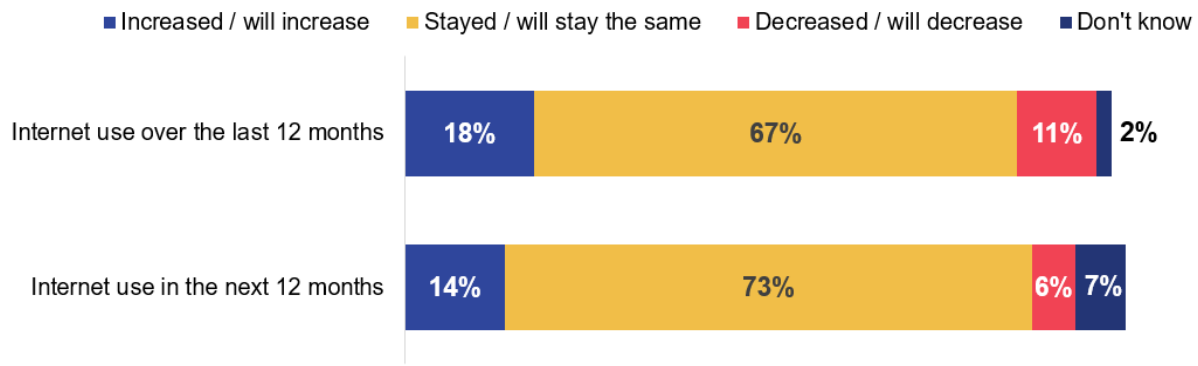
6.1.2 Usage trends

Two-thirds (65%) of Carers customers who had used the internet said their personal use over the past 12 months had remained at the same level. Almost the same proportion reported having increased their use (16%) as said usage had decreased (15%). However, as illustrated by Figure 6.1.2 there were significant differences between the results for CA and AA customers.

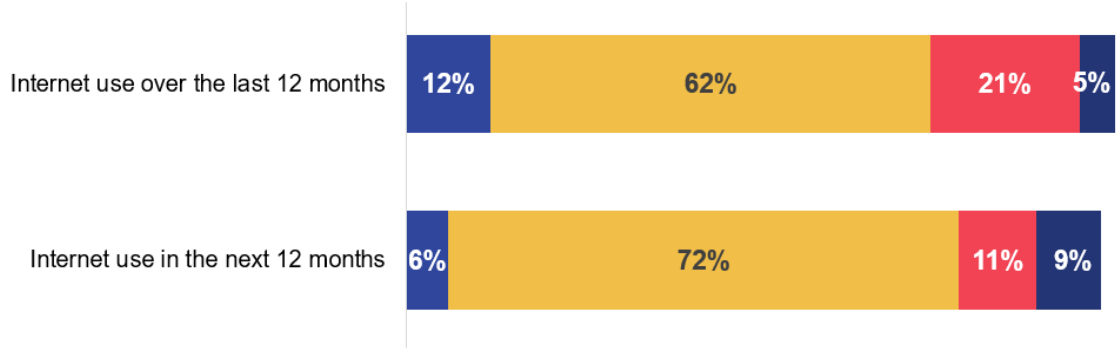
On balance more CA customers increased (18%) rather than decreased (11%) internet use over the past 12 months. The opposite was true for AA customers with more decreasing (21%) than increasing internet use (12%). A similar pattern was seen with predicted future use. CA customers expected to increase internet use over the next 12 months (14% increase versus 6% decrease), while those receive AA foresee a net reduction (6% increase versus 11% decrease).

Figure 6.1.2: In the last 12 months, has your personal use of the internet increased, stayed the same or decreased? In 12 months from now, do you think your personal use of the internet will increase, decrease, or stay the same?

Carers Allowance



Attendance Allowance



Base: Carers Allowance customers who have used the internet and were asked about last 12 months (522), and all asked about the next 12 months (550). Attendance Allowance customers who have used the internet and were asked about last 12 months (404), and all asked about the next 12 months (556).

6.1.3 Devices and assistive technology

For CA customers, smartphones (88%) dominated as the device most often used to go online. Fewer than half reported they used a laptop, netbook or desktop computer (45%), or a tablet such as an iPad (38%). Compared to CA customers, AA customers were less likely to use a smartphone (56%) but made relatively more use of laptops, notebooks and desktop computers (56%) and tablets (50%).

Assistive technologies were used by three in ten CA customers (31%) and a quarter of those receiving AA (26%). For both groups of customers, voice assistants such as Alexa, Siri or Google Assistant were the most frequently used type of assistive technology (CA 28% and AA 18%). The only other notable technology used was screen magnifiers, used by 7% of AA customers when accessing the internet.

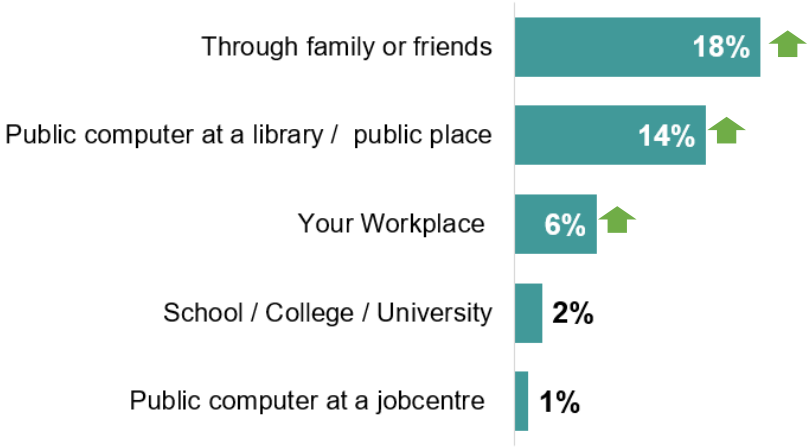
6.1.4 Internet access inside and outside the home

Reflecting the differences seen in other questions, customers receiving CA (90%) had both access and made use of broadband internet at home, significantly more than AA customers (49%). A small proportion of AA customers had internet access at home but were not making use of it (6%) while a similar proportion (10%) were without home-based access.

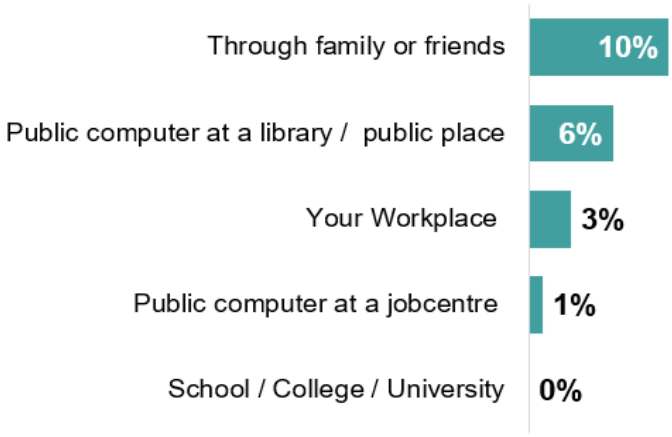
While a large majority of caring benefit customers were internet users and access it at home via broadband, only a third (37%) had ever accessed the internet outside their residence. The proportion among CA customers (46%) was almost double that of AA customers (24%). For both groups of Carers customers, when used outside the home the internet was most frequently accessed via family or friends or a public computer at a library or other public space (Figure 6.1.4).

Figure 6.1.4: Do you ever access the internet anywhere other than in your home at all?

Carers Allowance



Attendance Allowance



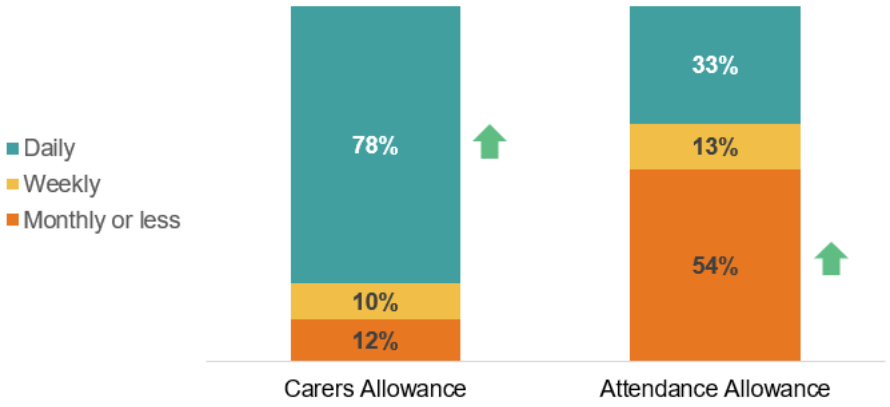
Base: All Carers Allowance (496) and Attendance Allowance customers (354) who use the internet–multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

6.1.5 Internet use

Almost three-quarters of Carers customers reported they used the internet at least once a day, but the figure was significantly higher among CA (78%) than AA customers (33%). As illustrated by Figure 6.1.5, the difference was the outcome of AA customers being significantly more likely to be very infrequent users of the internet, with more than half (54%) using the internet monthly, less, or not at all. Even though they had access, one in ten Attendance Allowance customers never used the internet (10%) while a similar proportion (7%) had access but chose not to use it.

Figure 6.1.5: How often do / did you use the internet? (Including both work and personal use)



Base: All Carers Allowance (550) and Attendance Allowance customers (556)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

6.1.6 Internet confidence

The majority of Carers customers (53%) reported they were confident to some degree in using the internet. However, as shown in Figure 6.1.6 CA customers (77%) were far more confident than those receiving AA (29%). Almost half of AA customers (49%) reported they were not at all confident in using the internet and this group will likely require careful and targeted assistance if they were to become more comfortable with using it. When considering how this might be done it is worth remembering that in comparison to CA customers, those receiving Attendance Allowance were: much older; more likely to have a disability; less likely to have any formal qualifications.

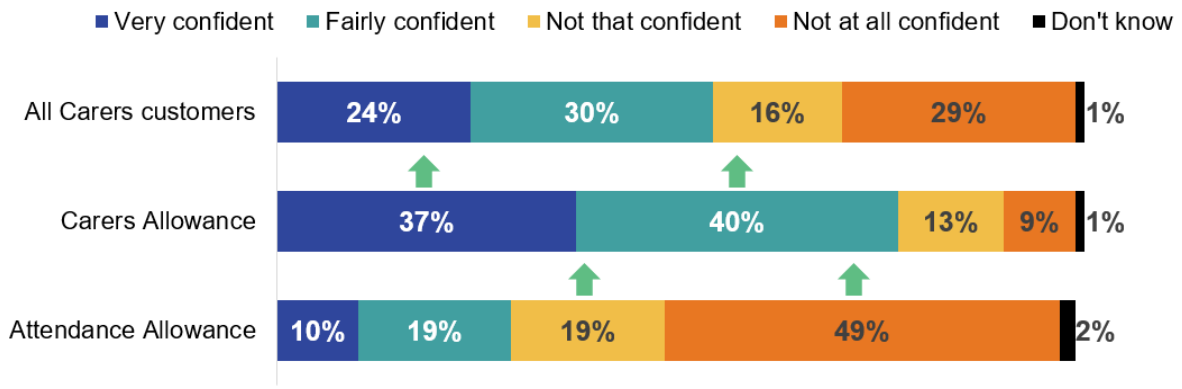


Figure 6.1.6: How confident, if at all, do you feel in your ability to use the internet?

Base: All Carers customers (1,106), Carers Allowance (550), Attendance Allowance (556)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

6.1.7 Needing support when accessing the internet

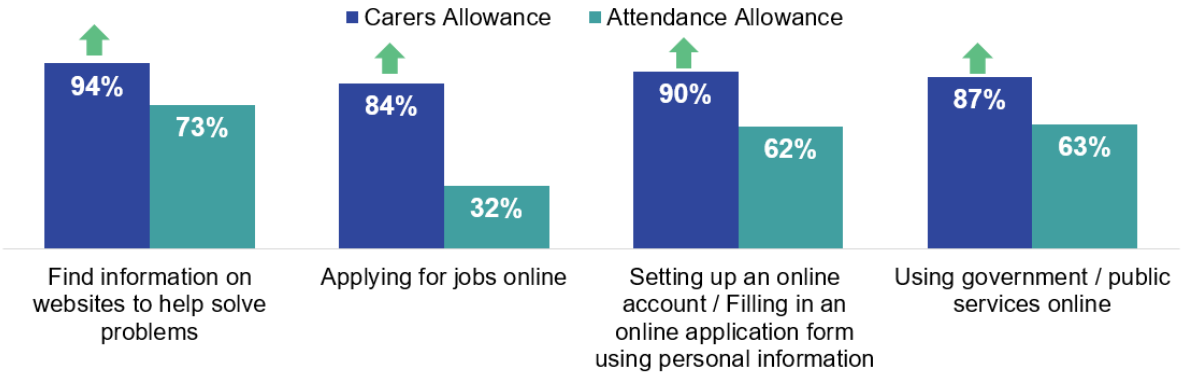
Customers who had used the internet at any point were asked whether they could perform certain activities online, either with or without help. As summarised in Figure 6.1.7, CA Customers were significantly more likely than AA customers to report they could complete each of the four activities.

Over eight in ten CA customers said they could complete each activity on their own or with assistance, rising to 94% for finding general information. Three-quarters of AA customers (73%) also said they could find information on websites, either or their own or with assistance. The task AA customers felt least able to complete was applying for jobs online but given that the vast majority (91%) describe themselves as retired this may reflect a lack of need as much as their actual ability to do it.

When looking at the results in detail it was noticeable that compared to AA customers, those receiving CA had much greater confidence in their ability to carry out these tasks on their own. For each of the four activities, between 64 percent and 80 percent of CA customers said they could carry it out online without assistance. In contrast the proportion of AA customers who reported they would not require help ranged from 22 percent to 47 percent. In both cases the lower figure was for completing online job applications and the higher figure related to finding information on websites to solve problems.

Figure 6.1.7: Thinking now about the following general activities that you can do on the internet. Which, if any, of the following activities could you do online either with or without help?

% that could do task either alone or with help



Base: All Carers Allowance (496) and Attendance Allowance customers (354) who use the internet

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Almost seven in ten (68%) CA customers were confident that they can use online government and public services without assistance. However, only a minority of AA customers thought they could achieve this on their own (43%). Over a third (35%) of AA customers considered themselves unable to use online government and public services.

Those who required assistance in completing online tasks tend to be helped by family members. In the case of CA customers, it tended to be family members who lived with them (60%), while for AA customers it was a family member who lived elsewhere (56%). Friends were the only other source used by more than one in ten CA (12%) or AA customers (17%). Very few reported using support from organisations such as Citizens Advice (6% and 3% respectively), organisations / departments that were proving a service to them (2% and 1%) or carers (1% and 5%).

6.2 Barriers to internet use

A series of questions intended to understand barriers to internet use were asked to all customers. These barriers uncovered reasons why offline customers did not use the internet, why online customers did not use the internet for more activities than they currently did and what would encourage further use in future for both users and non-users of the internet.

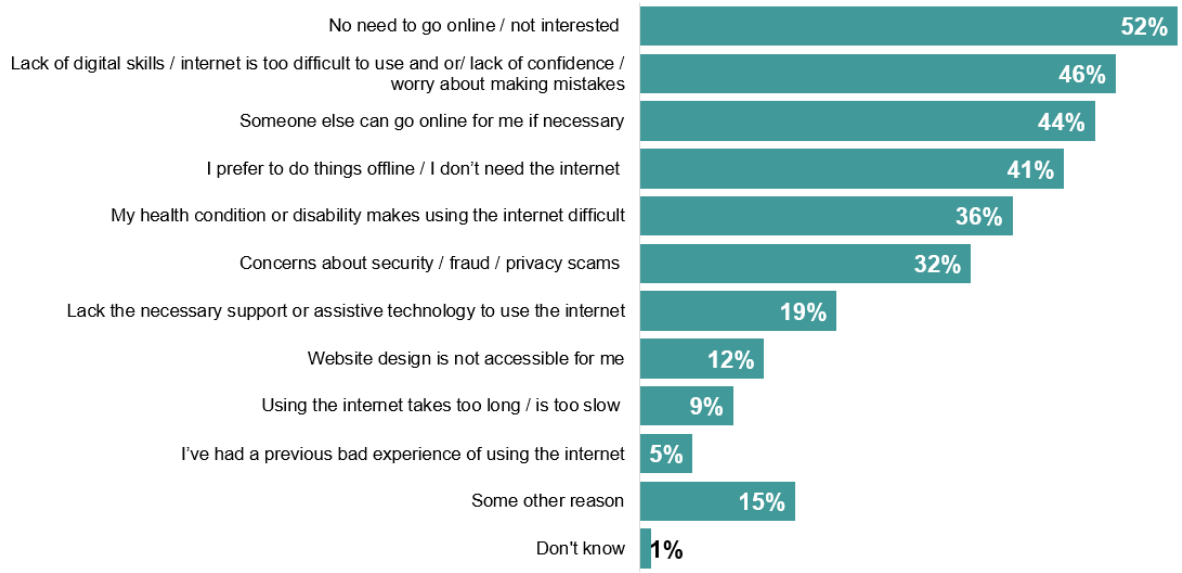
6.2.1 Offline customers

Approximately four in ten AA (38%) and one in ten CA customers (8%) did not currently use the internet. For the purposes of this research therefore, they were

classified as being offline. With only a small base of 53 offline CA customers, it was not possible to identify clear differences between the reasons why they and AA customers did not use the internet. However, by looking across all Carer customers as a whole three main factors emerge.

As the data in Figure 6.2.1 illustrates, two of these factors were a general preference for doing things offline (including a perceived lack of need or interest or having others that, if necessary, can go online on the customer's behalf), and fears over security. The third group of reasons contains elements where DWP might be able to intervene and help those customers who are currently offline to access digital services. These involved improving customers' level of digital skills and/or confidence, helping to address the barriers that health conditions or disabilities presented to non-users, and looking to provide the support or assistive technology people needed to use the internet. If DWP could help assure customers of the integrity and security of digital services this would help address another of the biggest barriers, one mentioned by a third of Carers customers (32%).

Figure 6.2.1: Which of these, if any, are reasons why you do not use the internet?



Base: All Carers Customers who are currently offline (253) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

The reason most frequently given for why Carers customers were not online is a lack of interest or perceived lack of need. The majority (52%) of Carers customers, including 55% of AA customers, gave this as a reason. Almost half of Carers customers (46%) felt they lacked the digital skills required to go online or felt the internet was too difficult to use, leading to worries over making mistakes. This was voiced by an almost identical proportion of both CA and AA customers. The factor ranked third as a reason not to use the internet was that customers could call on somebody else to go online for them (44%). Almost half (46%) of AA customers said this.

It was of note that almost half of the CA customers who do not currently use the internet say they prefer to do things offline or do not feel they need the internet

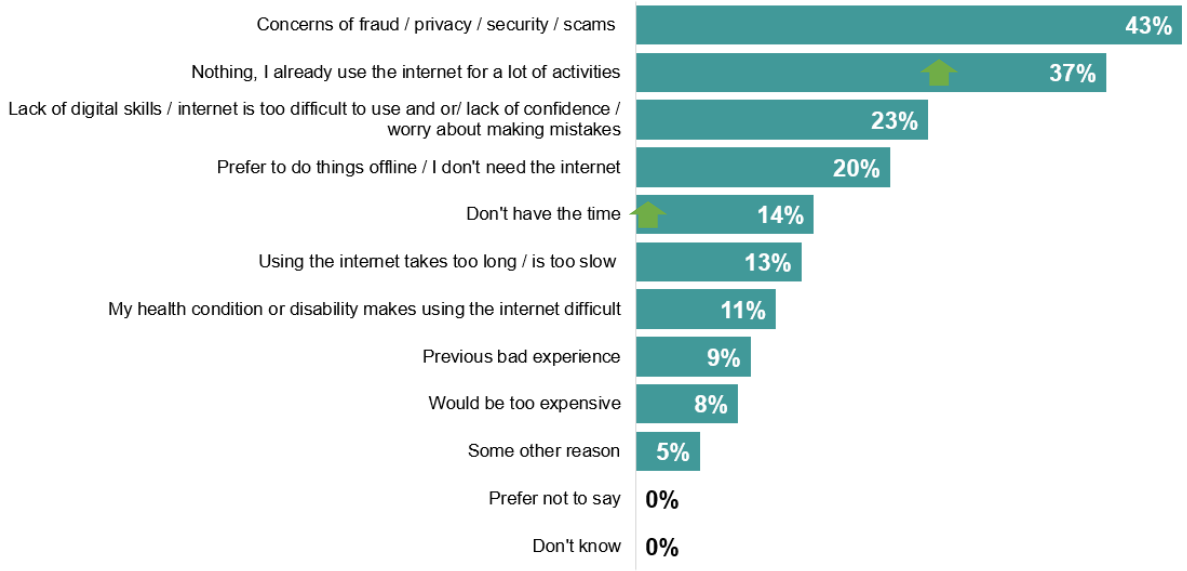
(49%). However, owing to the small base size this cannot be considered significantly different to AA customers.

6.2.2 Current internet users

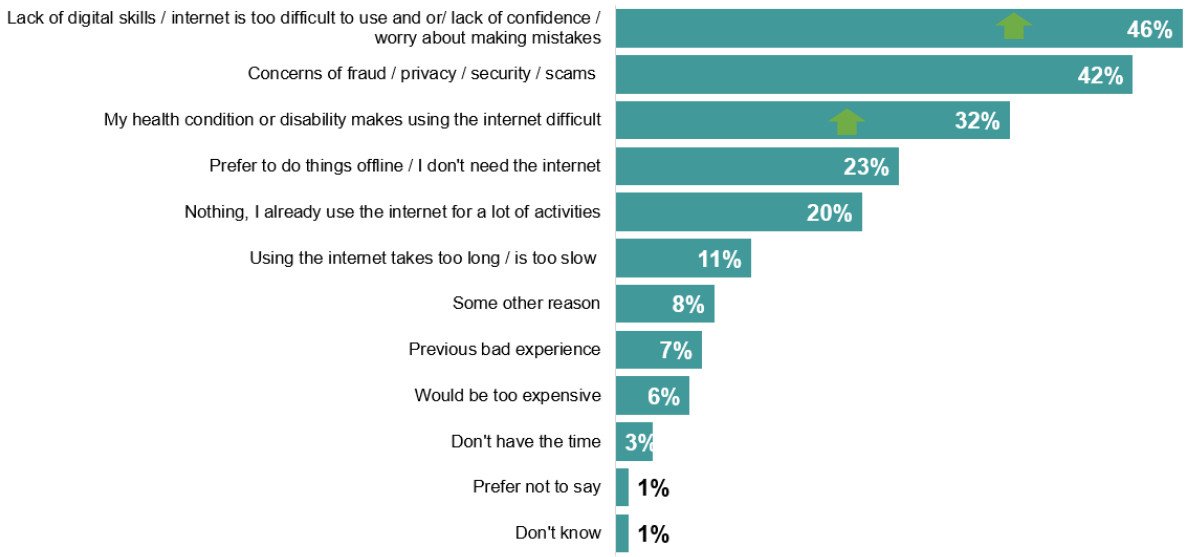
Three-quarters of Carers customers (77%) reported they currently make use of the internet but even among this more internet experienced and confident group, only a minority (37%) said nothing prevents them from using it for more activities than they currently do. Among AA customers only two in ten (20%) reported nothing is preventing them from using the internet more. The reasons for not making more use of the internet are detailed in Figure 6.2.2.

Figure 6.2.2: Which, if any, of the following reasons are stopping you from using the internet for more activities than you use it for now?

Carers Allowance



Attendance Allowance



Base: All Carers Allowance (496) and Attendance Allowance customers (354) who use the internet– multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit line

Figure 6.2.2 illustrates that among AA customers the barriers preventing them from making greater use of the internet were experienced to a greater degree than equivalent CA customers. For example, they were twice as likely to say a lack of digital skills, feeling that it is too difficult or worries over making mistakes were stopping them from making more use of the internet (46% versus 23%). AA customers (32%) were also significantly more likely than CA customers (11%) to say a health condition or disability made using the internet difficult.

Fears over security, privacy, security and scams (43%) was the main reason why CA customers did not make more use of the internet. This reason was stated by a similar proportion of AA customers (42%). Meanwhile, CA customers (14%) were significantly more likely than AA customers (3%) to say they did not have time to use the internet more.

6.2.3 Encouraging further internet use in the future

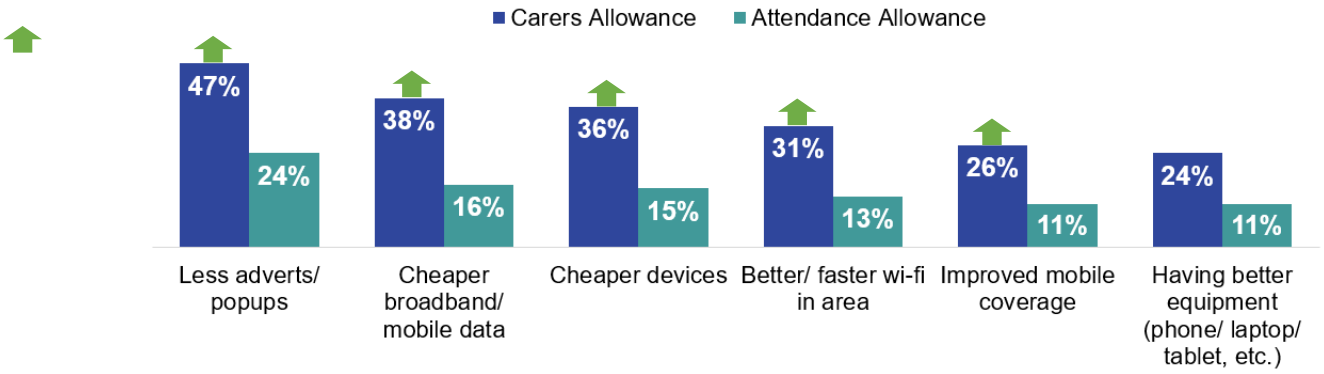
All Carer customers, including those who currently did not use the internet were asked what would encourage them to use it for more activities in the future. Over four in ten AA customers (45%) said there was nothing that would encourage them to make more use of the internet. This figure was almost double that reported among CA customers (24%) (Figure 6.2.3).

The factors presented to customers in the survey that could encourage greater internet use fall into two broad categories. Firstly, those which were structural and fell outside DWP's sphere of influence or control. This included website content, mobile coverage, broadband speeds and the cost of data and devices. The second

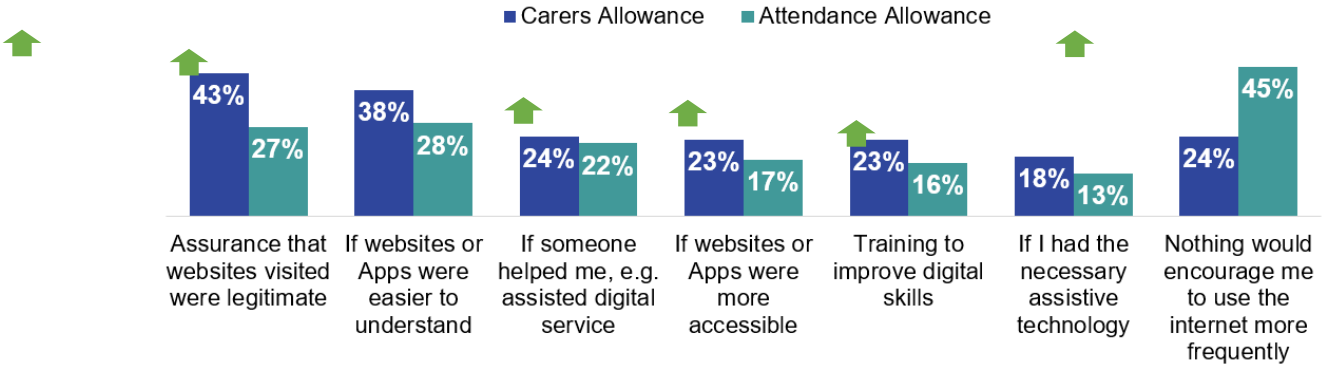
group contain factors that DWP could potentially help with, and included skills, assistance and accessibility.

Figure 6.2.3: Which, if any, of the following would encourage you to use the internet for more activities in the future?

Website content, IT infrastructure and costs



Skills, assistance and accessibility



Base: All Carers Allowance (550) and Attendance Allowance customers (556) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

As illustrated in Figure 6.2.3, Carer Customers most strongly believed that improvements to website content, IT infrastructure and cheaper access will encourage them to make more use of the internet. This was particularly true for CA customers, the group that already made most use and had more experience in using the internet. In the majority of cases the figure for CA customers was significantly higher than for AA customers. For example, reducing the number of adverts and popups would encourage almost half of CA customers (47%) to use the internet for more activities in the future. This was almost double the proportion reported among AA customers (24%). However, such factors are largely outside DWP's control, and therefore it might be more useful to focus on customers' skills and accessibility if DWP want to support an increase in their internet use.

Within the broad group of skills and accessibility factors, the highest reported figures were seen with respect to making websites and Apps easier to understand. Almost four in ten CA (38%) and three in ten AA customers (28%) would be encouraged to use the internet more if this were the case. While DWP cannot change every website or App, it could take this feedback and consider how its own sites could be more user-friendly for those using its services.

The skill and accessibility factor thought least likely to encourage great internet use was having the necessary assistive technology, but even though the figures were relatively low almost two in ten CA customers (18%) and over one in ten AA customers (13%) thought this would help. Meanwhile, as the overall findings of the survey illustrated, such assistance would be particularly helpful for Carers customers with physical and / or mental disabilities.

As was the case with IT infrastructure and costs of access, CA customers were generally more inclined than AA customers to say improvements in skills and accessibility would encourage them to make greater use of the internet. The exception was having somebody to help customers via an assisted digital service, with approximately a quarter of both CA (24%) and AA (22%) customers saying this might lead to them using the internet more.

6.3 Preferences for engaging with DWP

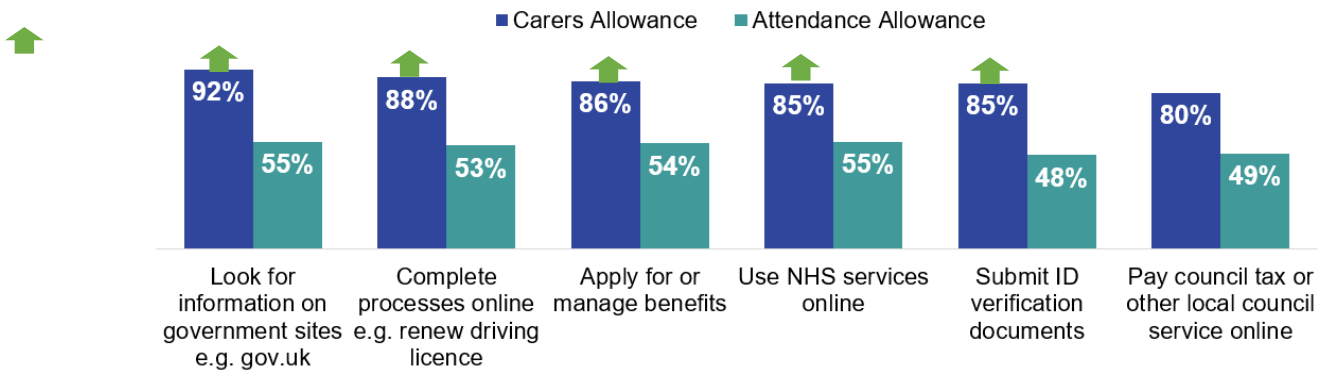
This section covers the extent to which Carers customers feel able to perform a range of online activities either alone, with help, or not at all. It details how customers currently prefer to contact and engage DWP, their awareness and use of assistive services provided by DWP and experiences of using GOV.UK. It outlines customer preferences for using an online portal, including what would stop them from accessing a portal online, as well as customer preferences by channel for engaging with DWP for a range of activities.

6.3.1 Online government service usage

As with general internet activities, customers were asked whether they could use specific government or public services online, either with or without help. As summarised in Figure 6.3.1 CA Customers were significantly more likely than AA customers to say they could complete each of the six activities.

Figure 6.3.1: Thinking now about using government or public services online. If they were available, which, if any, of the following services could you do online either with or without help?

% that could do task either alone or with help



Base: All Carers Allowance (550) and Attendance Allowance customers (556) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

At least eight in ten CA customers said they could have completed each activity on their own or with assistance, rising to 92% for looking online for public services information on government sites such as GOV.UK or HMRC. In contrast AA customers felt less able to complete each of the six tasks. While a small majority could complete most tasks, either on their own or with assistance, fewer than half felt able to pay their council tax or otherwise engage with their local authority online (49%) or submit ID verification documents (48%).

Of most relevance to DWP was customers' confidence in applying for or managing their benefits online. While almost nine in ten (88%) CA customers stated that they could do this, fewer than six in ten AA customers thought they could (54%).

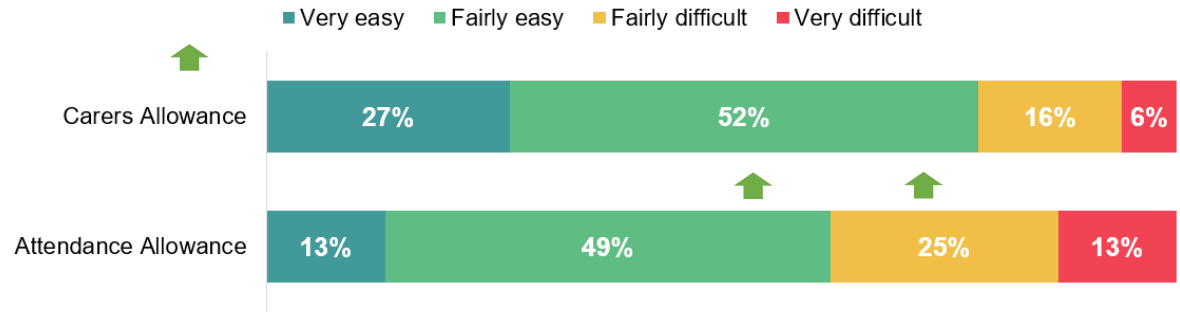
Looking at the data in detail, most CA customers stated that they could complete each of the six activities on their own. Ranging from nearly six in ten for applying for and managing their benefits (58%) to over seven in ten for looking online for public services information on government sites (73%). In contrast, no more than a third of AA customers thought they could independently complete any of the six activities. They had most confidence in their own ability to look for information (34%), but fewer than a quarter of AA customers felt able to apply for and manage their benefits on their own (23%). Supporting AA customers with online management of their benefits thus represents a significant challenge as DWP looks to encourage more people to engage with its services via the internet.

6.3.2 Using GOV.UK

Overall, three-quarters (75%) of all Carers customers using the internet had used the GOV.UK website. This overall figure includes nine in ten CA customers (89%) and almost six in ten AA customers (56%).

On balance those that had used the government website found it easy to locate the information they needed, with CA customers generally finding it easier than those receiving AA. By a factor of almost four to one CA customers said it was easy (79%) rather than difficult (22%) to find all of the information they needed when they last used the government website to access benefit information. Many AA customers had not used GOV.UK but where they did express an opinion, those who said it was easy to find all the information they required did outnumber those finding it difficult (Figure 6.3.2)

Figure 6.3.2: Thinking back to when you last used the government website, WWW.GOV.UK, how easy or difficult was it to find all the information needed?



Base: All who had used GOV.UK excluding 'Don't know' and 'Prefer not to say' (CA: 445, AA: 191)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

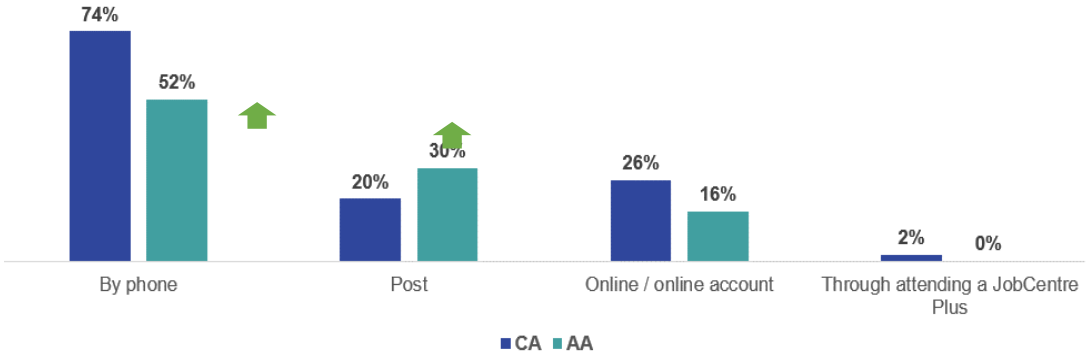
Although the figures were generally positive, it may be of concern that more than a third of AA customers (38%) and more than one in five CA customers (22%) who had visited GOV.UK found it difficult to find everything they needed when using the government website to access benefit information.

6.3.3 Contacting DWP

Above any other channel, Carer customers tended to use the telephone when contacting DWP to manage their benefit (such as making claims, reporting a change in circumstances, or providing evidence to keep their records up to date). As illustrated in Figure 6.3.3 the majority of both CA (74%) and AA customers (52%) use the phone when contacting DWP.

CA customers (26%) were significantly more likely than AA customers (16%) to contact DWP online. This reflected the generally higher levels of confidence and online usage by CA customers. The older group of AA customers were significantly more likely than Carers Allowance customers to be using post to manage their benefit claim (30% versus 20%).

Figure 6.3.3: How do you usually contact DWP in relation to managing your benefit claim?



Base: All Carers Allowance (550) and Attendance Allowance customers (556) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

6.3.4 Awareness and use of assistive services

Overall, a third of Carer customers (35%) were unaware of any of the assistive or support services provided by DWP. Almost half of AA customers (46%) were unaware of any type of assistive or support services, a figure almost double that recorded among CA customers. (25%).

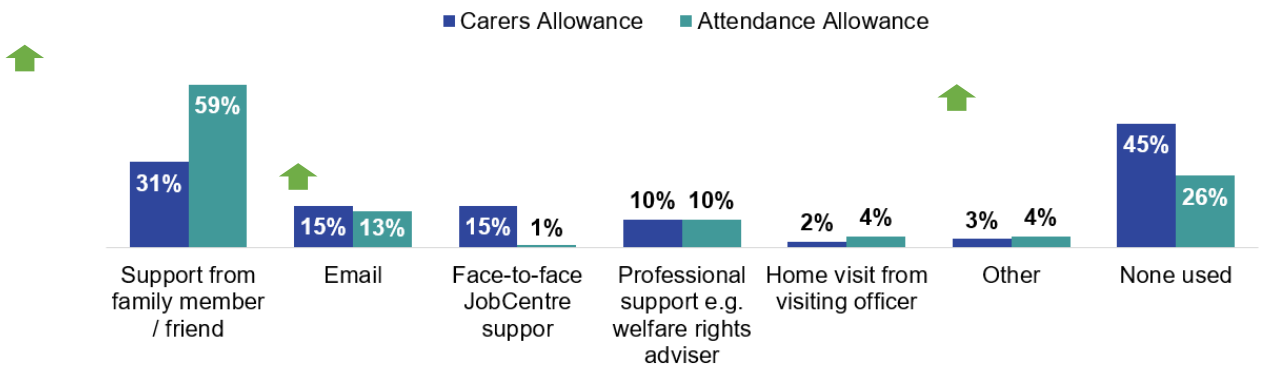
As with overall awareness, CA customers were more likely than AA customers to know that specific assistive or support services exist. For example, the majority knew of face-to-face support at a Jobcentre (53%), as compared to fewer than two in ten Attendance Allowance customers (16%). There was also significantly higher awareness among CA customers of communication by email (46% versus 35%) and text phone (23% versus 11%).

Within both customer groups approximately two in ten were aware of home visits from visiting officers. However, in both the CA and CA customer groups very few knew of the Video Relay service (7% and 4% respectively) or Relay UK (6% and 4%).

As illustrated by Figure 6.3.4, almost half of CA (45%) and a quarter of AA customers (26%) did not use any form of assistive or support services when contacting DWP about their claim. When they did use such support, this was overwhelming provided by a family member or friend. Approximately six in ten AA customers (59%) used the support provided by a family member or friends, a figure almost double that for CA customers (31%).

Between 10 and 15 percent of both CA and AA customers used email or professional support such as welfare rights advisors when contacting DWP about their claim. Possibly reflecting their age profile and the fact that almost all have retired, almost no AA customers used face-to face visits at a Jobcentre Plus to contact DWP. This compared to 15% of CA customers.

Figure 6.3.4: When contacting DWP about your claim, do you use any of the following assistive or support services?



Base: All Carers Allowance (550) and Attendance Allowance customers (556) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

6.3.5 Preferred ways of engaging with DWP

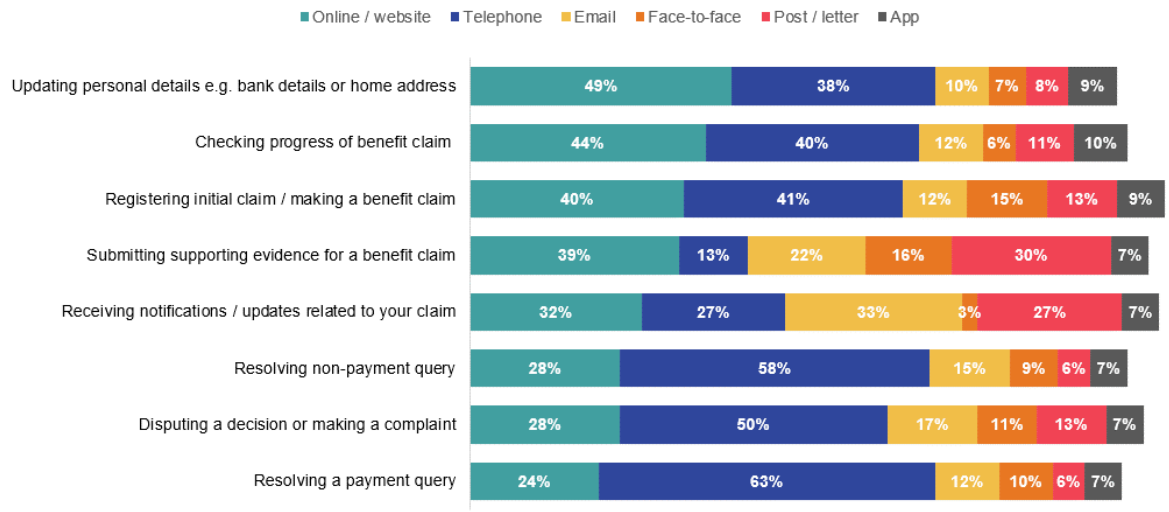
Customers were asked to indicate their preferred methods for communicating with DWP for a variety of activities that occur throughout the duration of a claim. These included things such as registering an initial claim, submitting supporting evidence, updating personal details, checking the progress of a claim, disputing decisions or resolving payment and non-payment related queries, and receiving notifications related to a claim.

Customers gave their preferences for ways to engage with DWP for each of these activities and could select from a range of communication channels include both digital and traditional analogue methods such as telephone, face-to-face or by post or letter. Customers were able to choose all methods they would like to use, not just their first preference.

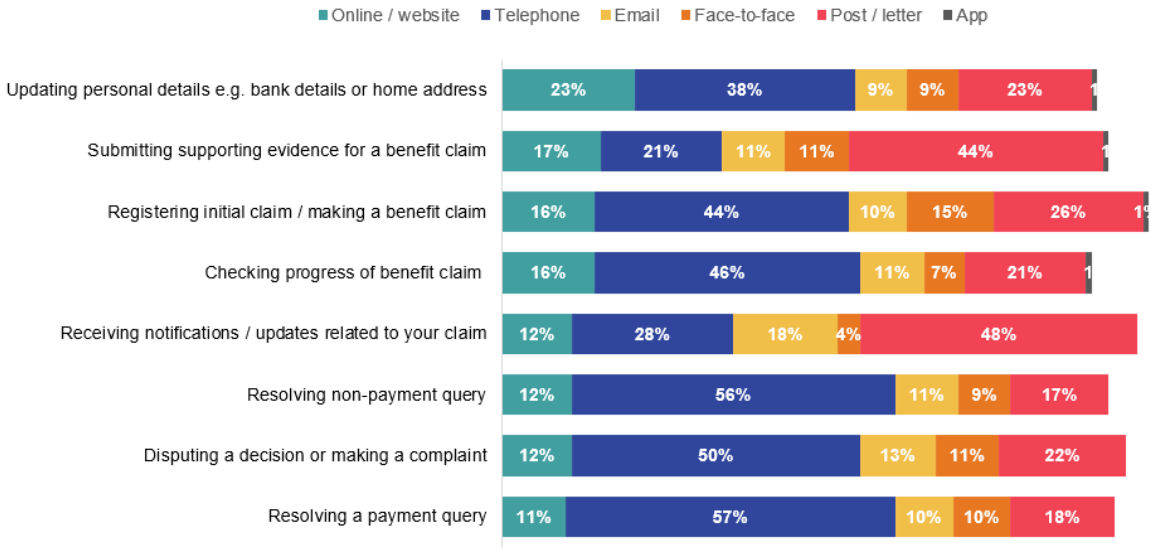
As summarised in Figure 6.3.5, activities that involved the general exchange of information such as updating personal details or submitting supporting evidence for a benefit claim the biggest preference was to use online communication. Almost half of CA customers (49%) would use online to update personal details, while they were three times as likely to prefer online (39%) as telephone (13%) for submitting supporting evidence. However, they had no clear preference for how they would like to receive notifications or updates relating to their claim. Approximately three in ten expressed a preference for each of telephone (27%), online (32%), Email (33%) and post (27%).

Figure 6.3.5: If it were available, in which of the following ways would you most prefer to engage with DWP for each of the following activities that might occur as part of your [benefit name] claim? Most preferred channel %:

Carers Allowance



Attendance Allowance



Base: All Carers Allowance (550) and Attendance Allowance customers (556)

Percentages in the charts add up to more than 100% as multiple options allowed. Ranked based on proportion rating online/website.

The second category of activity involves the initial registration or submission of a claim and checking its progress. Here, CA customers were equally divided between those that would prefer to use the telephone and those preferring an online approach. For both registering or making a benefit claim and checking progress approximately four in ten CA customers preferred to use the telephone with a very similar proportion favouring online communication. Once again there was relatively little appetite to engage in these activities face-to-face, by post or via an App. Although it should be noted that 15 percent would prefer to register or make a benefit claim in a face-to-face situation.

For activities involving payment queries, non-payment resolution, disputes over decisions or complaints, CA customers reported they would prefer a telephone approach. In each case at least 50 percent of CA customers would prefer to use the telephone.

On balance and for almost every activity, AA customers expressed a clear preference to use the telephone over other methods of communication. With the exceptions of updating personal details, receiving notifications and submitting supporting evidence, the preference for telephone was approximately double that of any other means of communication. In most cases post/letter was the second most preferred means through which they would prefer to engage with DWP. Almost no AA customers expressed a preference for using an App to achieve any of the outcomes covered by this question.

Looking at the details of how Attendance Allowance customers preferred to engage with DWP on activities that could have occurred as part of their benefit claim, at least half would prefer a telephone approach for payment queries (57%), non-payment resolution (56%) or disputes over decisions or complaints (50%). For these three activities post /letter was the preference of around two in five.

Telephone was also the single most popular method via which AA customers would like to register or make a claim (44%), check progress of a claim (46%) or update any personal details (38%). Once again, a postal approach was the second most preferred method of dealing with these aspects of their benefit claim. Only for receiving notifications (28%) or submitting supporting evidence (21%) do fewer than three in ten AA customers prefer to engage with DWP by telephone. In both cases there was a very strong desire to use post/letter with almost half saying this was their preferred approach.

Looking across all eight activities it was clear there was relatively little appetite among AA customers for using an online or website-based approach to carrying out these tasks. Only with respect to updating personal details did more than two in ten (23%) say they would prefer this method. The data also suggested only approximately one in ten would like to use e-mail to achieve the various tasks, although once again receiving notifications and updates relating to a claim sees a higher level of preference for this method (18%).

6.3.6 Potential online portal use

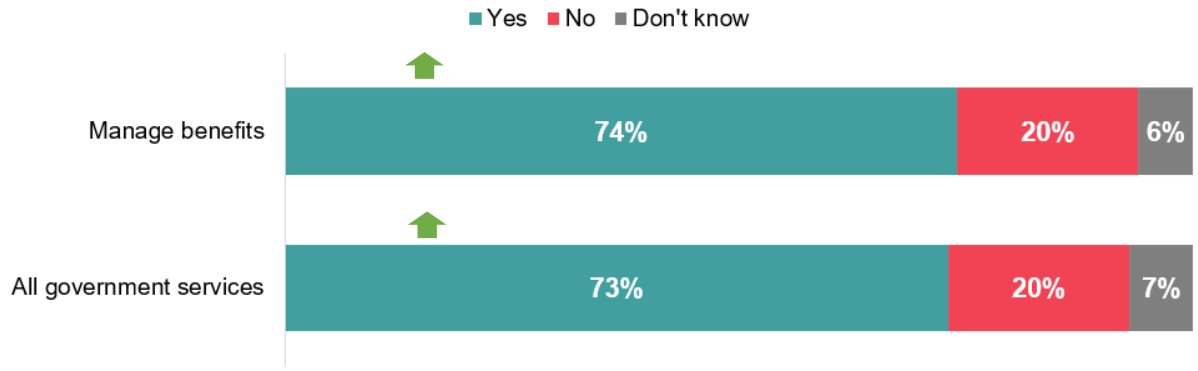
Having first been told that these were a webpage or website that provides users an entryway to a variety of information, tools and links, customers were asked to indicate their interest in using online portals. Customers were asked about both a single portal that could manage all of their benefits online, and one that would be available to access all government services, for example to manage not only their benefits but also their health and tax affairs.

The results for the two portals were very similar, indicating that CA customers were far more willing than AA customers to consider using them. As shown in Figure 6.3.6, almost three-quarters of CA customers would have used each of the portals (74% for

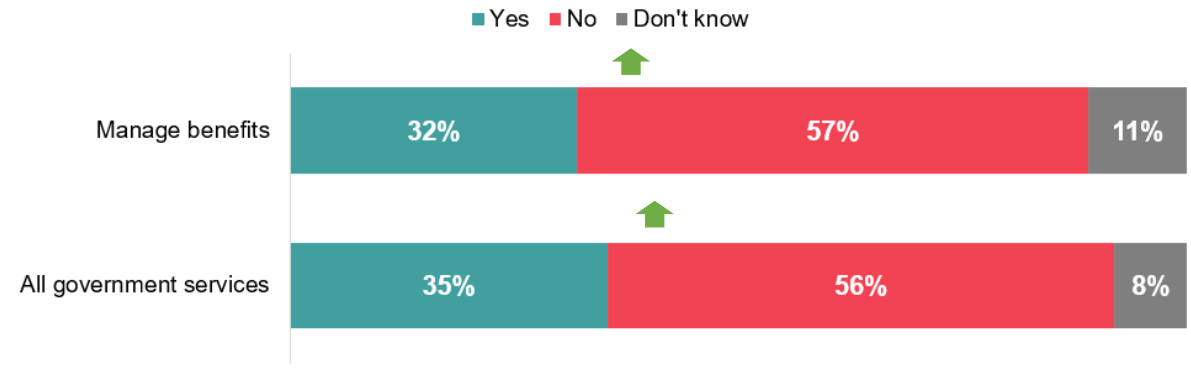
benefits and 73% for all government services). They were over twice as likely as AA customers to have been interested in using them (32% and 35% respectively).

Figure 6.3.6: If a single portal was available to manage all of your benefits online, would you use the portal? If there was a single portal available for ALL government services (e.g. managing your benefits, managing your health, managing tax) would you use it?

Carers Allowance



Attendance Allowance



Base: All Carers Allowance (550) and Attendance Allowance customers (556)

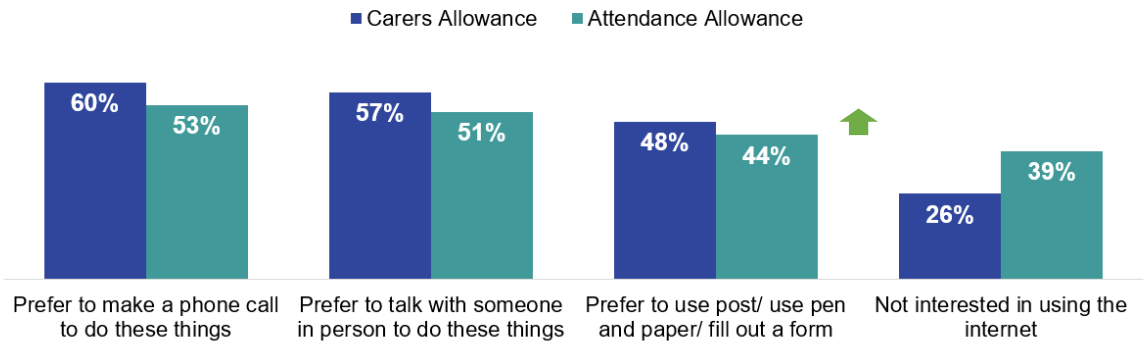
Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

With this potentially low level of take up among AA customers, it would be necessary to provide a large level of information and further support if they were to engage with these portals.

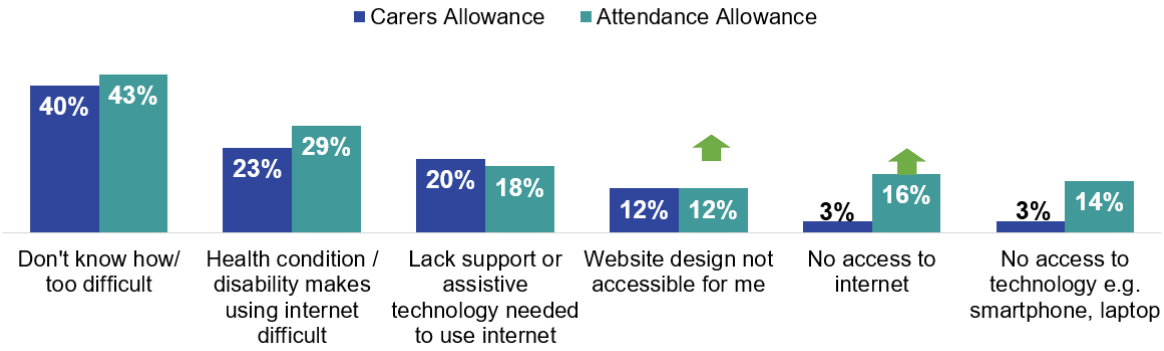
Just under a quarter of CA customers (24%) and over three-quarters of AA customers (78%) would not use a single online portal to manage either their benefits or government services in general. As seen with respect to reasons why customers did not generally make more use of the internet, two groups of factors were said to stop them using government services online. As shown in Figure 6.3.7, the first set of reasons comprised personal preferences for how customers conduct their affairs. The second set relates to issues of personal ability, accessibility and assistance.

Figure 6.3.7: Which, if any, of the following reasons would stop you from accessing government services online?

Contact preferences



Skills, assistance and accessibility



Base: All Carers Allowance (141) and Attendance Allowance customers (336) who would not use a portal to access government services online – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Both carer customer groups said a preference for making a phone call to do these things was the main factor stopping them from accessing government services online. This was stated by 60% of CA customers and 53% of those receiving Attendance Allowance. Similar proportions said they prefer to talk with someone in person (57% and 51% respectively). The third most frequently mentioned factor preventing customers from using online government services was a preference for using post, pen and paper or filling out forms (48% and 44%). Although specific contact preferences were similar for both CA and AA customers, the latter (39%) were significantly more likely than the former (26%) to say they were simply not interested in using the internet.

With respect to skills, accessibility and assistance, similar and sizeable proportions of CA (40%) and AA customers (43%) not wishing to use a benefits or general government portal said they don't know how to or thought they would find it too difficult. So, while CA customers tended to use the internet more and to be more confident in their skills than AA customers, there was a sizeable segment within both groups for whom a lack of confidence was a barrier to using online services.

Across both CA and AA customers, health conditions and a lack of assistive technology were factors stopping at least two-fifths of those who would not use a portal from accessing government services online. In both customer groups, website design was a barrier for just over one in ten.

When the figures for different Carer customers were compared, it was clear that a lack of access to the internet, or to technology such as smartphones or laptops, were much larger barriers for AA than CA customers. It may not be possible for DWP to address this directly but given the consistent feedback across multiple questions it might consider how it can improve certain customers' levels of interest and confidence in using the internet. Specifically, it might consider how those with accessibility challenges can be better supported.

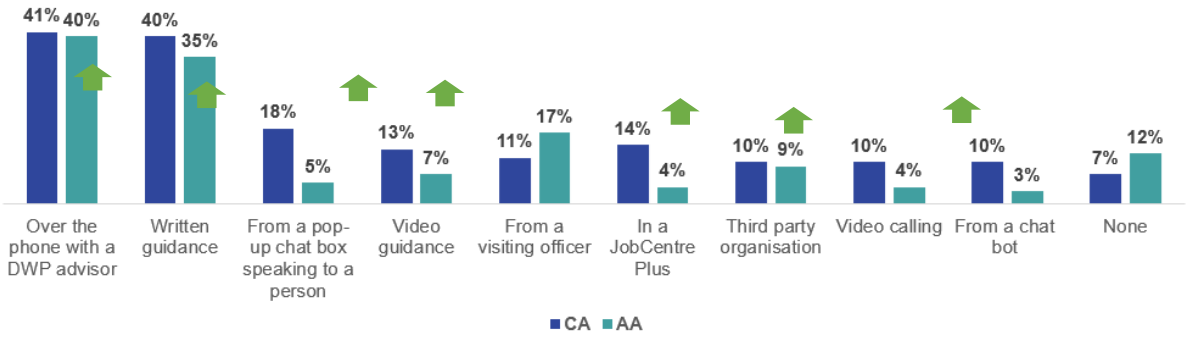
6.4 Future support needs

This section covers the ways in which customers would want to receive support or guidance on how to make and manage benefit claims digitally, including what DWP could do to make customers more likely to use DWP digital services. It covers situations which might encourage customers to further develop their digital skills.

6.4.1 Support and guidance for DWP digital services

For DWP to encourage more Carer customers to transition to digital services, support and guidance needed to be provided. When asked how they would want to receive support or guidance on making and managing a benefit claim through a DWP digital service, the majority of both CA and AA customers expressed a strong preference for telephone or written guidance, rather than in-person or online support. (Figure 6.4.1)

Figure 6.4.1: Assuming you wanted to use a DWP digital service, in what ways would you want to receive support or guidance on how to make and manage a benefit claim?



Base: All Carers Allowance (550) and Attendance Allowance customers (556) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Although the percentage figures vary, the overall preferences expressed by CA and AA customers were broadly the same. The most significant differences between CA and AA customers were the level of interest expressed for using a chat box on GOV.UK where another person is on the other end (10% versus 3%), video guidance

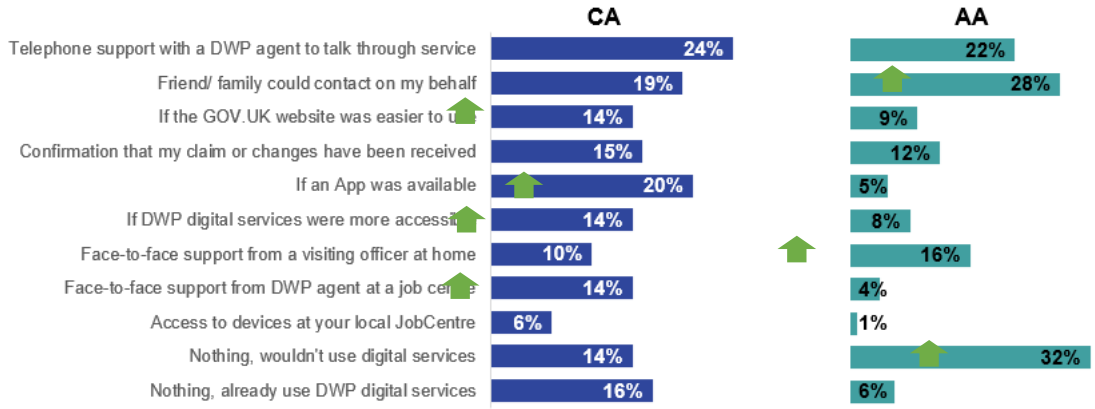
(13% versus 7%) and video calling (10% versus 4%). This suggested more acceptance or preference among CA customers for remote / video-based guidance. However, it was also of note that CA customers also had a stronger preference for receiving guidance in a Jobcentre Plus. Although this may have reflected the age profile of the two groups and the fact that very few AA customers would have needed to, or had experience of, visiting a Jobcentre Plus.

6.4.2 What can DWP do to make customers more likely to use digital services

Three in ten CA customers (30%) and almost four in ten AA customers (38%) reported that nothing would make them more likely to use DWP digital services. In the case of CA customers this was mainly because they were already using DWP digital services. In contrast, the large majority of AA customers who said there was nothing that would increase the chances of using DWP digital services said it was because they had no interest in doing so.

Where Carer customers did outline the initiatives DWP could take to increase their likelihood of using its digital services, these tended to focus on personal support such as that provided by telephone or by allowing family or friends to contact DWP on the customer's behalf. (Figure 6.4.2).

Figure 6.4.2: What, if anything, could DWP do to make you more likely to use DWP digital services?



Base: All Carers Allowance (550) and Attendance Allowance customers (556) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Although many CA customers believed telephone (24%) or the involvement of family and friends (19%) would increase their use of DWP digital services, it was of note that one in five (20%) also believed making an App available would encourage them to make use the services more. Beyond this there were some very specific actions that could influence the frequency with which these customers use DWP digital services. In isolation none of them were likely to lead to significantly higher use, but in combination they could make a difference.

Such changes included making GOV.UK easier to use (14%), making DWP digital service generally more accessible (14%) and providing face to face support at Jobcentres (14%). Relatively few said that access to devices at local Jobcentres will increase their use of DWP digital services, but this may reflect the number of CA customers that actually visit job centres, rather than being an assessment of the initiative itself.

Possibly reflecting the fact that relatively few were online, AA customers generally regarded personally delivered support as the most effective way of increasing their use of DWP digital services. For example, almost three in ten (28%) said that enabling friends or family to contact DWP on their behalf would increase use. A relatively large proportion also thought that telephone support from a DWP agent (22%) or receiving face-to-face support from a visiting officer at home (16%) would help.

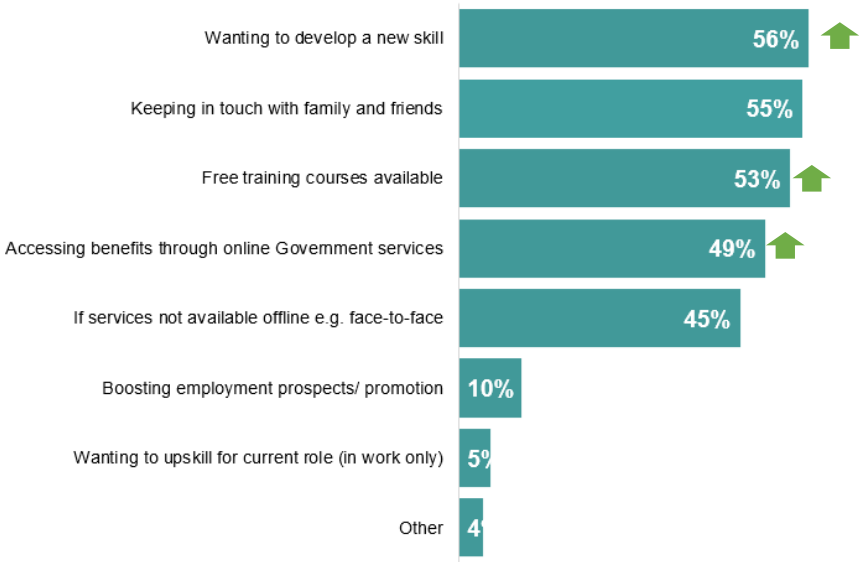
Beyond face-to-face support very few of the initiatives were thought likely to increase AA customers' use of DWP digital services. Approximately one in ten thought that making GOV.UK easier to use or ensuring DWP digital services were more accessible would increase use of the services. With no more than one in twenty choosing these options, making an App available or jobcentre-based initiatives would probably not have been very effective in increasing Attendance Allowance customers' use of DWP digital services.

6.4.3 Future digital skills development

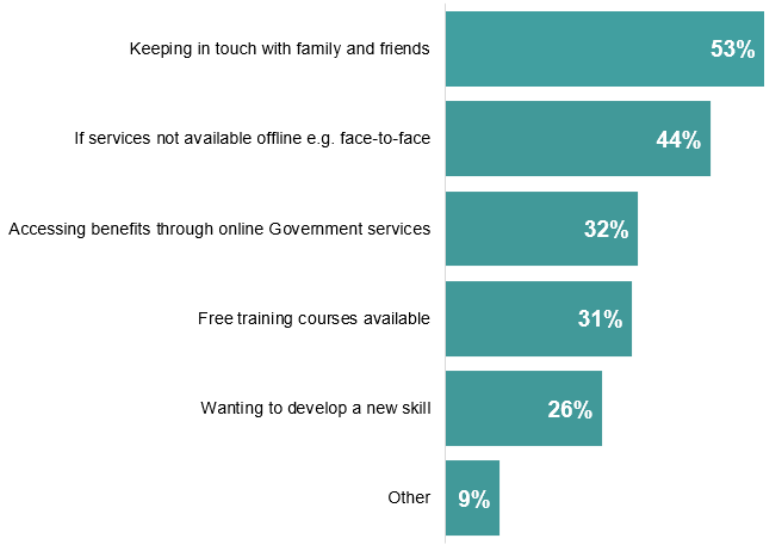
Certain situations could encourage Carer customers to further develop their digital skills in future. These range from changes in levels of personal motivation to a desire to keep in touch with family and friends, or the provision of free training courses and changes to the wider context within which they use digital services. See Figure 6.4.3.

Figure 6.4.3: Which, if any, of the following situations would encourage you to further develop your digital skills in the future?

Carers Allowance



Attendance Allowance



Base: Carer customers who could be encouraged to use their digital skills in the future (CA: 353 AA: 207 - excluding those who said they didn't need to or want to develop skills, don't know and prefer not to say) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Two-thirds of CA customers thought they might encounter a situation that encouraged them to further develop their digital skills in the future. Of these customers, over half would be encouraged to further develop a new skill (56%). A similar proportion would be motivated by the opportunity to keep in touch with family and friends (55%), if free training courses were available (53%), or if they needed to access benefits through online government services (49%). Generally, the motivation comes from choice rather than necessity, but four in ten CA customers might look to

improve their digital skills if services were no longer made available through offline channels (45%). With relatively few in employment or looking for work, CA customers will not be motivated to develop their digital skills through a desire to boost their employment or promotion prospects (10%) or upskill for a current role (5%).

Compared to CA customers relatively few AA customers envisaged a situation that encourage them to further develop their digital skills. Only about 40% thought this might happen. Amongst these customers the main motivation would be a desire to keep in touch with family and friends (53%) or through necessity because services were no longer available online (44%). Just three in ten would possibly develop their digital skills in the future if free training courses were made available, or if it was needed to access benefits through online government services. Compared to CA customers (56%), where it was the main reason given, a relatively small proportion of AA customers (26%) would develop their skills through a general desire to develop their abilities in this area.

However, there remained a significantly higher proportion of AA customers who simply did not want to develop their digital skills in the future (38% AA compared to 14% CA).

7. Retirement and Bereavement

This chapter covers Retirement and Bereavement customers' internet usage; where they access the internet, and the devices and assistive technologies used to go online. It summarises customers' confidence in their ability to go online and barriers to internet access at home or in general. Comparisons are made between those claiming BSP, SP and PC. The overall picture was that internet access, capability and confidence were highest among BSP customers and considerably lower among PC customers. SP customers generally sat between these two groups. These marked differences reflect the very different profiles of these three customer groups. BSP customers were most likely to have higher levels of education and higher socio-economic status. In turn, SP customers had higher levels of education and socio-economic status than PC customers. A majority of BSP customers were in employment/self-employment, while PC and SP customers were predominantly retired. Finally, and particularly significantly when considering internet capability, PC customers were more likely to have a disability (physical and/or mental), and for this to significantly impact their abilities.

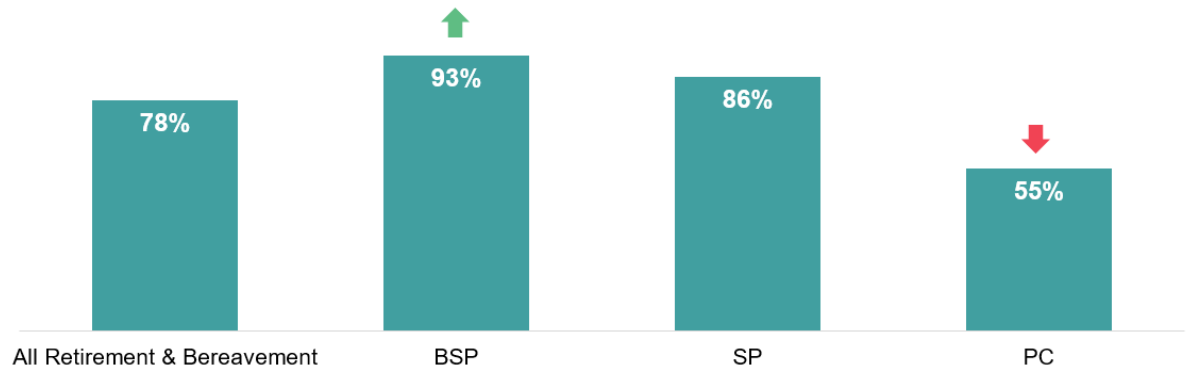
7.1 Digital capabilities

7.1.1 Internet usage

A very high percentage of BSP customers (93%) were currently accessing the internet. The proportion of SP customers (86%) doing so was lower, but still substantial. Access was considerably lower among PC customers, with just over half (55%) currently using the internet (Figure 7.1.1).

More than a third (36%) of PC customers had never used the internet at all, compared to only 10% of SP customers. The proportion of BSP customers who had never used the internet was lower still on 4%.

Figure 7.1.1: Have you ever accessed the internet? (Percentage currently accessing the internet)



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

These differences in internet access can be linked to significant demographic and personal differences across the three groups. Broadly speaking, BSP customers had higher education levels and socio-economic status compared to SP customers, who in turn were better educated and of a higher social class than PC customers. A majority of PC customers had a physical or mental disability.

BSP customers were mostly in employment/self-employment (60%), while SP (91%) and PC (93%) customers were predominantly retired. Only 18% of BSP customers were retired and 10% were long-term sick or disabled.

There were clear socio-economic differences between the three customer groups. Almost half (47%) of BSP groups were ABC1 social class compared to 34% of SP customers and 17% of PC customers.

BSP customers were the most likely to have university qualifications (32%), followed by SP customers (28%). PC were three times less likely to have a degree (11%) and two-fifths of this group had no formal qualifications at all (42%), compared to 18% of SP customers and 9% of BSP customers. A higher proportion of SP customers had English as their first language (98%, compared to 92% of BSP customers and 91% of PC customers).

PC customers were more likely to have a physical or mental disability (63%, compared to 37% of BSP and 41% of SP customers). These disabilities were also more likely to impact PC customers' lives. A third of PC customers with a disability said this reduced their abilities 'a lot', compared to 17% of BSP and 12% of SP customers with a disability.

The three Retirement and Bereavement customer groups were therefore very distinct groups of people. These different characteristics will influence internet usage and confidence. In particular, the higher levels and severity of disability among PC customers will need to be considered when designing interventions to increase engagement with DWP's digital services.

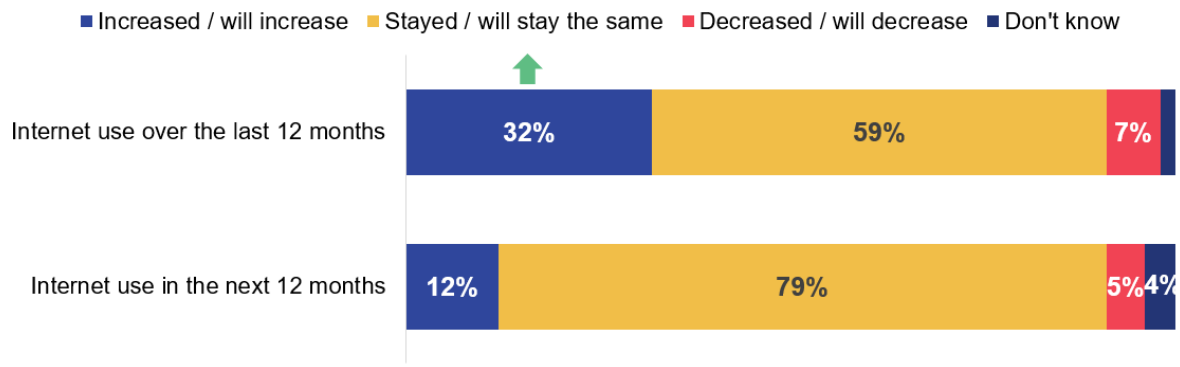
7.1.2 Usage trends

BSP customers were significantly more likely to report that their internet usage had increased over the past 12 months, with 32% reporting this, compared to only 18% of SP customers and 16% of PC customers. PC customers were more likely than SP customers to say their internet usage had decreased (10% compared to 6%). The figure for BSP customers was almost the same as SP customers on 7%.

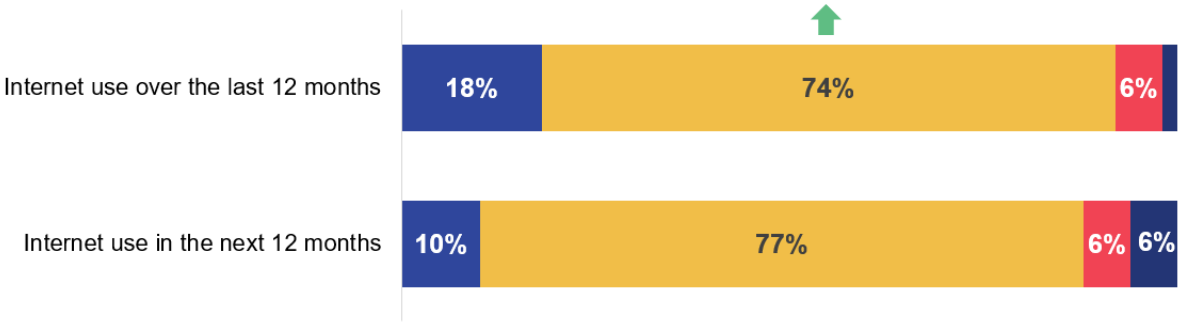
Levels of predicted future use were similar among all three Retirement and Bereavement customer groups. Around one in ten of PC (10%), SP (10%) and BSP (12%) customers thought their internet usage would increase over the next 12 months. Only one in twenty of each customer group said it would *decrease* (6% of SP and PC customers and 5% of BSP customers). See Figure 7.1.2 below.

Figure 7.1.2: In the last 12 months, has your personal use of the internet increased, stayed the same or decreased? In 12 months from now, do you think your personal use of the internet will increase, decrease, or stay the same?

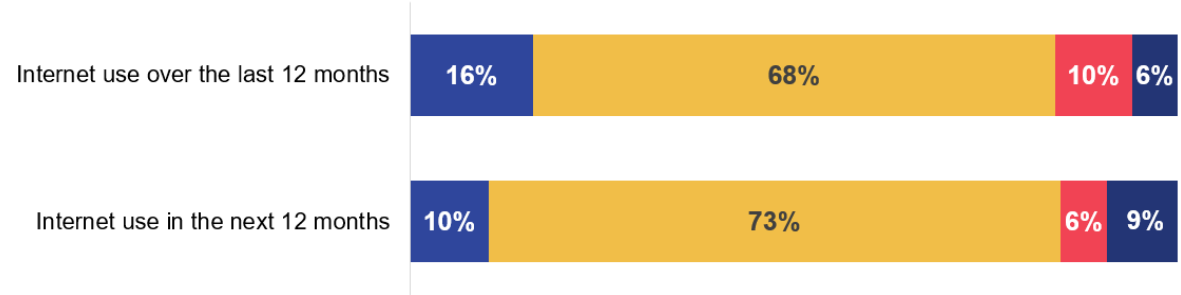
BSP



SP



PC



Base: BSP customers who have used the internet and were asked about last 12 months (538), and all asked about the next 12 months (562). SP customers who have used the internet and were asked about last 12 months (506), and all asked about the next 12 months (554). PC customers who have used the internet and were asked about last 12 months (360), and all asked about the next 12 months (551).

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

7.1.3 Devices and assistive technology

There were differences between the three Retirement and Bereavement customer groups in terms of which device they were most likely to use to go online.

BSP customers who accessed the internet were most likely to use a smartphone to do so (89%), followed by a laptop (69%). The reverse was true for SP customers, who were most likely to use a laptop or desktop (72%), followed by a smartphone (66%). More than half used a tablet (57%), the same proportion as BSP customers (56%).

For PC customers, smartphones (61%) were most likely to be used to go online, closely followed by a laptop or desktop (54%). Just under half used a tablet (46%). The proportion of PC customers accessing the internet with a smartphone was the same as SP customers, but, other than that, their usage of all other ways to access the internet was lower.

A third of BSP customers (33%) used any of the assistive devices asked about, most commonly voice assistants such as Alexa (28%). One in 14 (7%) used screen magnifiers. SP and PC customers were less likely to use any of the devices asked about (16% and 20% respectively). Around one in eight were using voice assistants (15% of PC customers and 12% of SP customers). No other assistive technology was being used by more than 5%. In contrast to other questions about internet usage and behaviour, SP and PC customers' level of usage of assistive devices was similar. It was worth noting here that the higher levels of disability among PC customers suggested that their need for assistive devices was higher than the other two customer groups.

7.1.4 Internet access inside and outside of the home

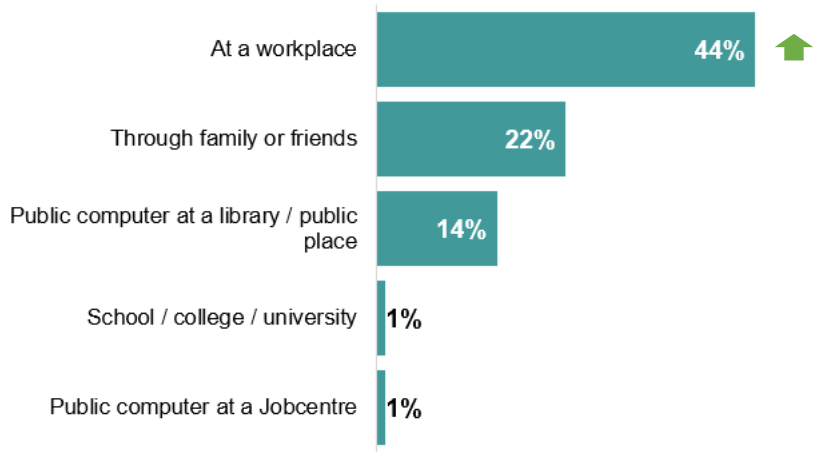
Almost all BSP (98%) and SP (95%) customers had access to the internet at home. Reflecting the pattern seen in other questions on internet access, the figure was lower among PC customers on 89%.

Most BSP customers accessed the internet away from home (70%). This was most commonly at work (44%), followed by family and friends (22%). See Figure 7.1.4.

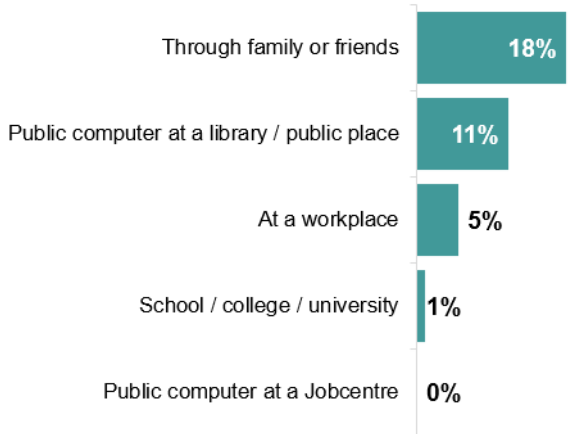
In contrast, less than half of SP customers (45%) and a third of PC customers (33%) accessed the internet out of the home. PC customers were most likely to do so through family or friends (15%). SP customers were most likely to have used other sources (21%) to access the internet away from home, followed by family and friends (18%).

Figure 7.1.4: Do you ever access the internet anywhere other than in your home at all?

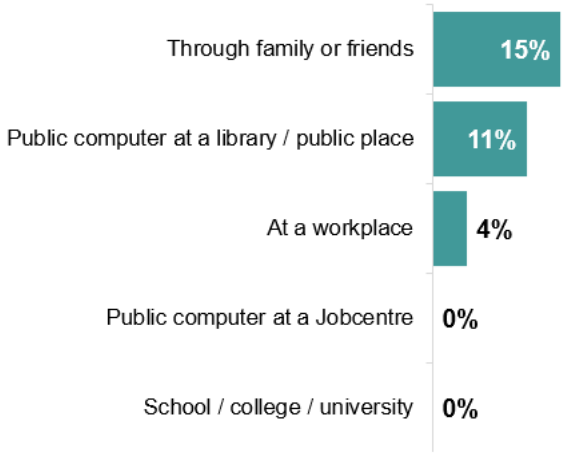
BSP



SP



PC



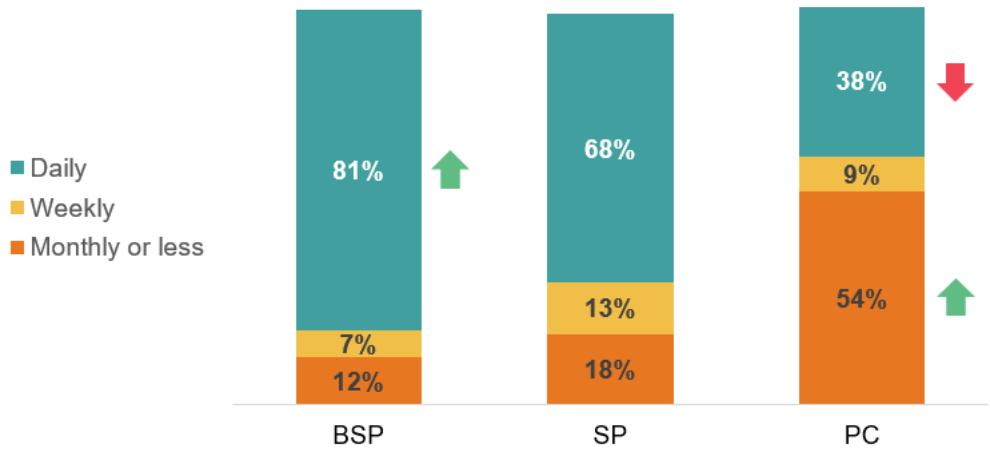
Base: All BSP (519), SP (492) and PC customers (320) who use the internet– multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

7.1.5 Internet use

More than 8 in 10 BSP customers (81%) accessed the internet on a daily basis (Figure 7.1.5). The proportion of SP customers accessing the internet daily was also high on 68%, but this was lower than BSP customers.

Figure 7.1.5: How often do / did you use the internet? (Including both work and personal use)



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

The proportion of daily internet users was significantly lower among PC customers, with just under 4 in 10 (38%) doing so. SP customers (13%) were around twice as likely as BSP customers (7%) to be using the internet weekly.

BSP customers were the only customer group with enough employed customers to ascertain how often they used their digital skills at work. Among BSP customers who were employed, 40% said they were 'always' using their digital skills in their day-to-day job and a further 27% said they were doing so for most of the day. Only 3% said they were not using their digital skills at all. This suggested that the higher levels of internet confidence among this group was linked to their usage of the internet at work.

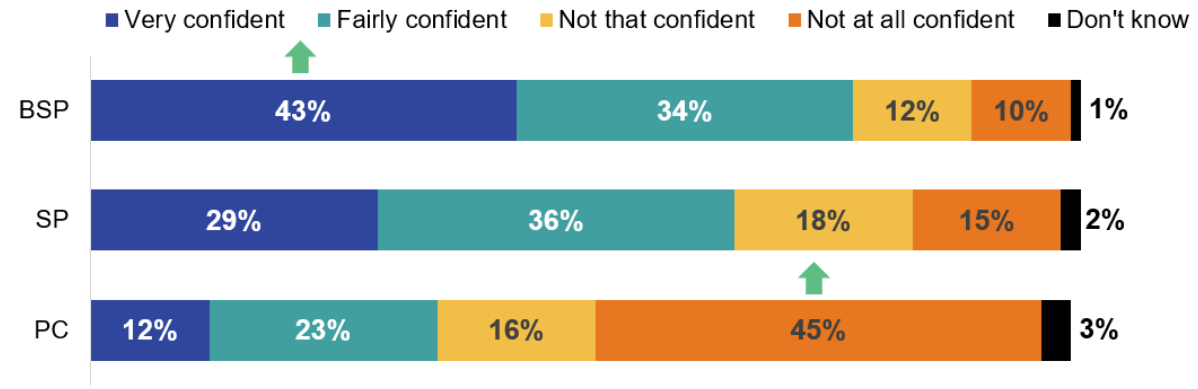
7.1.6 Internet confidence

Confidence in using the internet varied considerably across the three Retirement and Bereavement customer groups (Figure 7.1.6).

Levels of confidence were generally high among BSP customers, with 77% saying they were confident using the internet. Just under half (43%) reported being very confident. However, a fifth (22%) were not confident, divided fairly evenly between 'not that confident' (12%) and 'not at all confident (10%).

SP customers were less confident than BSP customers. Two-thirds (65%) said they were confident. In contrast to BSP customers, they were more likely to say they were fairly rather than very confident. A third (33%) were not confident. Like BSP customers, the proportions were fairly evenly split between not that confident (18%) and not at all confident (15%).

Figure 7.1.6 How confident, if at all, do you feel in your ability to use the internet?



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

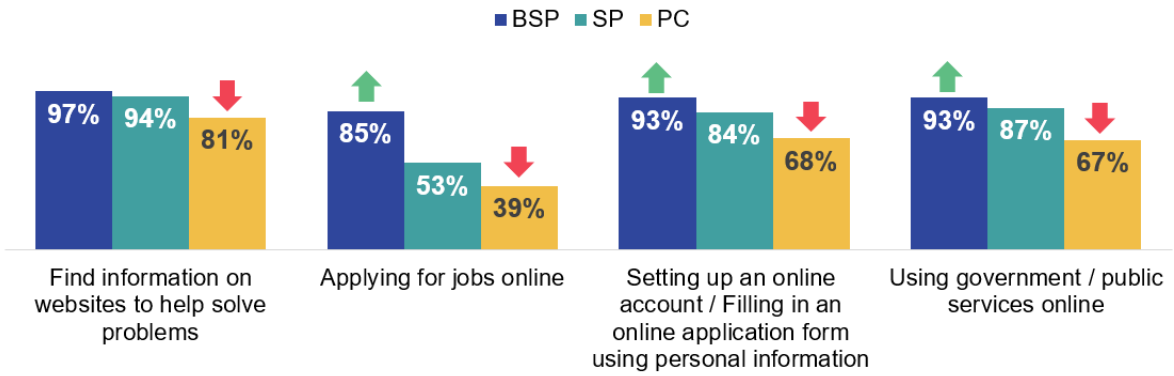
Reflecting their lower levels of internet access and usage, PC customers were the least confident of the three Retirement and Bereavement groups. Three-fifths (61%) said they were not confident about using the internet, with 45% being not at all confident. Only 35% were confident, with just 12% claiming to be very confident. There were also likely to be personal factors at play here, notably the higher levels of disability prevalence and severity among this customer group.

7.1.7 Needing support when accessing the internet

Customers who had used the internet at any point were asked whether they could perform certain activities online, either with or without help. BSP customers were significantly more likely than SP and PC customers to say they could carry out each of the four activities online. PC customers were less likely than SP customers to be able to perform each activity. This reflected overall levels of confidence in using the internet. See Figure 7.1.7.

Figure 7.1.7: Thinking now about the following general activities that you can do on the internet. Which, if any, of the following activities could you do online either with or without help?

% that could do task either alone or with help



Base: All BSP (538), SP (506) and PC customers (360) who use the internet

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

At least nine in ten BSP customers were able to carry out each activity either with or without help. Around nine in ten BSP customers could, without help, find information on websites to help solve problems (97%), set up an account online (93%) or use government services online (93%). The proportion of BSP customers able to apply for jobs online without help was lower on 85%. Only a small proportion of BSP customers were unable to carry out any of these activities online with or without help. This was 2% in the case of finding information on websites and 6-7% for the other activities.

The capability of SP customers to perform these activities varied according to the type of activity. SP customers' ability to find information on websites was similar to BSP customers, with 94% able to do this on their own or with help and 6% not able to with or without help. However, the proportion able to set up an online account (84%) and use government services online (87%) was lower. More than one in ten were unable to do either activity online with or without help (12% and 11% respectively). Just over half (53%) were able to apply for jobs online with or without help but the lower levels of capability for this activity reflected the life stage of this group of customers who were predominantly retired.

Of the four activities asked about, PC customers were most likely to be able to find information on websites to help solve problems, with four in five able to do this with or without help (81%, 60% without help). However almost one in five (17%) were unable to perform this task online. These figures were higher still for setting up an online account (28%) and using government services online (30%). Only half (48% in both cases) were able to perform these tasks without help. The proportion able to apply for jobs online was lowest of all the four activities, with 39% able to do this with or without help. As with SP customers, this activity was less relevant to a group of customers who were retired.

Customers who required assistance with online activities predominantly turn to family for help, most often a family member who lives elsewhere. This was particularly the case for PC customers (69%) but this was also true for a majority of SP (56%) and BSP (57%) customers. PC customers (13%) were less likely than SP (39%) and BSP (31%) customers to rely on a family member who lives with them. Around one in five of each customer group usually got help from friends. Very few used a support organisation such as Citizen's Advice or an organisation providing a service (0-3% across the three customer groups).

7.2 Barriers

A series of questions intended to understand barriers to internet use were asked to all customers. These barriers uncovered reasons why offline customers did not use the internet, why online customers did not use the internet for more activities than they currently did and what would encourage further use in future for both users and non-users of the internet.

7.2.1 Offline customers

Just under half of PC customers (44%), 14% of SP customers and 7% of BSP customers did not currently use the internet and for the purposes of this research were classified as being offline.

When asked why they did not use the internet, lack of interest or need to go online was the top answer for both SP (60%) and PC (61%) customers.

Half of PC customers cited a lack of digital skills (51%), the next most popular answer for this customer group. Two-fifths of PC customers not accessing the internet said they prefer to do things offline (41%) or that someone else can go online for them if necessary (40%). Notably, a fifth (23%) said that a health condition or disability makes using the internet difficult and 19% that they lacked the necessary support or assistive technology to use the internet. A third (35%) had concerns about fraud, privacy and security.

The other factors discouraging SP customers from using the internet were similar to PC customers. Half (51%) said they prefer to do things offline and a similar portion mentioned a lack of digital skills (45%). Like PC customers, two-fifths (39%) said someone can go online for them. Fraud and privacy concerns (32%) were another

barrier. SP customers were less likely than PC customers to mention support and assistive technology (8%).

With only a small base of 43 offline BSP customers, it was not possible to draw robust comparisons with the two other two Retirement and Bereavement customer groups. No need to use the internet and a lack of digital skills were the barriers mentioned most often.

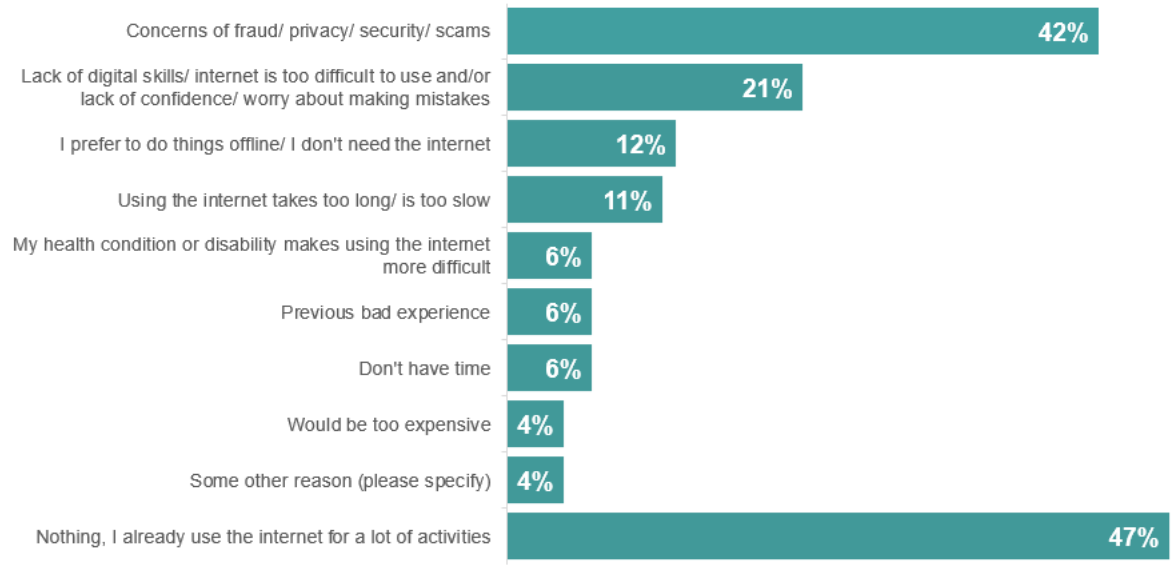
These findings highlight that there is some scope for DWP to address barriers to using the internet through improving customers' digital skills and addressing the problems that health conditions or disabilities present to non-users, in using the internet. However, DWP first needs to convince significant proportions of these customer groups that the internet is worth using.

7.2.2 Current internet users

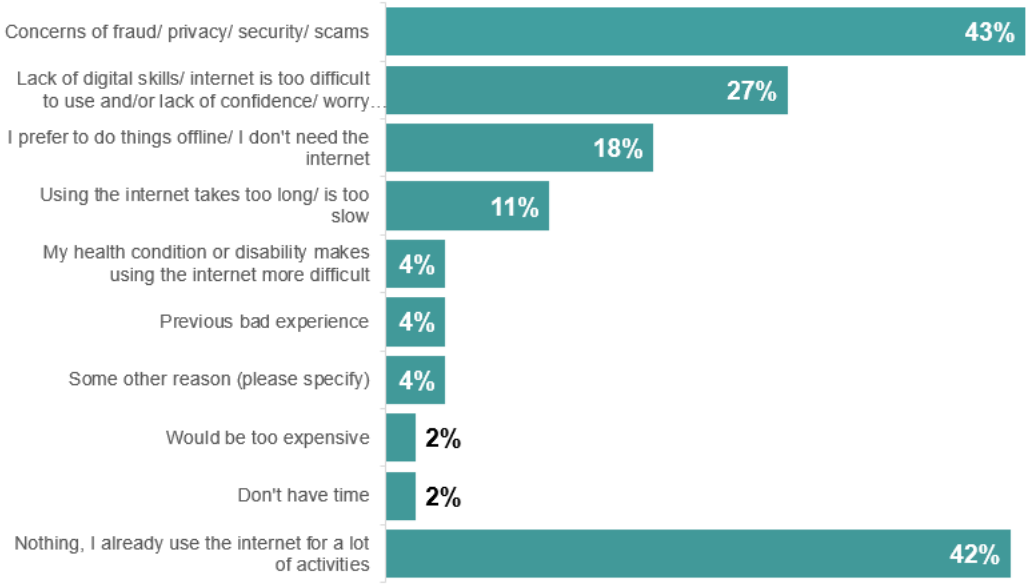
Among Retirement and Bereavement customers who were internet users, 47% of BSP customers and 42% of SP customers said nothing was stopping them from using the internet more as they already used it for a lot of activities. A lower proportion of PC customers (29%) said nothing was stopping them from using the internet.

Figure 7.2.1: Which, if any, of the following reasons are stopping you from using the internet for more activities than you use it for now?

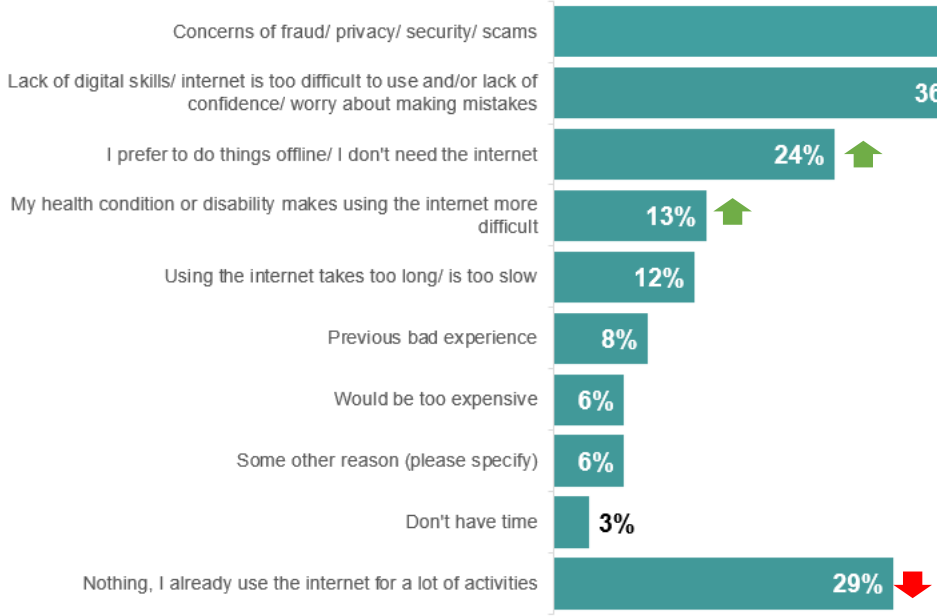
BSP



SP



PC



Base: All BSP (519), SP (492) and PC customers (320) who use the internet – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

The most common barrier to using the internet more for BSP customers was fraud, privacy and security concerns, mentioned by 42%. This was followed, some way behind, by lack of digital skills, cited by 21%. We saw the same pattern among SP customers, with fraud the top barrier on 43%, followed by a lack of digital skills (27%).

Fraud, privacy and security was also the top answer for PC customers (43%), but this group of customers was more likely than other customer groups to mention lack of digital skills (36%). Preferring to do things offline was more likely to be mentioned by

PC customers (24%) and SP customers (18%) in comparison to BSP customers (12%). One in eight (13%) PC customers said that their health condition or disability made using the internet difficult, a higher proportion than the other two customer groups.

7.2.3 Encouraging further use in future

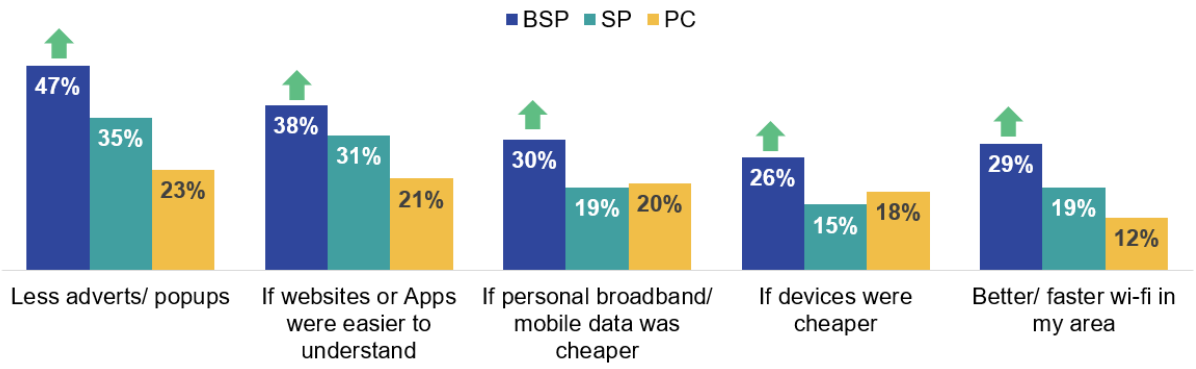
All Retirement and Bereavement customers, including those who did not use the internet, were asked what would encourage them to use the internet for more activities in the future (Figure 7.2.3).

Half (50%) of PC customers said nothing would encourage them to use the internet more frequently, double the figure of BSP customers (25%). The proportion of SP customers who said nothing would encourage them was 32%, higher than BSP customers but still some way off the PC customer total. These differences reflected the higher levels of digital access and capability among the three customer groups.

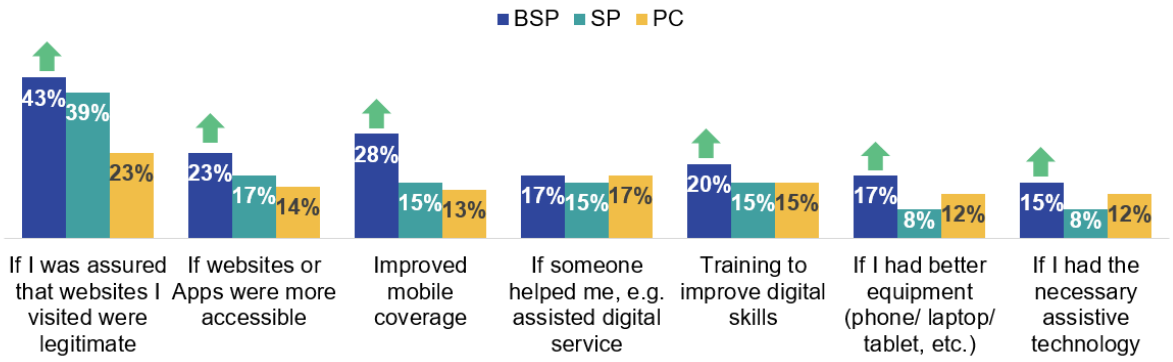
In terms of what would encourage them to use the internet more, all three customer groups were most likely to mention factors which fall outside DWP's control. Less adverts/pop-ups was the top answer for BSP customers, mentioned by almost half (47%), followed by assurance that the websites they were visiting were legitimate (43%).

Figure 7.2.3: Which, if any, of the following would encourage you to use the internet for more activities in the future?

Website content, IT infrastructure and costs



Skills, assistance and accessibility



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

SP customers were most likely to choose assurance that websites were legitimate (39%) followed by less adverts/pop-ups (35%, lower than the BSP figure). For PC customers, 23% chose both factors (no other factor scored higher than this for this customer group).

Cost, access and coverage was a factor for BSP customers. Around three in ten customers said cheaper broadband/mobile data (30%), better wi-fi (29%) improved mobile coverage (28%) and cheaper devices (26%) would encourage them to use the internet for more activities. SP and PC customers were less likely to mention any of these factors. For instance, 19% of SP customers and 20% of PC customers said that cheaper broadband/mobile data would encourage them to use the internet for more activities.

When we looked at factors relating to skills, assistance and accessibility that DWP could potentially help with, websites/apps being easier to understand comes top for all three customer groups. This was selected by 38% of BSP customers and 31% (a lower portion) of SP customers. One in five (21%) of PC customers thought this would help (and this was one of the highest scoring factors of all for this customer group).

BSP customers were more likely than the other two customer groups to mention training to improve their digital skills (20% compared to 15% of SP and PC customers) and having better equipment (17%). This was more commonly cited by PC customers (12%) compared to SP customers (8%). We saw a similar pattern with assistive technology, which was more likely to be mentioned by BSP customers (15%) and PC customers (12%) compared to SP customers (8%). In addition, being helped by someone was mentioned by around one in seven of the three customer groups (17% of BSP and PC and 15% of SP).

7.3 Preferences for engaging with DWP

This section covers the extent to which Retirement and Bereavement customers feel able to perform a range of online activities either alone, with help, or not at all. It details how customers currently prefer to contact and engage DWP, their awareness and use of assistive services provided by DWP and experiences of using GOV.UK. It outlines customer preferences for using an online portal, including what would stop them from accessing a portal online, as well as customer preferences by channel for engaging with DWP for a range of activities.

7.3.1 Online government service usage

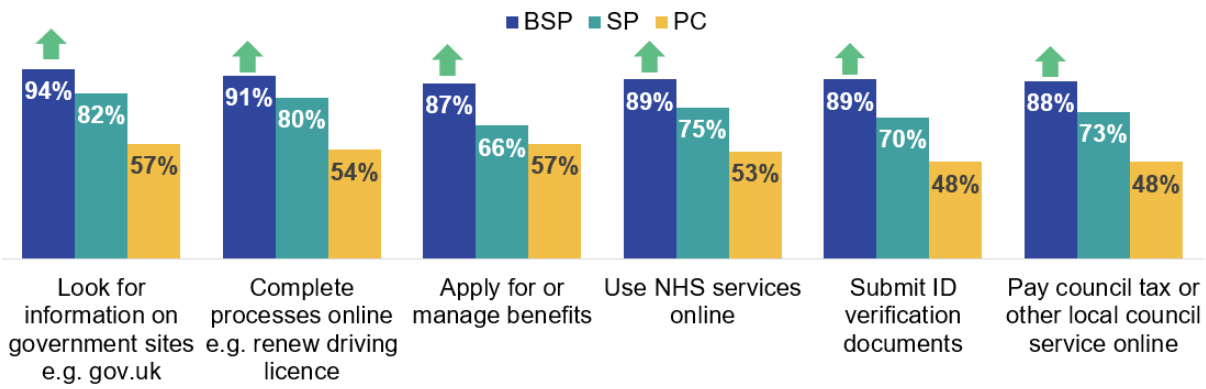
Customers were asked whether they could use specific government or public services online, either with or without help. Most BSP customers were capable of doing all the online activities asked about without help. The proportion of SP who could do so was lower. The ability to carry out online activities either alone or with help was considerably lower among PC customers (Figure 7.3.1).

Two-thirds (66%) of BSP customers said they could apply for or manage their benefits by themselves. A further 21% said they could do this task with help. Just under one in ten (8%) reported not being able to carry out this task online.

Just under half (48%) of SP customers said they could apply for or manage their benefits online without help, a lower proportion than BSP customers. A further 17% could do this with help. A fifth (20%) of SP customers said they were unable to do this task online.

Figure 7.3.1: Thinking now about using government or public services online. If they were available, which, if any, of the following services could you do online either with or without help?

% that could do task either alone or with help



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Only 57% of PC customers reported being able to manage their benefits online with or without help (the figures for SP and BSP customers were 66% and 87% respectively). PC customers were evenly split between being able to do this on their

own or with help (both 29%). Two-fifths (39%) of PC customers were unable to do this activity online at all.

Levels of capability for the other online tasks asked about were broadly similar, with BSP customers the most likely to be able to carry each of them out with or without help and PC customers the least likely.

Across the activities, SP customers were the least likely to be able to apply for or manage their benefits online. Around three-quarters could have managed NHS services online with or without help (75%), paid online for local council services (73%), completed government processes online (80%, with 65% being able to do this without help) and looked online for public service information (82% could do this, 72% without help). Levels of capability among BSP customers were similar, with the exception of looking online for public service information which was higher; 94% can do this, 81% without help).

PC customers' capability to perform online activities also did not vary a great deal. However, the proportion who were not able to pay online for council tax/local services (45%) or submit documents online for ID verification (48%) was higher than managing benefits online.

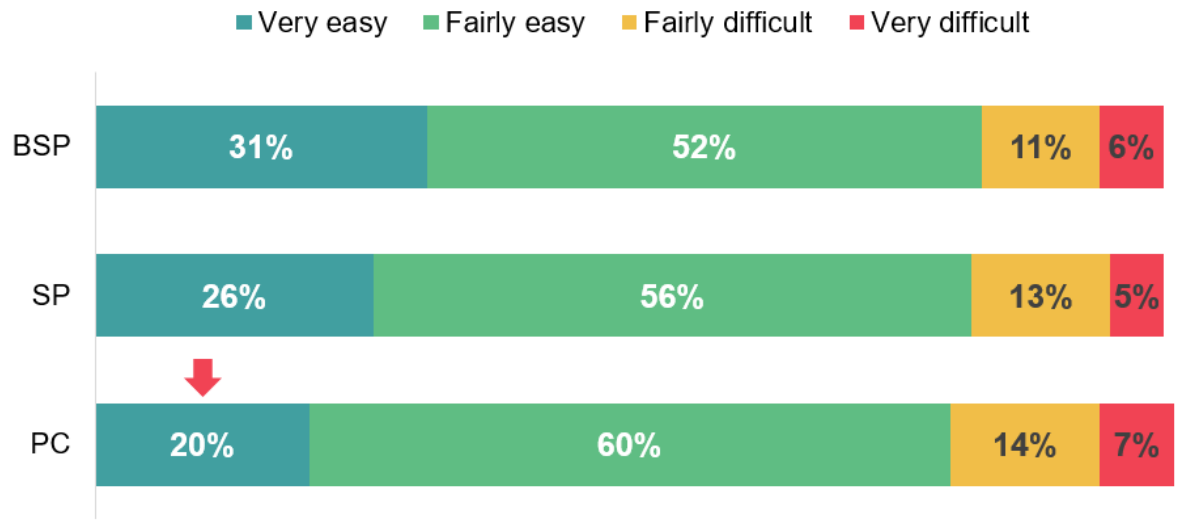
7.3.2 GOV.UK

Just under three-quarters (73%) of all Retirement and Bereavement customers using the internet had used the GOV.UK website. This overall figure includes nine in ten Bereavement Support Payment customers (90%), and six in ten State Pension and Pension Credit customers (both 62%).

On balance those that had used the government website found it easy to locate the information they needed, with around a third of BSP customers finding it very easy.

Many PC customers had not used GOV.UK but where they did express an opinion, a significantly lower proportion found it very easy to find the information they needed compared to both SP and BSP. (Figure 7.3.2)

Figure 7.3.2: Thinking back to when you last used the government website, WWW.GOV.UK, how easy or difficult was it to find all the information needed?



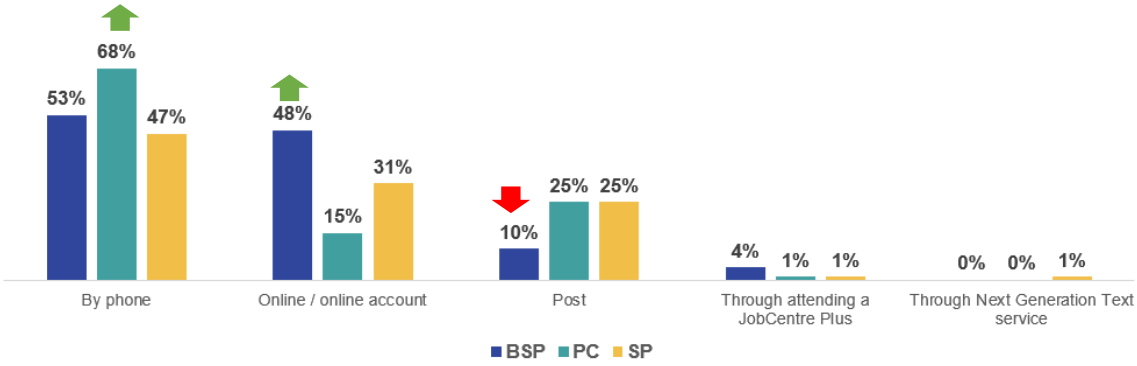
Base: All who had used GOV.UK excluding 'Don't know' and 'Prefer not to say' (BSP: 446, SP: 266, PC:192)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

7.3.3 Contacting DWP

Usual methods of contacting DWP varied among the different Retirement and Bereavement customer groups. The most common method for contacting DWP among BSP customers was by phone (53%), although online was not far behind on 48%. A far lower proportion were using post (10%). As we have seen, this customer group was high in digital capability and confidence, so some of this may have been down to a lack of digital options (Figure 7.3.3).

Figure 7.3.3: How do you usually contact DWP in relation to managing your benefit claim?



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

SP customers were also most likely to be using the phone (47%) but online contact was some way behind on 31%, and was significantly lower than among BSP customers. In contrast to BSP customers, almost as many SP customers (25%) were using the post as online forms of contact.

Reflecting their lower levels of digital access and capability, PC customers were much more likely to be using the phone as their usual method to contact DWP, with 68% doing so. Unlike the other two Retirement and Bereavement customer groups, post was the second most common form of contact (25%) and only 15% were contacting DWP online.

The striking differences between these three different customer groups illustrated how channel usage could be driven by customer preference and capability.

7.3.4 Awareness and use of assistive services

Awareness of assistive services provided by DWP was highest among BSP customers. Only 33% had not heard of any of the services asked about, compared to 50% of SP customers and 49% of PC customers.

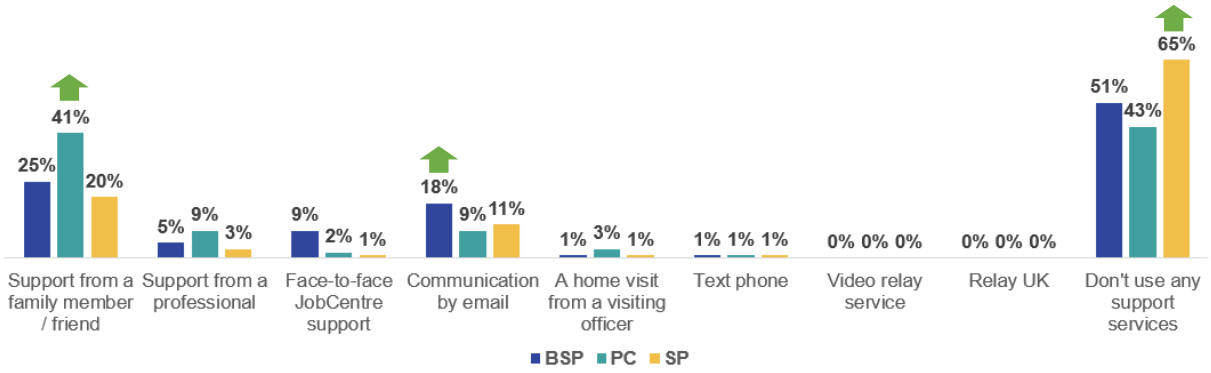
Just under half (47%) of BSP customers were aware of communication by email and 39% face-to-face Jobcentre support. Just under one in five had heard text phone (18%) and home visits (17%). Awareness of video relay service and Relay UK was very low (both 6%).

Awareness of most of the assistive services asked about was lower among SP customers. Communication by email had the highest levels of awareness on 38%. Awareness of all other support services was below 20%, with 14% aware of face-to-face Jobcentre support and of text phone.

PC customers had similar levels of awareness to SP customers, with the exception of email communication which was lower on 31%. Home visit (18%) and face-to-face Jobcentre support (17%) were the next best known, followed by text phone (12%). As with other Retirement and Bereavement customer groups, awareness of video relay service (5%) and Relay UK (3%) was very low.

When contacting DWP about their claim, two-thirds (65%) of SP customers did not use any of the support services asked about. The proportion was lower among BSP customers (51%) and lowest among PC customers (43%). See Figure 7.3.4.

Figure 7.3.4: When contacting DWP about your claim, do you use any of the following assistive or support services?



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

BSP customers were most likely to use support from a family member or friend (25%). In terms of support provided by DWP, communication by email (18%) was the most commonly used, followed by face-to-face Jobcentre support (9%). Other forms of DWP support were used by 1% or lower.

The pattern for SP customers was similar. They were most likely to receive support from a family member or friend (20%), followed by email communication (11%, a lower proportion than BSP). The use of face-to-face Jobcentre support was 1%, considerably lower than BSP customers, and no other form of DWP support asked about was used by more than 1%.

PC customers were much more likely than the other two customer groups to rely on family and friends (41%) and much less likely to use email communication (9%).

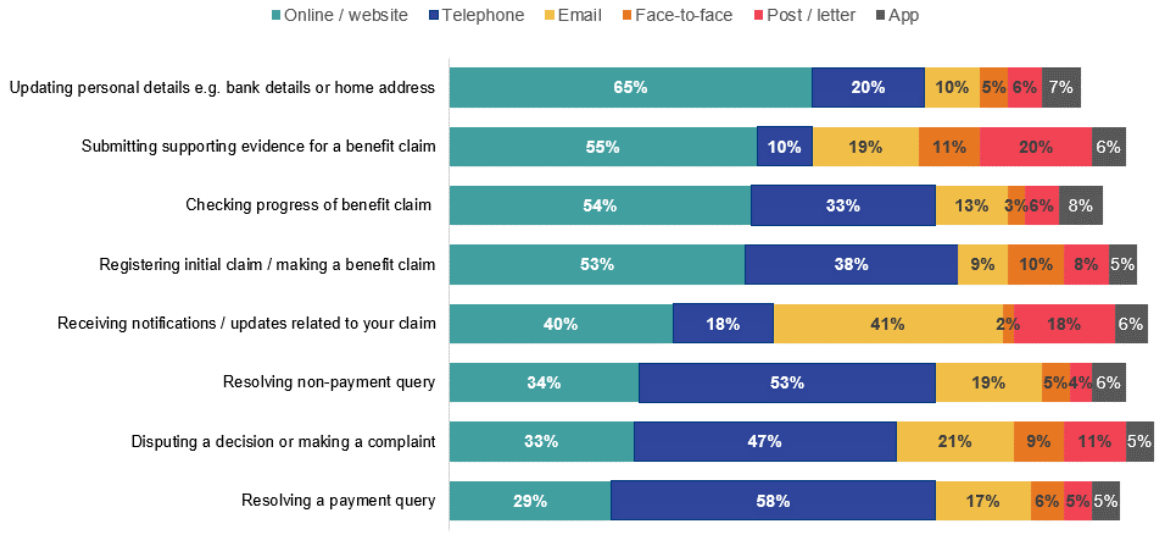
Usage of other DWP support was low, although 3% had a home visit (compared to 1% of the other two customer groups). As well as being supported by friends and family, this group were more likely to have professional support when contacting DWP, with 9% doing so.

7.3.5 Preferred ways of engaging with DWP

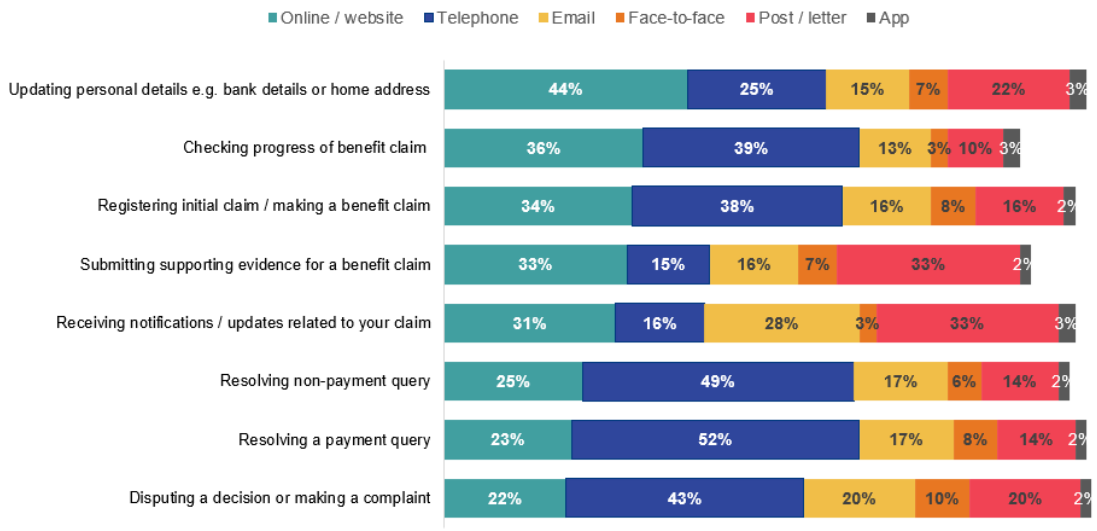
Channel preference varied considerably among the three Retirement and Bereavement customer groups and was closely related to current online behaviour and capabilities (see Figure 7.3.5).

Figure 7.3.5: If it were available, in which of the following ways would you most prefer to engage with DWP for each of the following activities that might occur as part of your [benefit] claim? Most preferred channel %:

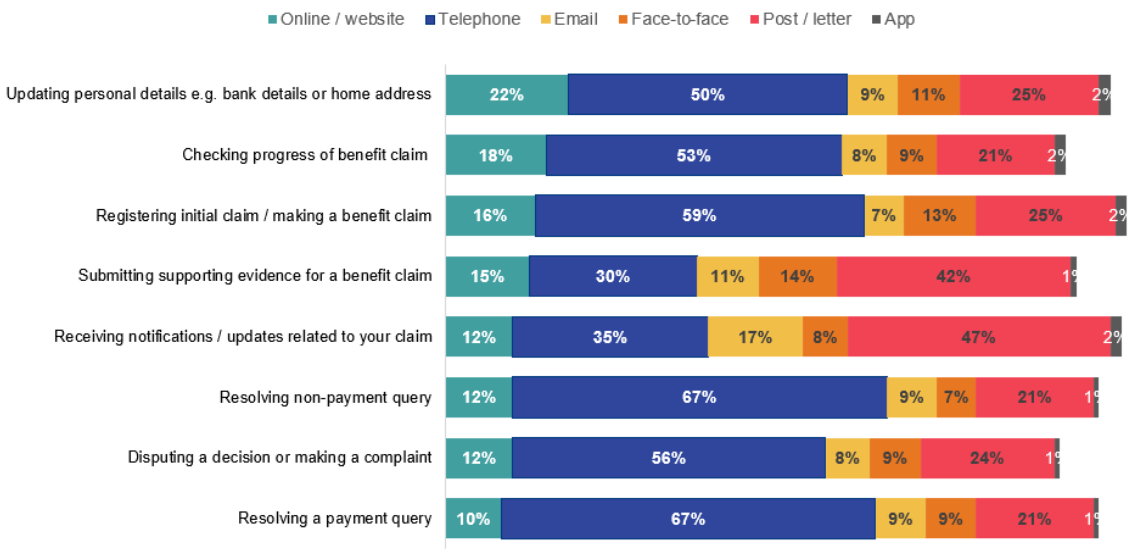
BSP



SP



PC



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551)

Percentages in the charts add up to more than 100% as multiple options allowed. Ranked based on proportion rating online/website

As shown in Figure 7.3.5, BSP customers were much more receptive to engaging with DWP digitally and around 6 in 10 customers would prefer to engage with DWP online when updating their personal details (65%), providing supporting evidence (55%) and checking the progress of their benefit claim (54%). However, channel preference was typically driven by the complexity of the engagement with DWP. For the most complicated queries, such as disputing a decision or making a complaint, or resolving queries (both payment and non-payment related) interaction by telephone was the preferred approach for all disability benefits.

In contrast, SP customers and PC customers reported higher proportions of customers preferring to communicate via the post, particularly with regard to providing supporting evidence (SP 33% and PC 42%) and receiving notifications or updates related to their claim (SP 33% and PC 47%).

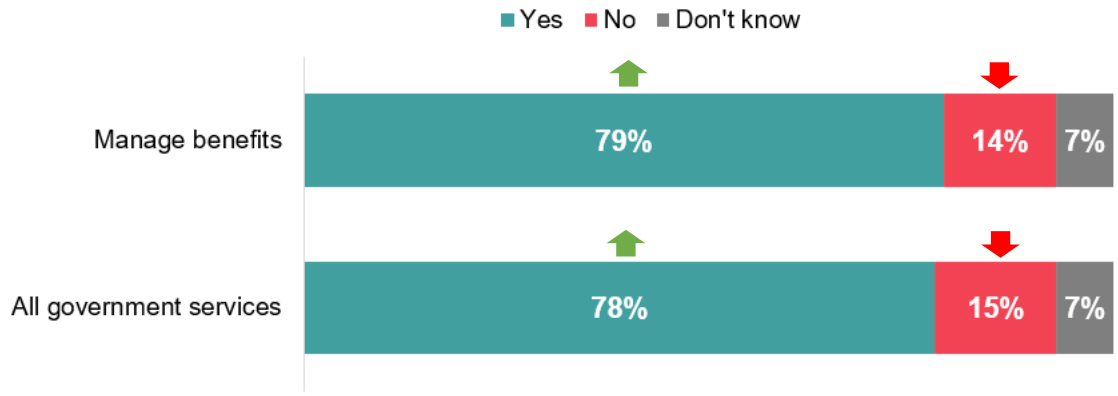
Online was not the preferred option for PC customers for any of the listed activities. This is not surprising given their lower levels of digital engagement.

7.3.6 Potential online portal use

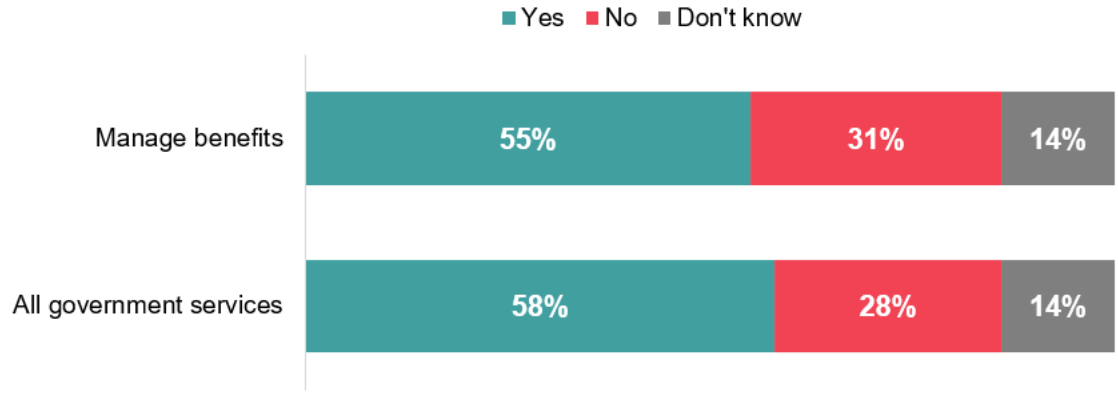
There were stark differences between the three Retirement and Bereavement customer groups in terms of whether or not they would be willing to use a single portal to manage all their benefits online (see Figure 7.3.6). BSP customers were more than twice as likely than PC customers to say they would use the portal (79% versus 36%), while SP customers sat somewhere in between on 55%.

Figure 7.3.6: If a single portal was available to manage all of your benefits online, would you use the portal? If there was a single portal available for ALL government services (e.g. managing your benefits, managing your health, managing tax) would you use it?

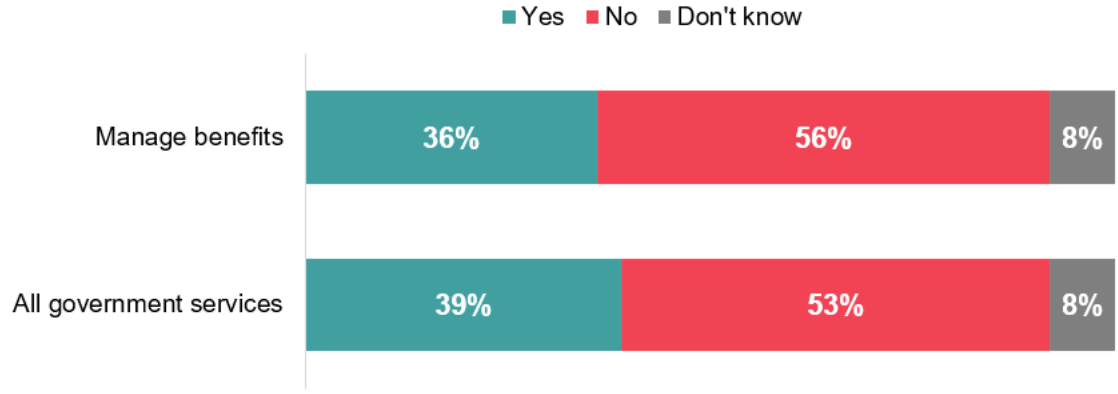
BSP



SP



PC



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551)

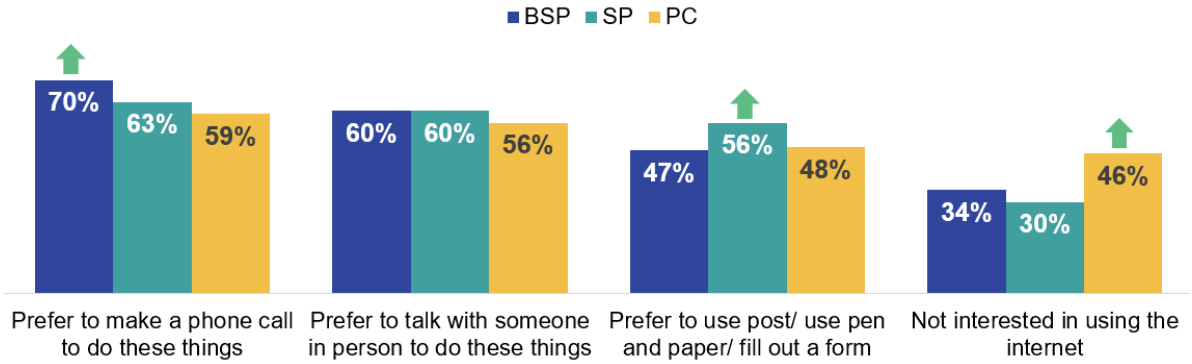
Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

We saw the same pattern when customers were asked whether they would use a single portal for all government services. The proportions who would do so were very similar to the figures for a single benefits portal. Four-fifths (78%) of BSP said they would use such a portal, compared to 58% of SP customers and only 39% of PC customers.

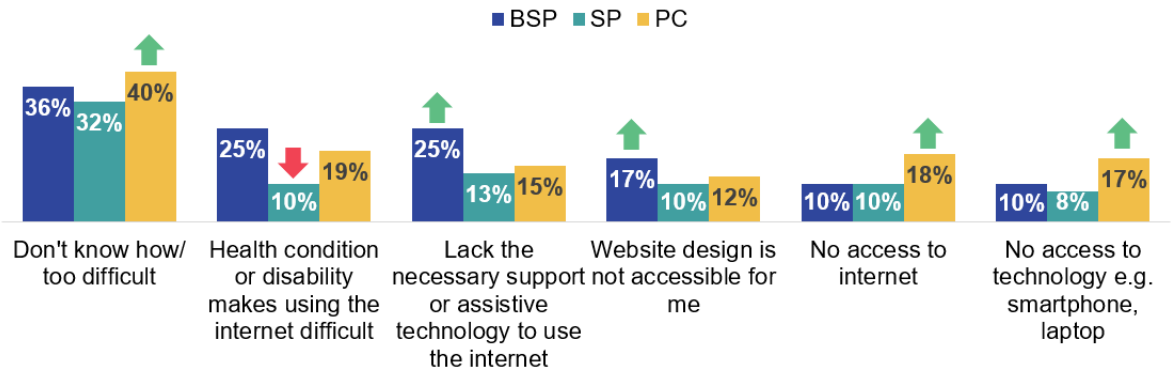
In order to understand the barriers to using online portals, Retirement and Bereavement customers who were not accessing government services online were asked why this was the case (Figure 7.3.7). The reasons were similar across all three customer groups. Preferring a phone call or in-person interaction were the top two reasons in all customer groups. A phone call was cited by 70% of BSP customers, which was higher than SP (63%) and PC (59%). In contrast, the proportion who said they preferred talking to a person did not differ across the customer groups (60% of BSP and SP customers and 56% of PC customers).

Figure 7.3.7: Which, if any, of the following reasons would stop you from accessing government services online?

Contact preferences.



Skills, assistance and accessibility



Base: All BSP (96), SP (180) and PC customers (316) who would not use a portal to access government services online – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

PC customers were more likely to say they would not use government services online because they were not interested in using the internet (46%) or had no access to the

internet (18%). SP customers were more likely to say they did not interact with government services online because they preferred using the post/filling out a form (56%). This was an example of this group's stronger preference for written interactions in comparison to the other two customer groups.

7.4 Future support needs

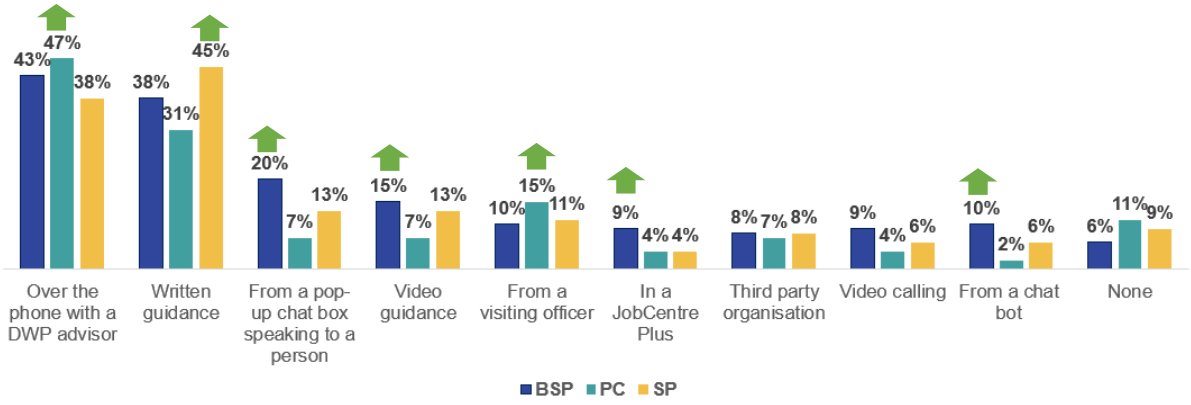
This section covers the ways in which customers would want to receive support or guidance on how to make and manage benefit claims digitally, including what DWP could do to make customers more likely to use DWP digital services. It covers situations which might encourage customers to further develop their digital skills.

7.4.1 Support and guidance

Retirement and Bereavement customers were asked what support or guidance they wanted to receive to make and manage a claim digitally (Figure 7.4.1). The top answer for BSP and PC customers was over the phone with a DWP advisor, chosen by 43% and 47% respectively.

In contrast, written guidance was the top answer for SP customers (45%). This form of support was less popular among BSP customers (38%) and even less likely to be chosen by PC customers (31%), although was still the second most popular answer for both customer groups.

Figure 7.4.1: Assuming you wanted to use a DWP digital service, in what ways would you want to receive support or guidance on how to make and manage a benefit claim?



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

Reflecting their higher levels of digital usage and confidence, BSP customers were more likely to want support from a pop-up chat box on GOV.UK speaking to a person (20%). This was the third most popular option for this customer group. Video guidance would be welcomed by 15%, while one in ten would like assistance through video calling (9%) or a GOV.UK chatbot (10%). While digital forms of support were relatively popular among this customer group, 10% would like support from a visiting DWP officer and 9% in a Jobcentre.

After phone support and written guidance, the most popular forms of help for SP customers were support through a pop-up chat box on GOV.UK (13%), video guidance (also 13%) and from a visiting DWP officer (11%). No other form of support asked about was chosen by more than 10%.

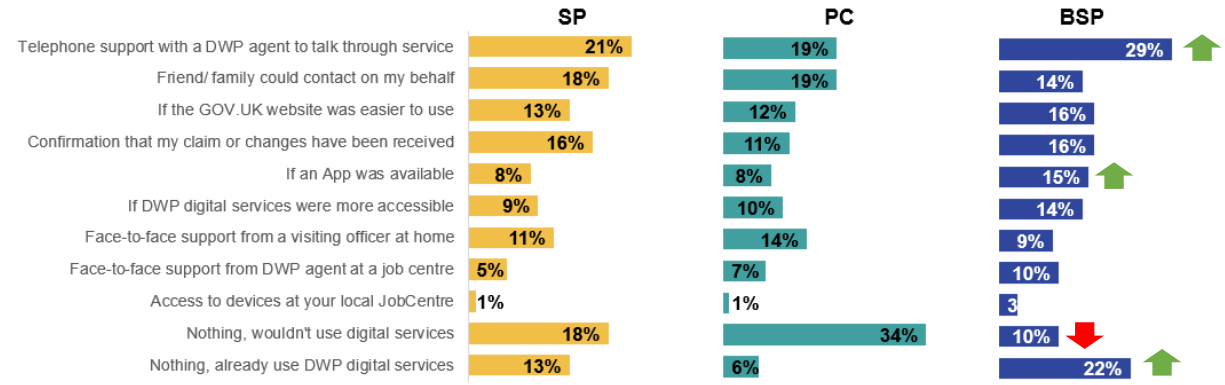
For PC customers, the most popular form of support after assistance on the phone and written guidance was in-person, from a visiting DWP officer (15%). A pop-up chat box on GOV.UK and video guidance were only chosen by 7%.

Given this customer group's lower levels of digital access and confidence, it was not surprising that these customers were less keen on digital forms of support. That said, all Retirement and Bereavement customers would prefer offline forms of support, notably telephone support or written guidance, to help them make and manage their benefit claims online.

7.4.2 What can DWP do to encourage further use in the future

Retirement and Bereavement Customers were asked what DWP could do to make them more likely to use DWP services digitally (Figure 7.4.2). A third of PC customers (34%) said that nothing would encourage them. This was almost twice as high as SP customers (18%) and more than three times higher than BSP customers (10%). This pattern of responses was to be expected given the differing degrees of internet usage and capability across these different customer groups. It was positive to note that a significant proportion of all three customer groups could potentially be encouraged to use DWP digital services more.

Figure 7.4.2: What, if anything, could DWP do to make you more likely to use DWP digital services?



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers (1,667), BSP (562), SP (554), PC (551) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

In terms of what DWP could do to encourage PC customers to use its digital services, the most popular answers centre on personal support. One in five cited telephone support from a DWP agent to talk through the service (19%) or

friends/family contacting DWP on their behalf (also 19%). A further 14% mentioned face-to-face support from a visiting DWP officer at home.

Making services easier to use and more accessible was mentioned less often, with around one in ten choosing making GOV.UK easier to use (12%) and 10% ‘if DWP services were more accessible’.

Arguably the actual need for ease of use and accessibility was considerably higher among this group given their lack of digital confidence, as well as the impact of their disabilities on their internet usage. However, the greater popularity of answers relating to personal support illustrates the extent to which this customer group need one-to-one guidance to increase their digital engagement with DWP services.

For BSP customers, telephone support from DWP (29%) was the most popular form of support to increase their use of DWP digital services. However, 15% chose an App, twice the proportion of SP and PC customers (both 8%) and a similar proportion making GOV.UK easier to use (16%) and making DWP digital services more accessible (14%). Digital reassurance was also an issue, with 16% looking for confirmation of changes to claims. There was some appetite for face-to-face support, with 9% mentioning a home visit and 10% support at a Jobcentre.

The top options for SP customers were telephone support from DWP (21%) or family/friends contacting DWP on their behalf (18%). Similar to BSP customers, they would also like GOV.UK to be easier to use (13%) and confirmation of changes to claims (16%). Like BSP customers, one in ten (11%) would like support through a home visit.

7.4.3 Future digital skills development

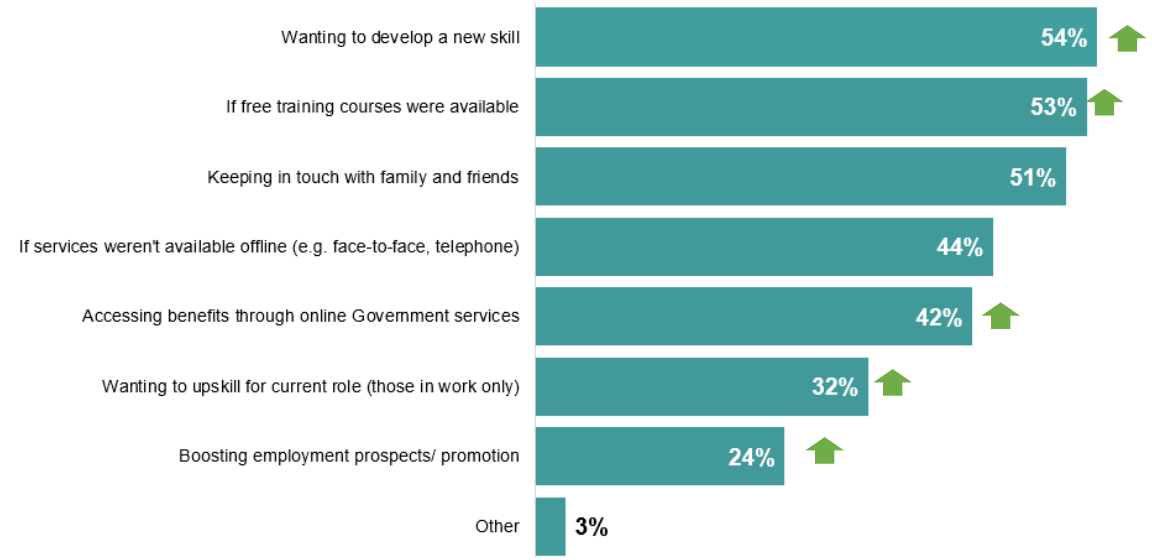
When asked a broader question about which situations would encourage them to use their digital skills more in the future (Figure 7.4.3) more than a third (36%) of PC customers simply didn’t want to develop their digital skills in the future, with an additional 21% reporting they didn’t need to develop their digital skills any further.

In contrast, 10% of BSP and 19% of SP customers said they didn’t want to develop their digital skills. SP customers were also more likely than BSP customers to have said they didn’t need to develop their digital skills (28% versus 23%).

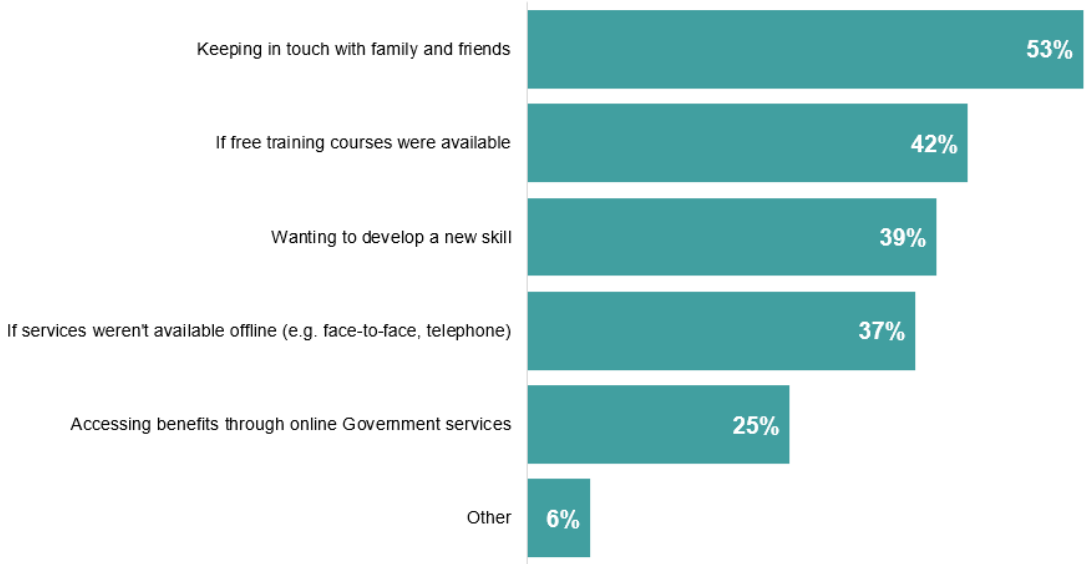
Amongst customers who could be encouraged to develop their digital skills in the future, BSP customers were more likely to choose all of the options asked about, with over half selecting wanting to develop a new skill (54%), if free training courses were available (53%) and keeping in touch with family and friends (51%). This reflects their higher levels of digital engagement.

Figure 7.4.3: Which, if any, of the following situations would encourage you to further develop your digital skills in the future?

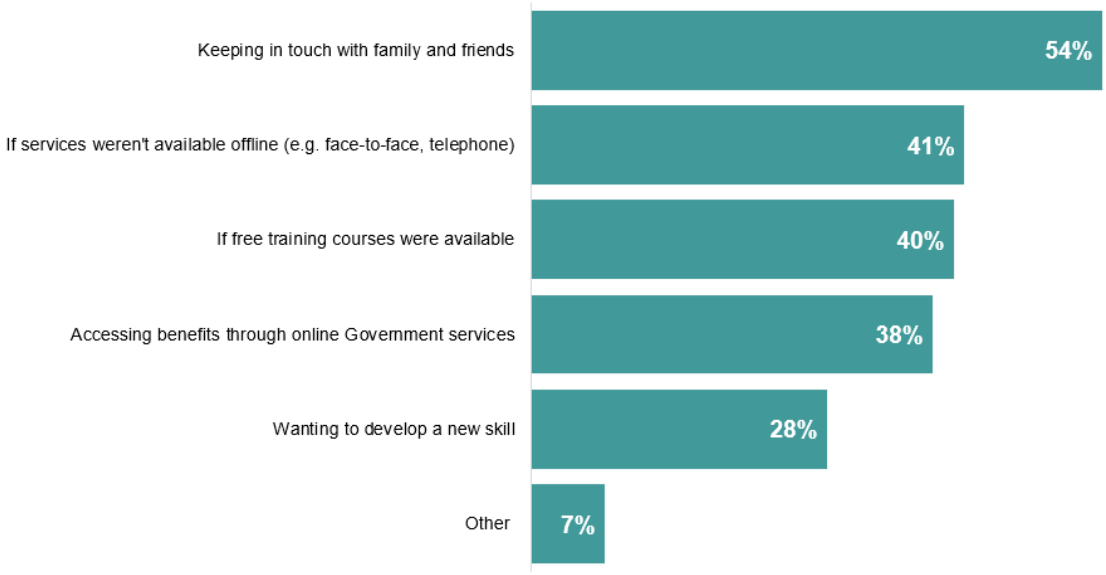
BSP



SP



PC



Base: All Retirement & Bereavement customers who could be encouraged to use their digital skills in the future (BSP: 351, SP:264, PC: 210 - excluding those who said they didn't need to or want to develop skills, don't know and prefer not to say) – multi-code (multiple options could be selected)

Indicates significant difference compared to benefit group

The most common motivator for PC customers to develop their digital skills was keeping in touch with family and friends (20%). A further one in six said that training (15%), accessing benefits through online government services (15%) and activities not being available offline (16%) would encourage them to develop their digital skills.

Responses from SP customers were similar to PC customers, with family and friends coming top (26%). However, SP customers were more likely to mention wanting to develop a new skill (19%).

8. Cost of living

This chapter summarises how DWP customers' use of broadband internet and mobile data has been impacted by the increasing cost of living in the UK. It also covers awareness of social broadband tariffs and the outcomes for those who have applied for them.

The chapter highlights that a third (32%) of DWP customers have already taken steps to reduce their expenditure on internet and mobile data usage so that they can afford other bills. Over one in ten (11%) plan to give up using broadband internet or mobile data for the same reason while seven percent say the rising cost of living is preventing them from starting to use the internet or mobile data. In contrast, a quarter (26%) of DWP customers say the rising cost of living is having no impact on their ability to go online.

When those experiencing "no impact" are combined with those making savings elsewhere to enable them to use the internet /mobile data (or who are using the internet to help them reduce other costs), it is estimated that half (51%) of DWP customers have been able to continue using digital services as 'usual.'

The chapter summarises how responses to increasing costs of living varies across customers of different benefits and demographic groups. In general, those receiving Retirement & Bereavement benefits are the least effected, while those in receipt of payments linked to disability are most likely to be adapting their digital behaviour in response to generally rising prices. Those with no form of disability are the least impacted, as are those in higher socio-economic groups, of white ethnicity and who hold a degree. The people most likely to be reducing their use of internet/mobile data or making changes that reduce the cost of online access include the long-term sick or disabled, those in lower socio-economic groups, of non-white ethnicity, where English is not their first language or who hold no formal qualifications.

The chapter concludes with an analysis of awareness and take up of social broadband tariffs. The key findings are that only two in ten (21%) DWP customers who responded to the survey are aware that social broadband tariffs exist. Of these, only one in ten (11%) have applied for and received it. In total, two percent of all DWP customers surveyed are aware of and receive social broadband tariffs. DWP continues to work with Department for Science Innovation and Technology (DSIT) who own the social broadband tariff policy to ensure DWP operational colleagues are aware of the latest broadband tariffs and can signpost claimants to them.

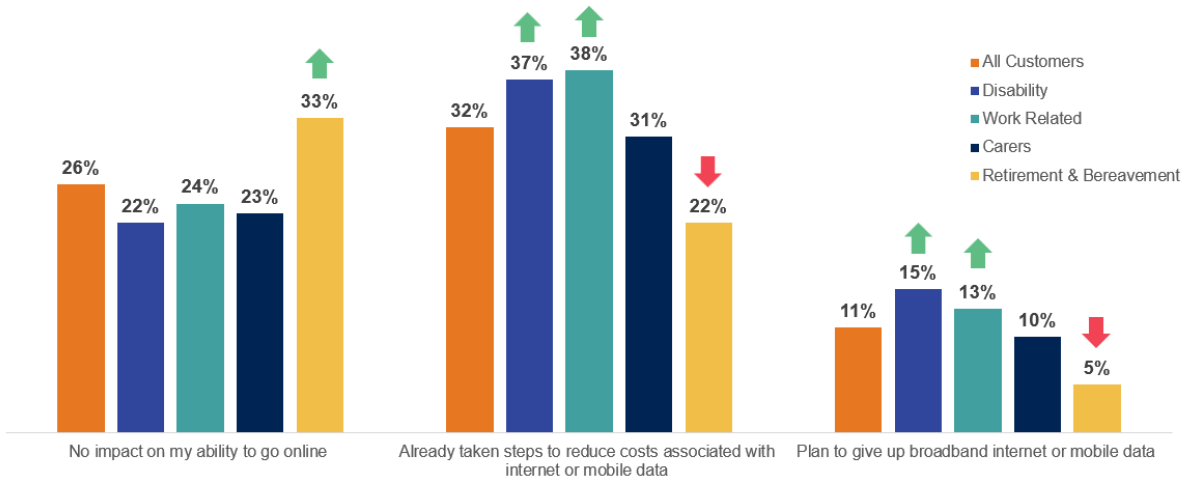
8.1 Overall impact of cost of living

As illustrated in Figure 8.1, just over a quarter (26%) of DWP customers report the rising cost of living was having no impact on their ability to go online. However, a third (32%) had already taken steps to reduce costs associated with internet or

mobile data usage and thereby continue to afford other bills such as food or rent. Over one in ten customers receiving DWP benefits (11%) report they may have to take much stronger action and plan to give up using broadband internet or mobile data to make their other bills more affordable.

Figure 8.1 also shows that those receiving Retirement & Bereavement benefits tended to be the least impacted by cost of living increases. They were the most likely to say there had been no impact in their use of internet or mobile data (33%) and the least likely to have already taken steps to reduce costs (22%) or plan to give up broadband internet or mobile data (5%). In contrast those receiving disability benefits were among the most negatively affected by rising prices. Nearly four in ten (37%) had taken steps to reduce costs while 15 percent planned to give up broadband internet or mobile data. Almost four in ten (38%) of those classified as Work Related had also taken steps to reduce costs related to internet access and data usage.

Figure 8.1: Overall impact of rising cost of living on internet / mobile data use



Base: All customers (7,988), Disability (4,112); Work Related (1,103); Carers (1,106); Retirement & Bereavement (1,667).

Indicates significant difference compared to the overall average

The impact of rising prices on the internet usage of customers receiving specific benefits was summarised in Table 8.1. This shows that those least impacted were in receipt of a SP (42% say there has been no impact), BSP (38%) and JSA (31%). Meanwhile, relatively few of those receiving PC (22%), AA (19%) or SP (14%) had felt the need to take steps to reduce costs associated with internet or mobile data usage.

Those who had already taken steps to reduce internet or data related costs were significantly more likely than average to be receiving CA (43%), UC (42%), DLAc (40%) or PIP (36%). Almost two in ten (18%) of those who claimed UC may give up using broadband internet or mobile data altogether, as might a similar proportion of those receiving Employment and Support Allowance (17%).

Table 8.1: Impact of rising cost of living on internet / mobile data usage by type of benefit received (Ranked by "Taken steps")

	Base	No impact on ability to go online	Taken steps to reduce cost of internet / mobile data	Plan to give up using broadband internet / mobile data
Carers Allowance	*550*	23%	43%	15%
Universal Credit	*553*	18%	42%	18%
Child Disability Living Allowance	*553*	23%	40%	13%
Personal Independence	*3,008*	23%	36%	14%
Job Seekers Allowance	*550*	31%	35%	8%
Employment and Support Allowance	*551*	20%	34%	17%
All DWP Customers	***7,988***	26%	32%	11%
Bereavement Support	*562*	38%	30%	6%
Pension Credit	*551*	20%	22%	7%
Attendance Allowance	*556*	24%	19%	5%
State Pension	*554*	42%	14%	2%

The impact of rising prices of goods and services on internet / mobile data use had impacted different demographic and other sub-groups in varying ways. Within the DWP customer base the following groups were significantly more likely than average (26%) to say the rising price of goods and services had not impacted their ability to go online: held a university degree (36%), ABC1 socio-economic group (33%), had no disabilities (32%), used the internet at least daily (28%), male (28%) and white (28%).

In contrast, the following groups had been most negatively affected with an above average proportion having said they had taken steps to reduce the cost of broadband internet / mobile data or were planning to give up using it entirely in order to afford food, rent etc: full-time carers (63%), non-white (63%), unemployed (59%), had a physical and mental health condition (58%), were long-term sick or disabled (57%), or were in C2DE socio-economic group (54%).

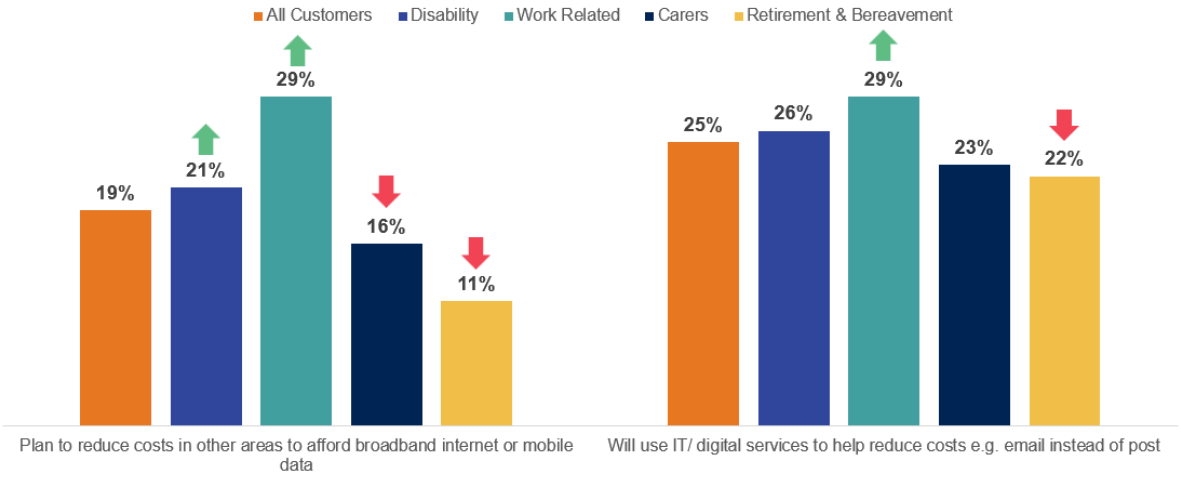
In addition, those who did not have English as a first language (20%) or any formal qualifications (14%), or who were not internet confident (14%) were significantly more

likely than others benefit customers to plan on giving up using internet /mobile data to afford other bills. Compared to the average benefit customer, those with vocational qualifications (39%) and women (34%, compared to 28% of men) were more likely to have taken steps to reduce the cost of internet / mobile data.

8.1.1 Prioritising broadband internet / mobile data over other costs

As illustrated by Figure 8.2, almost two in ten (19%) DWP customers planned to reduce costs in other areas of their life to afford broadband internet or mobile data. A quarter (25%) intended to pro-actively use IT/digital services to help them reduce their costs. For example, by using email instead of post or online orders instead of travelling to a store.

Figure 8.2: Prioritising internet / mobile data or using it to reduce other costs



Base: All customers (7,988), Disability (4,112); Work Related (1,103); Carers (1,106); Retirement & Bereavement (1,667).

Indicates significant difference compared to the overall average

Figure 8.2 also shows that those receiving Carers or Retirement & Bereavement benefits were the least likely to be reducing other costs to help fund their digital access (16% and 11% respectively), or to use this access to make savings elsewhere (23% and 22%). In contrast those receiving Work Related benefits were among the most likely to be taking these actions (29% in each case).

With respect to individual benefits, those most likely to be reducing costs in other areas of their life so they can continue to afford broadband internet or mobile data were those receiving: UC (30%), JSA (28%), DLAc (24%) or PIP (21%).

The proportion of people who were looking to reduce costs in other areas so that they continued to have digital access was highest among minority and disadvantaged groups. For example, it represented almost three in ten of those who did not have English as a first language (28%), of non- white ethnicity (27%), who had been

declared homeless at some point (29%), or who were currently unemployed (26%). A similar proportion was seen among full-time carers and those with both physical and mental disabilities (both 23%). A quarter of students (26%) expressed similar intentions. Relatively few retired people (10%) or those without formal qualifications (15%) were currently reducing costs in other areas of their life so they could continue to afford broadband internet or mobile data.

Those planning to use IT/digital services to help them reduce costs in other areas of their lives were primarily those receiving JSA (33%) and BSP (32%). Fewer than one in five of those benefiting from AA (18%) or PC (15%) were taking similar actions.

Those with a university degree (32%), vocational qualifications (29%) or in the ABC1 socio-economic group (30%) were among the most likely to be using digital services in order to save money in other areas. The proportion was also relatively high among those who were currently unemployed (30%) or had both physical and mental disabilities (27%). Once again, relatively few retired people (18%) or those without formal qualifications (14%) were currently looking to do this.

When those making savings elsewhere to support broadband internet /mobile data use were combined with those leveraging this technology to save costs or say the rising cost of living was having no impact on their ability to go online, the data suggested half (51%) of DWP customers could be regarded as having been able to continue using digital services to their ‘usual’ extent. This was the case for the majority of those receiving Work Related (57%) and Retirement & Bereavement benefits (52%) but was significantly lower than average for those getting Carers payments or allowances (46%).

With respect to individual benefits, the highest proportion continuing to use broadband internet / mobile data at the same or a higher level were those receiving JSA (64%), BSP (64%) and SP (56%). It was notably lower among those receiving PC (36%), AA (40%) or ESA (45%).

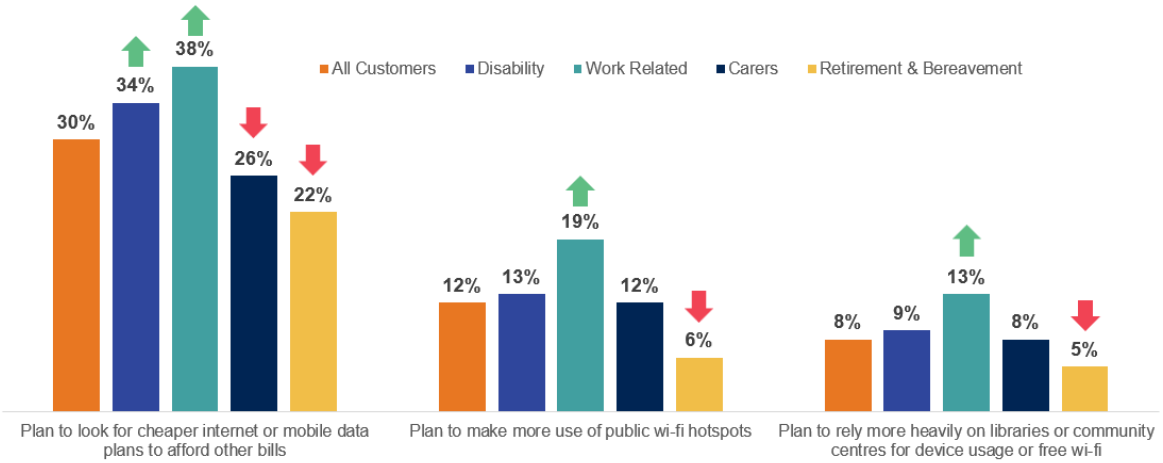
8.1.2 Cheaper alternatives to current internet / mobile data use

Three in ten (30%) benefit customers planned to look for cheaper internet or mobile data plans so they were better able to afford their other bills. By comparison, relatively few were planning to access Wi-Fi hotspots (12%) or rely more heavily on libraries or community centres for device usage or free Wi-Fi (8%). In combination, 15% report they plan to use either public Wi-Fi hotspots or the access provided by libraries or community centres. This combined figure suggested that many of those planning on using ‘hotspots’ would also be using access points such as libraries and community centres.

As shown in Figure 8.3, those receiving one of the Work Related benefits were significantly more likely than average to be seeking cheaper plans (38%), to plan on using public Wi-Fi hotspots (19%) or to use the access provided by libraries or community centres (13%). Those receiving benefits related to Retirement & Bereavement were significant *less* likely to respond to the higher cost of living in

these ways.

Figure 8.3: Finding cheaper alternatives to current internet / mobile data use



Base: All customers (7,988), Disability (4,112); Work Related (1,103); Carers (1,106); Retirement & Bereavement (1,667).

Indicates significant difference compared to the overall average

Table 8.2 summarises at the individual benefit level the intention to seek cheaper or free alternatives to internet and mobile data access. This shows that those most likely to be looking for cheaper plans were receiving UC (40%), DLAc (38%) or JSA (37%). These were approximately double the proportions seen among those who received SP (19%), AA (18%) or PC (17%).

Those planning to make greater use of public internet and mobile data resources were currently receiving UC, JSA or CA. Approximately two in ten of each group planned to use public Wi-Fi hotspots to offset the higher cost of living, while just over one in ten thought they will make more use of the digital access provided by libraries or community centres.

Very few of those who benefitted from SP, AA or PC plan on making more use of public Wi-Fi hotspots or the access provided by libraries or community centres.

Table 8.2: Intention to look for cheaper plans or make greater use of public internet / mobile data access by type of benefit received (Ranked by 'Look for cheaper plan')

	Base	Look for cheaper internet or mobile data plans to help afford other bills	Make more use of public Wi-Fi hotspots to save mobile data	Rely more heavily on libraries or community centres for device usage or free Wi-Fi
Universal Credit	*553*	40%	21%	13%
Child Disability Living Allowance	*553*	38%	15%	9%
Job Seekers Allowance	*550*	37%	17%	13%
Carers Allowance	*550*	35%	18%	11%
Personal Independence	*3,008*	34%	12%	8%
All DWP Customers	***7,988***	**30%**	**12%**	**8%**
Bereavement Support	*562*	30%	11%	6%
Employment and Support Allowance	*551*	29%	11%	10%
State Pension	***554***	19%	3%	3%
Attendance Allowance	*556*	18%	6%	6%
Pension Credit	***551***	17%	5%	5%

Those most likely to be planning on obtaining a cheaper internet or mobile data plan tended to come from the more vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. For example, over four in ten of those for whom English was not a first language (44%) or of non-white ethnicity (45%) were looking to obtain cheaper Internet and mobile data. Meanwhile, over a third of those who had been declared homeless at some point (37%), who were unemployed (37%), were full-time carers (36%), or had both physical and mental disabilities (34%) were also looking to get a cheaper plan. The exception to this 'trend' of the more disadvantaged seeking cheaper plans were those with university degrees. They were also significantly more likely than average (35% versus 30%) to planning to obtain less expensive internet or mobile data.

As noted above, 15 percent of DWP customers were planning to make greater use of one or both of public Wi-Fi hotspots or the access provided by libraries and community centres. Again, it tended to be the more vulnerable groups that had the

highest intention of taking such cost saving actions. Approximately a quarter of those in the following groups said that they plan to make more use of publicly available digital resources in response to the higher cost of living: those of non-white ethnicity (25%), people for whom English was not a first language (23%), who had been declared homeless at some point (24%), who were currently unemployed (24%), or who were full-time carers (23%). Almost two in ten of those who had both physical and mental disabilities or in the C2DE socio-economic group (both 18%), also planned to make more use of public Wi-Fi or the internet services at libraries and community centres.

8.1.3 Cost as a barrier to using internet / mobile data

Just over one in 20 of all DWP customers (7%) report the rising cost of living means they would not be able to afford to start using an internet or mobile data plan of their own. The figure was significantly higher than average among those receiving Disability (9%) or Work Related benefits (10%), and lower within the Carer (6%) and Retirement & Bereavement (4%) benefit customers. With respect to individual benefits the proportion who felt ‘cost’ would prevent them from being able to start a ‘digital’ plan was highest among those receiving UC (13%) or ESA (12%).

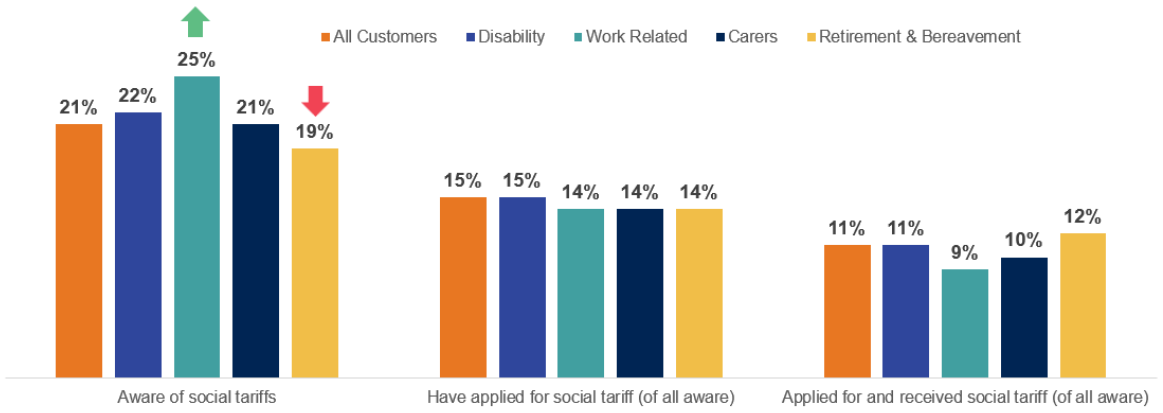
As with other negative impacts of the rising cost of living, the figure was significantly above average among minorities and more vulnerable sections of society. The proportion saying cost would prevent them from starting a plan of their own rises to 13% for those who had been declared homeless at some point. The figure was also relatively high for people who were long-term sick or disabled (12%), had both a physical and mental health condition (11%), were of non-white ethnicity (12%), or did not have English as their first language (13%).

Almost one in five (19%) of those currently using the internet less than once a month said higher prices of goods and services such as food, energy, and fuel, would prevent them from starting an internet or mobile data plan of their own. The figure was only slightly lower among those without home internet access (16%). So, for people already making little use of digital services, increased costs were likely to be a factor behind their continuing lack of access.

8.2 Awareness and ‘take up’ of social broadband tariffs

As explained in the survey questionnaire, social broadband tariffs were provided by internet service providers and offered cheaper broadband and phone packages to people claiming a means tested state benefit. They offered the same services as ‘regular’ broadband but were available at a lower price for eligible citizens. As summarised in Figure 8.4, just over a fifth (21%) of all DWP customers were aware of social broadband tariffs. Of those aware, 15% had applied for and 11% were currently benefiting from a social broadband tariff. When considered in the context of all DWP customers, approximately three percent had applied for and two percent were on a social broadband tariff.

Figure 8.4: Awareness and applications for Social broadband Tariffs



Base: Base: All customers (7,988), Disability (4,112); Work Related (1,103); Carers (1,106); Retirement & Bereavement (1,667) / Aware of Social broadband Tariffs - All aware (1,787), Disability (923); Work Related (284); Carers (239); Retirement & Bereavement (341)).

Indicates significant difference compared to the overall average

There was very little variation in awareness of, and applications for, social broadband tariffs by benefit groups. The only notable difference was that those receiving Work Related benefits (25%) had significantly higher awareness than the average DWP customer, while those receiving Retirement & Bereavement benefits were the least aware (19%). With respect to individual benefits, awareness was highest among those receiving UC (30%) and lowest for those being paid BSP (17%) or AA (18%). DWP continue to deliver awareness campaigns to ensure that all work coaches in Jobcentres, Universal Credit service centre agents, Pension centre agents, and partnership managers who engage with customers and stakeholders are aware of the social broadband tariffs and are able to signpost to the Ofcom webpage which promotes the offer, this being their most visited page.

A quarter (25%) of those receiving PC that were aware of such plans had successfully applied for a social broadband tariff.

Awareness of social tariffs tended to be higher among those who used the internet most frequently. It was also relatively high among those who had been declared

homeless at some point (28%) and full-time carers (26%). These tariffs were relatively unknown to those without formal qualifications (16%), who did not have English as their first language (17%) or of non-white ethnicity (18%).

Among those who were aware of social broadband tariffs, they had most frequently been applied for and obtained by those with both physical and mental disabilities (17%), who were categorised as being long-term sick (16%), or those with vocational qualifications (16%). A relatively low proportion of the DWP's unemployed customers know about, had applied for and had obtained a social broadband tariff (6%).

9. Conclusions and recommendations

As this report shows, the digital usage landscape among DWP customers is complex. Overall, the internet usage of DWP customers was high, with more than 8 in 10 (84%) of all DWP customers accessing the internet at the time of the research. However, this varied by benefit line and over a third (36%) of Pension Credit customers and 3 in 10 (30%) Attendance Allowance customers reported that they had never used the internet.

Whilst we have seen increased self-reported internet use in the past 12 months, particularly amongst Work Related customers, there remained a minority of customers who were offline. Unsurprisingly, these were typically older customers, those with no formal qualifications and those in lower social grades (C2DE customers). Digital confidence was lower amongst the long-term sick, retired, those with no formal qualifications and C2DE customers, particularly those claiming ESA, PIP, PC and AA. Customers on these benefits were also the most likely to have seen decreased internet usage over the last 12 months.

Confidence was related to how often a customer accessed the internet, with confident users accessing the internet several times a day compared to unconfident users who were more likely to access the internet weekly or monthly. Customers with greater confidence were also more likely to access the internet outside of the home compared to unconfident users.

In comparison, those customers with no formal qualifications had much lower confidence levels, with many reporting they were not confident at all in using the internet. Customers with no formal qualifications were more likely to be older so there was a level of interaction between these two factors impacting confidence.

This presents both opportunities and challenges for DWP in supporting a wide range of differing needs. Differing levels of support will be needed for different customer groups.

1 - Lighter touch support

Overall digital confidence was much higher amongst Work Related customers, so the level of support they require would be much lighter touch than other benefit lines. Of all benefit lines, JSA had the highest proportion of customers who felt able to manage or apply for their benefit online alone without help and they were also most likely to perform digital tasks without any assistance. They would benefit from support specifically targeted towards developing new skills and training.

In addition to Work Related customers, high levels of digital competency were seen amongst BSP and DLAc customer groups. These customers therefore do not require

as much assistance or targeted support as other benefit customers in order to become more comfortable online.

2 - Raising confidence levels with targeted support

In addition to those offline customers, there was a perception amongst many customers (particularly retired customers and those with a disability) that they lacked digital skills, felt the internet was too difficult to use and they were worried they would make mistakes. There is opportunity here for DWP to provide training and education that is targeted to the age and needs of the different benefit groups. This will be challenging as there are a variety of needs that need to be met:

- Many customers with a long-term sickness or disability were more likely to have decreased their internet usage than other customers, so could be potentially difficult to engage in digital services.
- Employed customers were more frequent internet users with higher digital confidence levels than the unemployed. Targeting support to help those unemployed customers increase their levels of digital confidence will be beneficial.

By finding ways to provide assistance on improving their digital skills and confidence, DWP can help alleviate the concerns these customers have and help raise digital confidence levels.

3 - More intensive support levels

AA customers had significant internet access issues and would require a lot of support if they are to attain the same level of internet access as other benefit customers. Confidence in their ability to carry out specific tasks on their own was particularly low.

Other benefit customers that would most struggle to apply for or manage their benefit online included PC, SP, ESA and PIP customers. PIP and ESA customers relied on the help of others more than other benefit lines. DWP should remain aware of this, and make sure guidance is clear for those supporting DWP customers.

4 - Supporting those without home internet access

Those who used the internet but not at home were a small minority group. ~~, but~~ For this group the biggest barrier reported was the cost of the internet, alongside relying on others to go online for them and lack of interest. These customers were also typically AA and ESA customers. The advice would be for DWP to continue to raise awareness of the social tariffs available, given the particularly low awareness seen in this research.

5 - Supporting offline customers

Although a minority, the biggest barrier for offline customers was simply a lack of interest and fear that they lacked digital skills, and the internet was felt to be too difficult to access and use. These were typically PC and AA customers. Training on digital skills could help with the fear around going online. However, given the demographic profile of these customers, it would be particularly challenging to

engage them all in digital services and many would simply not engage. It is important other modes to contact DWP remain available to not exclude customers.

6 - Demonstrate trust and security

Amongst existing internet users, issues around fraud, privacy, security and scams were the biggest concern and this was preventing them from using the internet for more activities. Overall, reassurances around website legitimacy and less online adverts would encourage customers to use the internet for more activities.

Clear messaging and communication to reassure customers of internet security is key and could help DWP to demonstrate its high levels of online safety and security.

7 - Offer compatible digital services

Typically, the majority of customers preferred to access the internet via a smartphone. Although, as the report shows, a range of different devices were favoured by different groups, with older customers more likely to engage with tablets. If DWP digital services continue to be compatible with a range of different devices, it could lead to higher digital take up amongst all DWP customers, as they can find a device that works best for them.

The report also highlights that Apps would engage younger customers and those with higher levels of digital skills. It is therefore worth DWP considering whether offering services via an App is viable.

8 - Ensure digital services are fully accessible

Customers suggested that if, in general, websites and Apps were easier to understand and also more accessible, they might be encouraged to engage. This was particularly the case for older customers (over 55) and customers with a disability. Both customer groups would be encouraged to use the internet more if they had assisted technology support. Awareness of the current support provided by DWP was low, so educating and explaining to customers the assisted technology support available to them will be a quick win.

Customers would prefer to engage with DWP online for easier interactions such as updating personal details, checking the progress of their claim, submitting supporting evidence or registering an initial claim.

The activity that customers were most open to engaging with DWP online through a website was for updating their personal details such as bank or home address information. It is therefore key that this process is easy and straightforward for all customers to understand.

9 – Improve awareness and ‘take up’ of social broadband tariffs

Given the increasing cost of living in the UK, around a third (32%) of DWP customers (at the time of the research) had already taken steps to reduce their expenditure on internet and mobile data usage and over 1 in 10 (11%) planned to give up using broadband internet or mobile data for the same reason. DWP should continue to

work with DSIT to ensure DWP operational colleagues are aware of the latest broadband tariffs and can signpost claimants to them to raise awareness and ‘take up’ of these tariffs in the future.

10 - Recognise the importance of personal interaction

There was strong reliance on telephone being the primary communication channel for many customers. Telephone support was also often cited by customers as a way to support them in engaging with more digital channels. This obviously has implications for DWP, and they could consider the role of telephone moving forward as part of a blended channel offering.

The type of customer who preferred to engage with DWP over the telephone were typically more likely to have no formal qualifications, be long-term sick or disabled, were older customers and were non-users of the internet. These customers had lower digital confidence levels, so there is an opportunity for DWP to potentially signpost to other digital channels with appropriate support going forward. But also, DWP should be reflective that a variety of channels were needed.

Similarities were seen amongst all disability customers in terms of what would stop them accessing government services online. Preference to make a phone call to do these things was the key factor stopping these customers from accessing government services online. The majority of all disability customers reported a stronger preference for telephone and written guidance.

Telephone support was also preferred by customers when dealing with more complex issues and queries, particularly relating to their payments, disputing decisions or resolving queries. There was a strong preference for Health Care Professional assessments to remain face-to-face.

Customers were motivated to learn new digital skills to be able to keep in touch with family and friends but were also encouraged by the prospect of free training to develop their skills. Work Related (UC and JSA) customers and those aged under 55 were the most likely to be encouraged to develop their digital skills further in order to be able to access their benefits through online government services. Overall, around 6 in 10 of all DWP customers would use a single portal to manage all of their benefits online. Clearly, there is scope for digitally led interactions between DWP and its customers but DWP must remain mindful that not all customers will want to engage in this way. There remains a proportion of customers who do not have internet access at home and alternative options to contact DWP should remain available so that certain customers are not excluded.

10. Appendices

10.1 Survey

Below is a full copy of the survey that was asked to all DWP customers as part of this digital skills, channel preferences and access needs research.

A1 – BENEFITS

ASK ALL
A0. Which of the following benefits, if any, are you currently receiving?
MULTI CODE, AUTOPUNCH BENEFIT SAMPLED FOR AFTER QUESTION ANSWERED

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE

ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Employment and Support Allowance
2 Universal Credit
3 Job Seekers Allowance
4 Personal Independence Payment
5 Child Disability Living Allowance
6 State Pension / Pension Credit
7 Carers Allowance
8 Attendance Allowance
9 Bereavement Support Payment
10 Child Maintenance
11 Cold Weather Payments
12 Winter Fuel Payments
13 Other
14 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]
15 No longer in receipt of any benefits [THANK AND CLOSE]

A2 – EMPLOYMENT

ASK ALL
A1. How would you describe your current working status? We are asking this because some of the survey questions relate to digital skills at work, or when looking for work.
SINGLE CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE

ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Employed full-time or part-time
2 Employed, but not currently working – e.g. on sick leave, maternity
3 Self-employed

4 Unemployed but looking for a job
5 Not currently looking for a job
6 Long-term sick or disabled
7 Full-time carer
8 Retired
9 Student/Pupil
10 Other
11 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

A3 – USAGE

SHOW ALL B4A2_INFO
The questions that follow will ask about **internet use**. This includes E-mail, web browsing/surfing and other online services such as downloading but does not cover time when you were connected but not using it.

ASK CATI ONLY, AUTOCODE CODE 1 FOR ONLINE
A2. Have you ever accessed the internet?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Yes, I currently access the internet
2 Yes, used frequently in the past but have now stopped using
3 Have tried it once or twice or in the past, but don't anymore
4 Never used the internet
5 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
6 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK IF CURRENTLY USING INTERNET (A2=1)
A3. Do you have access to the internet at HOME (via any device, e.g. PC, mobile phone etc.)?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 I have access to the internet and use it at home via home broadband
2 Yes, used frequently in the past but have now stopped using
3 I have access to the internet, but I don't use it at home
4 I do not have internet access at home
5 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL WHO USE THE INTERNET (A2=1)
A4. Do you ever access the internet anywhere other than in your home at all?
MULTI CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Your Workplace
2 School / College / University
3 Public computer at a jobcentre
4 Public computer at a library or in a public place e.g. café / shops / parks etc
5 Through family or friends
6 Other – please specify [TEXT BOX]
7 No - I do not access the internet away from home [EXCLUSIVE]

ASK ALL WHO GO ONLINE AT HOME (A3 = CODE 1-2) AND/OR ELSEWHERE (A4 = CODE 1- 7)
A5a. Which of these devices do you use to go online?
MULTI CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Smartphone (like an iPhone or Samsung Galaxy)
2 Tablet (like an iPad, Kindle Fire or Google Nexus)
3 Laptop, netbook or desktop computer (one that is usually in a fixed place with a separate screen and keyboard)
4 Other type of device used to go online (e.g. games console, smart speaker, etc.) – please specify [TEXT BOX]
5 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]

ASK ALL WHO GO ONLINE AT HOME (A3 = CODE 1-2) AND/OR ELSEWHERE (A4 = CODE 1- 8)
A6. Which, if any, of the following technologies do you use *when accessing the internet*?
MULTI CODE, RANDOMISE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Screen readers such as JAWS, NVDA, VoiceOVer, Windows Narrator
2 Technology to help with dexterity / mobile impairments such as Assistive touch
3 Screen magnifiers, such as ZoomText, Apple Zoom, Windows Magnifier
4 Voice assistants such as Alexa, Siri, or Google Assistant
5 Voice recognition software: Dragon, VoiceControl, Windows Speech
6 None of the above [EXCLUSIVE, FIXED]

ASK ALL
A7. How confident, if at all, do you feel in your ability to use the internet?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Very confident
2 Fairly confident

3 Not that confident
4 Not at all confident
5 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
6 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OU

ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED INTERNET (A2=1-3)
A8. How often [A2=1: do] [A2=2-3: did] you use the internet? [If working, A1=1-3: Please include both work and personal use.]
SINGLE CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Several times a day (or more)
2 Around once a day
3 Several times a week
4 Around once a week
5 2 or 3 times a month
6 Around once a month
7 Less than once a month
8 Never but you have access
9 Never but you do not have access
10 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
11 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED INTERNET (A2=1-3)
A9. Thinking now about the following general activities that you can do on the internet. Which, if any, of the following activities could you do online either with or without help?
SINGLE GRID

CATI: READ OUT ROWS. For each activity, please tell me whether you could do this task alone, could do it but with help or could not do it
ONLINE: Please select one option for each activity

ROWS
a. Find information on websites to help solve problems
d. Applying for jobs online
g. Setting up an online account / Filling in an online application form using personal information (e.g. for shopping Amazon / eBay, for government services)
h. Using government / public services online (e.g. renew a driving license or passport, booking medical appointments, pay council tax)

COLUMNS, SINGLE CODE
1 Could do this task alone
2 Could do this task, but with help
3 Couldn't do this task
4 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT

5 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK THOSE WHO NEED HELP WITH ANY OF THE TASKS (A9=2 FOR ANY ROW)

A10. You identified that you need help with some online activities, who would normally help you with these tasks?

MULTI CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE

ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 A family member who lives with me
2 A family member who lives elsewhere
3 A friend
4 A carer
5 An organisation/department providing a service
6 A support organisation e.g. citizen's advice, community group, charity
7 Someone else – please specify [TEXT BOX]
8 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
9 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

B - BARRIERS

ASK ALL WHO DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO INTERNET AT HOME (A3=4)

B1. Which of these, if any, are reasons that you don't have internet access at home?

MULTI CODE

CATI: READ OUT

ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 No need to go online / not interested
2 Cost to access internet is too high
3 Cost of devices and equipment to use the internet is too high
4 Using the internet is too complicated
5 Happy to use the internet at work / public
6 Someone else can go online for me if necessary
7 Broadband is too slow where I live
8 Concerned about security / fraud / privacy / scams
9 My health condition or disability makes using the internet difficult
10 Lack the necessary support or assistive technology to use the internet
11 Website design is not accessible for me
12 Some other reason– please specify [TEXT BOX]
13 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT [EXCLUSIVE]
14 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT [EXCLUSIVE]

ASK ALL WHO ARE OFFLINE (A2=2-4)

B2. Which of these, if any, are reasons why you do not use the internet?
MULTI CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 No need to go online / not interested
2 Concerns about security / fraud / privacy scams
3 Lack of digital skills / internet is too difficult to use and or/ lack of confidence / worry about making mistakes
4 I've had a previous bad experience of using the internet
5 Using the internet takes too long / is too slow
6 I prefer to do things offline / I don't need the internet
7 My health condition or disability makes using the internet difficult
8 Lack the necessary support or assistive technology to use the internet
9 Website design is not accessible for me
10 Someone else can go online for me if necessary
11 Some other reason – please specify TEXT BOX
12 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT [EXCLUSIVE]
13 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT [EXCLUSIVE]

ASK ALL WHO ACCESS INTERNET (A2=1)
B3. Which, if any, of the following reasons are stopping you from using the internet for more activities than you use it for now?
MULTI CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Concerns of fraud / privacy / security / scams
2 Lack of digital skills / internet is too difficult to use and or/ lack of confidence / worry about making mistakes
3 Using the internet takes too long / is too slow
4 My health condition or disability makes using the internet more difficult
5 Prefer to do things offline / I don't need the internet
6 Don't have time
7 Would be too expensive
8 Previous bad experience
9 Some other reason – please specify [TEXT BOX]
10 Nothing, I already use the internet for a lot of activities [EXCLUSIVE]
11 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT [EXCLUSIVE]
12 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]

ASK ALL
B4. Which, if any, of the following would encourage you to use the internet for more activities in the future?

MULTI CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 If websites or Apps were easier to understand
2 If websites or Apps were more accessible
3 Better/faster wi-fi in my area
4 Less adverts / popups
5 If I was assured that websites I visited were legitimate
6 Improved mobile coverage
7 If I had better equipment (phone/laptop/tablet, etc)
8 If devices were cheaper
9 If personal broadband / mobile data was cheaper
10 Training to improve digital skills
11 If someone helped me, e.g. assisted digital service
12 If I had the necessary assistive technology
13 Some other reason – please specify [TEXT BOX]
14 Nothing would encourage me to use the internet more frequently [EXCLUSIVE, CATI CODE IF NOTHING ABOVE SELECTED]
15 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT [EXCLUSIVE]
Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT [EXCLUSIVE]

C – ONLINE GOVERNMENT SERVICE USAGE

SHOW ALL B4C1_INFO
We will now ask about your use of government and public services. Government and public services include services used to renew driving licenses and passports, as well as healthcare services, such as booking a medical appointment and ordering repeat prescriptions.

ASK ALL
C1. Thinking now about **using government or public services online**. If they were available, which, if any, of the following services could you do online either with or without help?
SINGLE GRID

CATI: READ OUT ROWS. For each activity, please tell me whether you could do this task alone, could do it but with help or could not do it
ONLINE: Please select one option for each activity

ROWS
a. Look online for public services information on government sites (e.g. gov.uk or HMRC)
b. Complete government processes online (e.g. renew a driving licence or passport etc.)
c. Applying for or managing your benefits
d. Using NHS services online (e.g. ordering repeat prescriptions, booking medical appointment)

e. Pay online for your council tax or for another local council service (e.g. parking ticket, congestion charge etc.)
f. Submitting documents online for ID verification

COLUMNS
1. Could do this task alone
2. Could do this task, but with help
3. Couldn't do this task
4. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
5. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL
C2. If a single portal was available to manage all of your benefits online, would you use the portal? By portal, we mean a webpage or website that provides users an entryway to a variety of information, tools, links and more.
SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL
C3. If there was a single portal available for **ALL** government services (e.g. managing your benefits, managing your health, managing tax) would you use it?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT

ASK IF WOULD NOT USE INTERNET TO ACCESS GOVERNMENT SERVICES ONLINE (C2=2 AND/OR C3=2)
C4. Which, if any, of the following reasons would stop you from accessing government services online?
MULTI CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Prefer to make a phone call to do these things
2 No access to internet [ONLY SHOW IF A2=2-6]
3 No access to technology e.g. smartphone, laptop [ONLY SHOW IF A2=2-6]
4 Don't know how/too difficult

5 Prefer to use post/ use pen and paper / fill out a form
6 Prefer to talk with someone in person to do these things
7 Not interested in using the internet
8 Lack the necessary support or assistive technology to use the internet
9 Health condition or disability makes using the internet difficult
10 Website design is not accessible for me
11 Other (please specify) [TEXT BOX]
12 Nothing [EXCLUSIVE]
13 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]
14 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]

ASK ALL
C5. [CATI: Now, please can you tell me how] [ONLINE: How do] you usually contact DWP in relation to managing your [insert benefit sampled for] claim? By managing your benefit we mean making claims, reporting a change in circumstances, or providing evidence to keep your records up to date.
MULTI CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Online/online account
2 Phone/By phone (Pension Service Helpline) –SHOW FOR SP/PC
3 Post
4 Through next Generation Text service (for speech and hearing difficulties)
5 Through attending a JobCentre Plus
6 Other - please specify [TEXT BOX]
7 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]
8 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]

ASK ALL
C6. Which, if any, of the following assistive or support services provided by DWP, are you aware of?
MULTI CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Relay UK
2 Text phone
3 Video relay service
4 Communication by email
5 A home visit from a visiting officer
6 Face-to-face JobCentre support
7 Other - please specify [TEXT BOX]
8 None [EXCLUSIVE]
9 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]
10 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]

ASK ALL, FOR CODES 1-6 SHOW ONLY THOSE SELECTED AT C6

C7. When contacting DWP about your claim, do you use any of the following assistive or support services?

MULTI CODE

CATI: READ OUT

ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Relay UK
2 Text phone
3 Video relay service
4 Communication by email
5 A home visit from a visiting officer
6 Face-to-face JobCentre support
7 Support from a family member, a friend
8 Support from a professional, such as a welfare rights adviser
9 Other – please specify [TEXT BOX]
10 I don't use any support or assistive services [EXCLUSIVE]
11 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]
12 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]

ASK ALL UC CLAIMANTS (A0=2)

C8. Overall, how easy or difficult do you find using the internet to access your Universal Credit online account?

SINGLE CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE

ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Very easy
2 Fairly easy
3 Fairly difficult
4 Very difficult
5 I don't have access to an online account
6 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
7 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL

C9. If it were available, in which of the following ways would you most prefer to engage with DWP for each of the following activities that might occur as part of your [Benefit name] claim?

MULTI GRID

CATI: READ OUT ROWS. For each activity, please tell me how you'd most like to engage with DWP. You may choose from online, app, telephone, email, face to face, or by mail

ONLINE: Please select your most preferred options for each activity

ROWS

a. Registering an initial claim / making a benefit
b. [PIP only, A0=4] Completing your 'How your disability affects you' questionnaire
c. Submitting supporting evidence for a benefit claim, such as medical documents or proof of rental costs or, submitting documents for ID verification
e. [PIP only, A0=4] Being assessed by a healthcare professional
f. Checking progress of benefit claim
g. Disputing a decision or making a complaint
i. Resolving a payment related query
j. Resolving a non-payment related query
k. Updating personal details (such as updating your bank details or home address)
l. [PIP and UC only, A0=2, 4] Reporting a change in circumstances (such as changes to health condition or starting employment)
m. Receiving notifications / updates related to your claim

COLUMNS

1. Online / website
2. App
3. Telephone
4. Email
5. Face-to-face
6. Post / letter
7. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
8. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED INTERNET (A2=1-3)
C10. Thinking specifically about when you last used the government website WWW.GOV.UK to access benefit information, please can you tell me how easy or difficult it was to find all the information you needed?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE
ONLINE: Please select one option

1. Very easy
2. Fairly easy
3. Fairly difficult
4. Very difficult
5. I have never used WWW.GOV.UK
6. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
7. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK IF USED JOBCENTRE PLUS (C5=5)
C11. If available at your local Jobcentre Plus, which of the following digital services, if any, would you use?
MULTI CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1. A check-in device to let staff know you had arrived for your appointment
2. A self-service device to navigate your benefit claim and find out other information
3. I wouldn't use any of these [EXCLUSIVE]
4. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]

D SUPPPORT

ASK ALL
D1. Thinking now about using digital services from DWP. Assuming you wanted to use a DWP digital service, in what ways would you want to receive support or guidance on how to make and manage a benefit claim?
MULTI CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE AND PROBE FULLY (I.E. "ANYTHING ELSE?")
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Written guidance
2 Video guidance
3 Over the phone with a DWP adviser
4 In a Jobcentre Plus
5 From a visiting officer
6 From a chat bot on GOV.UK

7 From a pop-up chat box on GOV.UK, speaking to a person on the other end
8 Video calling
9 Third party organisation (e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau, charity)
10 None [EXCLUSIVE]
11 Other - please specify [TEXT BOX]
12 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]
13 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]

ASK ALL
D2. What, if anything, could DWP do to make you more likely to use DWP digital services?
MULTI CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE AND PROBE FULLY (I.E. "ANYTHING ELSE?")
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 Friend/family could contact on my behalf
2 Telephone support with a DWP agent to talk through service
3 Face-to-face support from DWP agent at a job centre
4 Face-to-face support from a visiting officer at home
5 Access to devices at your local job centre to claim and manage your benefits
6 [UC only, A0=2] Online support from DWP agent through your Universal Credit account
7 [UC only, A0=2] If the instructions on how to use digital services were clearer and easier to understand
8 Receiving confirmation of receipt that my claim or changes to my claim have been received
9 If the GOV.UK website was easier to use
10 If an App was available
11 If DWP digital services were more accessible
12 Other - please specify [TEXT BOX]
13 Nothing, wouldn't use digital services [EXCLUSIVE]
14 Nothing, already use DWP digital services [EXCLUSIVE]
15 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]
16 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]

E DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING

ASK ALL WHO HAVE USED INTERNET AT A2 (A2=1-3)
E3A. **In the last 12 months**, has your personal use of the internet increased, stayed the same or decreased?

SINGLE CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Increased

2 Stayed the same
3 Decreased
4 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
5 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL
E3B. **In 12 months from now**, do you think your personal use of the internet will increase, decrease, or stay the same?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Increase
2 Stay the same
3 Decrease
4 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
5 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL
E4. Which, if any, of the following situations would encourage you to further develop your digital skills in the future?
MULTI CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 [IF IN WORK, A1=1-3] Wanting to upskill for current role
2 Wanting to develop a new skill
3 Keeping in touch with family and friends
4 [IF IN WORK/LOOKING FOR WORK, A1=1-4] Boosting employment prospects/promotion
5 If free training courses were available
6 Accessing benefits through online Government services
7 If services weren't available offline (e.g. face-to-face, telephone)
8 Other - please specify [TEXT BOX]
9 None, I don't want to develop digital skills in the future [EXCLUSIVE]
10 None, I don't need to develop my digital skills any further [EXCLUSIVE]
11 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]
12 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT, [EXCLUSIVE]

F – DIGITAL SKILLS IN EMPLOYMENT

B4F1_INFO: SHOW TO ALL WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN WORK AND USE DIGITAL SKILLS AT WORK (A1 = 1,2,3 AND A4=1)
Earlier you mentioned that you are employed and use the internet at your workplace.

ASK ALL WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN WORK AND USE DIGITAL SKILLS AT WORK (A1 = 1,2,3 AND A4=1)
F1. How much, if at all, would you say you use your digital skills in your day to day job?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

1. Always
2. Most of the day
3. Some of the day
4. Not very much
5. Not at all
6. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
7. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL WHO ARE CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR WORK (EMPLOYMENT A1=4)

F2. In your current search for a job, have you done any of the following:
SINGLE GRID

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one answer per row

ROWS

a. Used an online job finding tools/search engines to look for a new job
b. Applied for a job online
c. Created a digital CV

COLUMNS

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
4. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

G – COST OF LIVING

ASK ALL
G1. Given the increasing cost of living in the UK driven by higher prices on goods and services such as food, energy, and fuel, which, if any, of the following apply to you?
MULTI CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select all that apply

1 I plan to give up broadband internet or mobile data to be able to afford my other bills (food/rent)
2 I plan to reduce costs in other areas of my life to afford broadband internet or mobile data
3 I plan to look for cheaper internet or mobile data plans to be able to afford my other bills
4 I plan to make more use of public Wi-Fi hotspots to save my mobile data
5 I plan to rely more heavily on libraries or community centres for device usage or free Wi-Fi
6 I have already taken steps to reduce costs associated with internet or mobile data usage to allow me to continue to afford my other bills [food/rent?]
7 I will not be able to afford to start using an internet or mobile data plan of my own
8 The rising cost of living is having no impact on my ability to go online
9 I will use IT/digital services to help me reduce my costs (e.g. email instead of post; online order instead of travelling to store; etc)
10 None of the above [EXCLUSIVE]

SHOW ALL
Social broadband tariffs are provided by internet service providers and offer cheaper broadband and phone packages to people claiming a means tested state benefit such as [SHOW BENEFIT LINE AS PER SAMPLE]. Some providers call them ‘essential’ or ‘basic’ broadband. Social broadband tariffs are delivered in the same way, it is just that they are available at a lower price for those citizens eligible.

ASK ALL
G2. Are you aware of social broadband tariffs that are mainly available to customers who are
receiving a means tested state benefit such as [CATI: INSERT BENEFIT SAMPLED FOR] [ONLINE:
Universal Credit, Pension Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, Jobseeker’s Allowance and
Income Support]?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Yes
2 No
3 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
4 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL AWARE OF SOCIAL BROADBAND TARRIFS (G2 = 1)
G3. And have you applied for a social broadband tariff?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Yes – I have applied but am awaiting the outcome
2 Yes – I have applied and I'm on a social tariff
3 No
4 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
5 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

H DEMOGRAPHICS

B4H1_INFO: SHOW ALL

This is the final section and [CATI: I'd just; ONLINE: we would] like to ask you a few details about yourself. This information will be used to monitor the experiences that different groups have when they are dealing with DWP. You do not have to give an answer if you do not want to.

All of your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence, DWP will not be able to identify you from the anonymised responses that Ipsos supply.

ASK ALL
H1. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for
12 months or more?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

INTERVIEWER ADD IF NECESSARY/SHOW AS POP UP FOR ONLINE: By this [CATI: I; ONLINE: we] mean any physical or mental health condition that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

1 Yes – Physical condition

2 Yes – Mental health condition
3 Yes – both physical and mental health condition
4 No
5 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL WHO HAVE A PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION OR ILLNESS (CODE 1,2,3 AT H1).

H2. Could you tell me what your illness, health condition or disability is? MULTI CODE

CATI: PROMPT AS NECESSARY

ONLINE: Please select all that apply.

MENTAL HEALTH
1. Depression
2. Stress or anxiety
3. Any other mental health condition (please specify)

LEARNING DIFFICULTIES & COGNITIVE DISORDERS
4. Learning difficulties including dyslexia
5. Asperger's syndrome / Autism / Autism Spectrum Disorder

MUSCULO-SKELETAL / PHYSICAL INJURY
6. Problems with your arms or hands
7. Problems with your legs or feet
8. Problems with your neck or back
9. Pain or discomfort
10. Any other musculo-skeletal problem or physical injuries (please specify)

SENSORY IMPAIRMENT AND COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS
11. Difficulty with seeing
12. Difficulty with hearing
13. Dizziness or balance problems
14. Speech problems
15. Any other sensory impairment problem (please specify)

CHRONIC / SYSTEMIC / PROGRESSIVE
16. Problems with your bowels, stomach, liver, kidneys, or digestion including Crohn's disease
17. Chest or breathing problems including asthma
18. Heart or blood pressure problems including angina
19. Skin conditions or allergies
20. Cancer or other progressive illness not covered above
21. Diabetes
22. Any other chronic / systemic illness (please specify)

OTHER CONDITION OR DISABILITY
23. Problems due to alcohol

24. Problems due to drug addiction
25. Fatigue or problems with concentration or memory
26. Obesity
27. Any other health condition or disability issue (please specify)
99. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL WHO HAVE A PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION OR ILLNESS (CODE 1,2,3 AT H1).

H3. Does your condition or illness reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Yes, a lot
2 Yes, a little
3 No, not at all
4 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL

H4. What is your ethnic group?

SINGLE CODE

CATI: PROMPT TO CODE
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 White
2 Mixed/ multiple ethnicity
3 Asian/ Asian British
4 Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British
5 Other
6 Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
7 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL

H10 How would you describe your gender?

SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

1. Man
2. Woman
3. Non-binary
4. Other (please describe) [TEXT BOX]
5. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL

H11. Now thinking about language, is English your first language?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

1. Yes
2. No
3. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK IF ENGLISH IS NOT THEIR FIRST LANGUAGE (H11=2)
H12. To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I need support with English
SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

a. Strongly agree
b. Agree
c. Disagree
d. Strongly disagree
e. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
f. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL
H13. What is the highest educational or professional qualification, if any, that you have obtained to date?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: READ OUT
ONLINE: Please select one option

1 Lower Secondary (e.g. GCSE or O Level, typically at age 16)
2 Upper Secondary (e.g. A- Level, typically at age 18)
3 Vocational qualifications
4 University degree
5 Other
6 No formal qualifications
7 Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK IF EMPLOYED (A1=1-3)
H14. What is your occupation?
CATI: RECORD OCCUPATION OF CHIEF INCOME EARNER THEN CODE CLASS BELOW Position / rank / grade: Qualifications / degrees / apprenticeships: Industry / type of company: Number of staff responsible for: (PROBE FOR PENSION)
OPEN RESPONSE

CATI: RECORD OCCUPATION
ONLINE: Please describe [TEXT BOX]

ASK ALL
H16. Aside from any children, do you have any caring responsibilities?
SINGLE CODE

CATI: ADD IF NECESSARY: By caring responsibilities, we mean caring for anyone who needs help with everyday life due to illness, disability or old age. This could include help with grocery shopping, bathing, dressing, laundry.

ONLINE: By caring responsibilities, we mean caring for anyone who needs help with everyday life due to illness, disability or old age. This could include help with grocery shopping, bathing, dressing, laundry.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
4. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL
H17. Before the age of 17, did you ever live with foster parents or in children's residential care?
SINGLE CODE
1. Yes
2. No
3. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL
H20. Have you ever been declared homeless?
SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know DO NOT READ OUT
4. Prefer not to say DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL
H22. For research and statistical purposes only, the Department would like to link your answers to other information they hold so they can further analyse the survey. Your responses will remain completely confidential, and your dealings DWP will not be affected in any way.

Are you happy to let DWP link your survey responses to benefit claim information they have about you for further research analysis? The linking is done with a unique survey id number that retains your anonymity
SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No

THANK AND CLOSE

10.2 Sample breakdown

The sample was provided by DWP and stratified by the most recent benefit claimed. The definition of the study population is therefore based on the last claimed benefit, not all benefits currently claimed. Please note, that as customers were sampled based on their latest benefit claimed through DWP, the customers referred to in this report may be claiming multiple benefits. Question A0 in the survey (see Section 10.1) asked which benefits the respondent was receiving at the time of the research. The table below outlines which, if any, other benefits DWP customers were in receipt of. Overall, 52% of DWP customers were multiple benefit customers, compared to 48% claiming one benefit alone.

Benefit	N – latest benefit	N – all benefits claimed (A0)
PIP	3,008	3,576
ESA	551	1,436
DLAc	553	735
UC	553	1,493
JSA	550	591
AA	556	613
CA	550	967
SP/PC	1,105	1,757
BSP	562	566

A sample breakdown of other demographics can be seen in the tables below.

Personal Independence Payment

Gender 	Man	Woman	Other
	40%	59%	1%

Disability 	Physical	Mental	Both	No, not for more than 12 months
	37%	13%	44%	7%

Disability type 	Musculo-skeletal	Mental health	Chronic / systemic / progressive	Sensory	Learning difficulties	Other (e.g. fatigue / memory)
	54%	49%	41%	23%	12%	29%

Age 	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65
	3%	19%	21%	24%	31%

Ethnicity 	White	Mixed	Asian / Asian British	Black African / Caribbean / British	Other
	86%	2%	5%	4%	2%

Education	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Vocational	University degree	Other	No formal qualification
	22%	11%	14%	18%	8%	26%

Caring responsibilities	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	17%	81%	1%

Employment status	Employed or self-employed	Unemployed	Long-term disabled	Retired	Full-time carer	Student
	21%	10%	45%	17%	3%	3%

English as a second language	Yes	No
	8%	92%

Lived in foster care 	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	5%	94%	2%

Declared homeless 	Yes	No	Don't know / prefer not to say
	13%	86%	1%

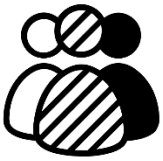
Employment and Support Allowance

Gender 	Man	Woman	Other
	47%	51%	2%

Disability 	Physical	Mental	Both	No, not for more than 12 months
	26%	18%	50%	6%

Disability type	Musculo-skeletal	Mental health	Chronic / systemic / progressive	Sensory	Learning difficulties	Other (e.g. fatigue / memory)
	47%	61%	42%	20%	12%	30%

Age	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65
	2%	11%	16%	26%	44%

Ethnicity	White	Mixed	Asian / Asian British	Black African / Caribbean / British	Other
	90%	1%	3%	4%	1%

Education	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Vocational	University degree	Other	No formal qualification
	22%	10%	17%	12%	9%	24%

Caring responsibilities	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	12%	84%	3%

Employment status	Employed or self-employed	Unemployed	Long-term disabled	Retired	Full-time carer	Student
	5%	4%	68%	6%	2%	1%

English as a second language	Yes	No
	4%	96%

Lived in foster care	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	7%	92%	1%

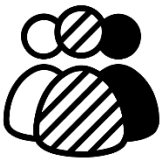
Declared homeless 	Yes	No	Don’t know / prefer not to say
	19%	78%	2%

Disability Living Allowance for Children

Gender 	Man	Woman	Other
	18%	82%	-

Disability 	Physical	Mental	Both	No, not for more than 12 months
	13%	17%	17%	50%

Age 	0-15
	100%

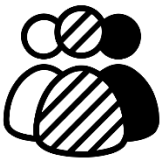
Ethnicity 	White	Mixed	Asian / Asian British	Black African / Caribbean / British	Other
	79%	3%	7%	7%	3%

Universal Credit

Gender 	Man	Woman	Other
	40%	60%	-

Disability 	Physical	Mental	Both	No, not for more than 12 months
	14%	15%	23%	44%

Age 	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65
	14%	29%	26%	17%	13%

Ethnicity 	White	Mixed	Asian / Asian British	Black African / Caribbean / British	Other
	72%	4%	8%	12%	3%

Education 	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Vocational	University degree	Other	No formal qualification
	23%	13%	14%	21%	9%	16%

Caring responsibilities 	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	17%	80%	2%

Employment status 	Employed or self-employed	Unemployed	Long-term disabled	Retired	Full-time carer	Student
	41%	24%	22%	1%	7%	2%

English as a second language 	Yes	No
	23%	77%

Lived in foster care 	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	7%	91%	1%

Declared homeless 	Yes	No	Don’t know / prefer not to say
	22%	75%	3%

Job Seekers Allowance

Gender 	Man	Woman	Other
	54%	44%	2%

Disability	Physical	Mental	Both	No, not for more than 12 months
	14%	10%	8%	64%

Age	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65
	3%	19%	21%	24%	31%

Ethnicity	White	Mixed	Asian / Asian British	Black African / Caribbean / British	Other
	85%	3%	6%	4%	2%

Education	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Vocational	University degree	Other	No formal qualification
	16%	13%	15%	42%	8%	3%

Caring responsibilities	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	16%	83%	1%

Employment status	Employed or self-employed	Unemployed	Long-term disabled	Retired	Full-time carer	Student
	19%	75%	2%	1%	-	-

English as a second language	Yes	No
	11%	89%

Lived in foster care	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	1%	98%	1%

Declared homeless	Yes	No	Don’t know / prefer not to say
	4%	94%	2%

Carer's Allowance

Gender 	Man	Woman	Other
	27%	72%	1%

Disability 	Physical	Mental	Both	No, not for more than 12 months
	20%	13%	13%	50%

Age 	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65
	5%	16%	25%	23%	30%

Ethnicity 	White	Mixed	Asian / Asian British	Black African / Caribbean / British	Other
	83%	3%	8%	3%	3%

Education	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Vocational	University degree	Other	No formal qualification
	26%	12%	17%	14%	9%	19%

Caring responsibilities	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	70%	28%	1%

Employment status	Employed or self-employed	Unemployed	Long-term disabled	Retired	Full-time carer	Student
	14%	13%	8%	5%	54%	1%

English as a second language	Yes	No
	11%	89%

Lived in foster care 	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	5%	93%	2%

Declared homeless 	Yes	No	Don't know / prefer not to say
	10%	88%	2%

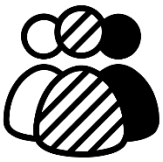
Attendance Allowance

Gender 	Man	Woman	Other
	40%	60%	-

Disability 	Physical	Mental	Both	No, not for more than 12 months
	59%	3%	19%	16%

Disability type	Musculo-skeletal	Mental health	Chronic / systemic / progressive	Sensory	Learning difficulties	Other (e.g. fatigue / memory)
	63%	21%	51%	37%	1%	28%

Age	66-74	75+
	16%	84%

Ethnicity	White	Mixed	Asian / Asian British	Black African / Caribbean / British	Other
	94%	-	2%	3%	1%

Education	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Vocational	University degree	Other	No formal qualification
	21%	8%	13%	13%	7%	31%

Caring responsibilities	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	16%	82%	1%

Employment status	Employed or self-employed	Unemployed	Long-term disabled	Retired	Full-time carer	Student
	3%	-	4%	91%	1%	-

English as a second language	Yes	No
	4%	96%

Lived in foster care	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	3%	94%	2%

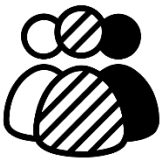
Declared homeless 	Yes	No	Don’t know / prefer not to say
	2%	95%	3%

State Pension

Gender 	Man	Woman	Other
	47%	53%	-

Disability 	Physical	Mental	Both	No, not for more than 12 months
	36%	2%	4%	56%

Age 	66-74	75+
	48%	52%

Ethnicity 	White	Mixed	Asian / Asian British	Black African / Caribbean / British	Other
	98%	-	1%	-	-

Education 	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Vocational	University degree	Other	No formal qualification
	18%	7%	17%	28%	10%	18%

Caring responsibilities 	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	10%	89%	1%

Employment status 	Employed or self-employed	Unemployed	Long-term disabled	Retired	Full-time carer	Student
	7%	-	1%	91%	-	-

English as a second language 	Yes	No
	2%	98%

Lived in foster care 	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	1%	98%	1%

Declared homeless 	Yes	No	Don’t know / prefer not to say
	1%	98%	-

Pension Credit

Gender 	Man	Woman	Other
	26%	74%	-

Disability	Physical	Mental	Both	No, not for more than 12 months
	47%	3%	13%	35%

Age	66-74	75+
	29%	71%

Ethnicity	White	Mixed	Asian / Asian British	Black African / Caribbean / British	Other
	90%	1%	3%	3%	2%

Education	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Vocational	University degree	Other	No formal qualification
	16%	7%	10%	11%	8%	42%

Caring responsibilities	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	13%	85%	1%

Employment status	Employed or self-employed	Unemployed	Long-term disabled	Retired	Full-time carer	Student
	2%	1%	3%	93%	1%	-

English as a second language	Yes	No
	8%	91%

Lived in foster care	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	3%	95%	2%

Declared homeless	Yes	No	Don’t know / prefer not to say
	3%	95%	2%

Bereavement Support Payment

Gender 	Man	Woman	Other
	26%	74%	-

Disability 	Physical	Mental	Both	No, not for more than 12 months
	18%	7%	12%	61%

Age 	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65
	-	1%	8%	22%	69%

Ethnicity 	White	Mixed	Asian / Asian British	Black African / Caribbean / British	Other
	93%	2%	3%	2%	-

Education	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Vocational	University degree	Other	No formal qualification
	23%	9%	15%	32%	8%	9%

Caring responsibilities	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	13%	86%	1%

Employment status	Employed or self-employed	Unemployed	Long-term disabled	Retired	Full-time carer	Student
	60%	7%	10%	18%	2%	-

English as a second language	Yes	No
	7%	92%

Lived in foster care 	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
	2%	97%	1%

Declared homeless 	Yes	No	Don’t know / prefer not to say
	2%	97%	1%

10.3 Cognitive testing of the questionnaire

Ipsos researchers conducted cognitive interviews with 10 DWP customers over the phone or Microsoft Teams in February 2023. Participants who took part were either PIP or UC customers and they were invited to take part through an email invitation. The sample for the cognitive testing was randomly selected from the full sample file provided by DWP.

The purpose of the cognitive interviews was to test how the questions worked and were understood. It used qualitative methods to try and identify any hidden issues around:

- comprehension (how participants understand questions)
- recall (how participants retrieve the necessary information to answer)
- judgement (how participants decide what answer is the correct one), and
- response (how participants decide which answer to give – which may take into account issues related to social desirability and perceived sensitivity)

. The interviewing outlined a few issues with the initial draft questionnaire which were addressed before launching full quantitative fieldwork. These included:

- reducing the number of long ‘read out’ questions to ‘prompt to code’ where possible, as for many simple questions (for example A3, A5a) participants felt able to answer without being presented with possible answer options

- removing any duplication of answer options or simplifying closely related answer options into one more succinct option, particularly within the barriers section of the questionnaire
- providing reassurance that a description of an online portal was necessary and in its final format, was understood by the target audience
- reducing the overall length of the survey by removing any questions that were misunderstood or were not focused on main research objectives

10.4. Weighting

The weighting structure used for this research is explained below.

weight0 is the weight used for analyses of the survey data, used in the main body of the report, and is based on a customer's most recent benefit claim. To select the sample, each benefit recipient was assigned to the benefit sampling strata based on their most recent claimed benefit. This therefore means that the definition of the study population is based on the last claimed benefit. The survey weight was a calibration weight which forced the weighted sample to look like its population for each benefit. The PIP sample was weighted to age and gender category, year of claim, region, Daily Living Award, Mobility Award, current award length and additional support requirements. Other benefits were weighted to: age group; gender; original year of claim; and region.

An additional weight was incorporated to weight0 to give equal weight to each benefit line, so that comparisons could be drawn and the overall sample was not skewed by the additional PIP customers, which were boosted to 3,000 overall responses in comparison to 550 for every other benefit line.

Weighted and unweighted sample profiles for DWP customers for their most recently claimed benefit can be found in the table below.

PIP

	Population figures (%)	Sample - unweighted (%)	Sample - weighted (%)
Gender & Age			
Male 16-24	13.8	16.8	13.8
Male 25-34	12.7	8.3	12.7
Male 35-44	13.9	6.4	13.9
Male 45-54	18.5	17.6	18.5
Male 55-60	16.0	13.4	16.0
Male 61-65	14.9	23.1	14.0
Male 66-74	10.2	14.4	10.2

Female 16-24	7.5	8.8	7.5
Female 25-34	10.5	6.0	10.5
Female 35-44	14.1	7.6	14.1
Female 45-54	20.5	19.5	20.5
Female 55-60	17.9	14.8	17.9
Female 61-65	15.8	23.7	15.8
Female 66-74	13.6	19.5	13.6
Year of claim			
2014	4.7	4.2	4.7
2015	6.2	7.0	6.2
2016	12.9	14.4	12.9
2017	11.1	11.6	11.1
2018	11.1	12.0	11.1
2019	14.4	14.7	14.4
2020	10.4	8.8	10.4
2021	14.1	13.1	14.1
2022	15.2	14.2	15.2
Region			
East Midlands	8.7	9.2	8.7
East of England	8.6	8.9	8.6
London	11.3	10.7	11.3
North East	6.5	6.4	6.5
North West	15.8	14.2	15.8
South East	11.2	12.3	11.2
South West	8.7	9.8	8.7
Wales	7.7	7.5	7.7
West Midlands	11.0	11.0	11.0
Yorkshire & H	10.5	9.8	10.5
Daily Living Award			
Enhanced	50.8	48.0	50.8
Standard	44.9	47.8	44.9

Nil	4.3	4.2	4.3
Mobility Award			
Enhanced	49.9	51.8	50.5
Standard	28.3	28.4	27.9
Nil	21.8	19.8	21.6
Award length			
Short term (0<2 years)	8.4	6.6	8.4
Longer term (2-10 years)	36.3	34.7	36.3
Ongoing (>10 years / no review date)	35.8	40.3	35.8
Expired (review date now passed)	19.5	18.4	19.5
Additional support			
Confirmed	21.9	16.1	21.9
Not confirmed	25.7	25.8	25.7
Not recorded	52.3	58.1	52.3

ESA

	Population figures (%)	**Sample - unweighted (%)**	**Sample - weighted (%)**
Gender			
Male	49.5	45.0	49.5
Female	50.5	55.0	50.5
Age			
16-24	1.7	0.0	1.7
25-34	11.5	10.5	11.5
35-44	16.4	10.3	16.4
45-54	26.4	26.1	26.4
55-60	23.4	26.5	23.4

61-65	20.5	26.5	20.5
Year of claim			
2012-13	21.4	20.7	21.4
2014-15	15.7	17.1	15.7
2016-17	20.5	17.6	20.5
2018-19	17.0	20.0	17.0
2020-21	14.1	13.6	14.1
2022-23	11.2	11.1	11.2
Region			
East Midlands	8.0	8.7	8.0
East of England	8.5	8.7	8.5
London	14.3	12.2	14.3
North East	5.2	5.1	5.2
North West	15.8	11.8	15.8
South East	12.2	13.8	12.2
South West	8.3	9.4	8.3
Wales	7.6	7.8	7.6
West Midlands	9.8	11.4	9.8
Yorkshire & H	10.2	11.1	10.2

DLAc

	Population figures (%)	Sample - unweighted (%)	Sample - weighted (%)
Gender			
Male	68.8	31.5	68.8
Female	31.2	68.5	31.2
Age			
0-15	100.0	100.0	100.0
Year of claim			
2012-13	10.8	10.8	10.8
2014-15	9.7	9.8	9.7
2016-17	14.0	15.6	14.0

2018-19	20.9	20.8	20.9
2020-21	27.9	24.2	27.9
2022-23	16.7	18.8	16.7
Region			
East Midlands	8.3	9.6	8.3
East of England	10.4	11.0	10.4
London	12.5	14.6	12.5
North East	5.5	4.5	5.5
North West	14.0	10.7	14.0
South East	15.4	17.9	15.4
South West	8.8	10.5	8.8
Wales	5.1	3.6	5.1
West Midlands	10.4	9.2	10.4
Yorkshire & H	9.4	8.3	9.4

UC

	Population figures (%)	**Sample - unweighted (%)**	**Sample - weighted (%)**
Gender			
Male	41.5	35.3	41.5
Female	58.5	64.7	58.5
Age			
16-24	13.8	11.8	13.8
25-34	28.9	24.8	28.9
35-44	26.5	24.1	26.5
45-54	17.2	18.3	17.2
55-60	8.0	13.0	8.0
61-65	5.2	8.1	5.2
Year of claim			
2018-19	26.9	29.8	26.9
2020-21	41.1	32.9	41.1
2022-23	32.1	37.3	32.1

Region			
East Midlands	7.5	7.1	7.5
East of England	8.9	10.3	8.9
London	18.1	17.9	18.1
North East	5.3	4.7	5.3
North West	14.1	11.0	14.1
South East	12.1	15.0	12.1
South West	7.8	7.6	7.8
Wales	5.3	5.6	5.3
West Midlands	11.1	10.5	11.1
Yorkshire & H	9.8	10.3	9.8

JSA

	Population figures (%)	**Sample - unweighted (%)**	**Sample - weighted (%)**
Gender			
Male	55.3	61.6	55.3
Female	44.7	38.4	44.7
Age			
16-24	3.7	0.0	3.7
25-34	19.2	13.3	19.2
35-44	21.2	13.1	21.2
45-54	24.3	27.6	24.3
55-60	18.3	25.8	18.3
61-65	13.3	20.2	13.3
Year of claim			
2022-23	100.0	100.0	100.0
Region			
East Midlands	8.3	8.9	8.3
East of England	9.5	8.2	9.5
London	14.3	15.1	14.3
North East	4.0	5.3	4.0

North West	11.6	10.9	11.6
Scotland	8.7	8.2	8.7
South East	13.4	14.4	13.4
South West	6.9	8.2	6.9
Wales	4.8	4.5	4.8
West Midlands	9.7	8.0	9.7
Yorkshire & H	8.8	8.4	8.8

CA

	Population figures (%)	**Sample - unweighted (%)**	**Sample - weighted (%)**
Gender			
Male	27.6	29.6	27.6
Female	72.4	70.4	72.4
Age			
16-24	4.1	0.0	4.1
25-34	16.3	9.8	16.3
35-44	25.4	21.1	25.4
45-54	23.4	24.5	23.4
55-60	16.0	22.0	16.0
61-65	13.8	22.5	13.8
66-74	0.7	0.0	0.7
Year of claim			
2012-13	19.3	23.5	19.3
2014-15	8.6	8.7	8.6
2016-17	11.9	13.5	11.9
2018-19	16.1	18.0	16.1
2020-21	25.5	19.3	25.5
2022-23	18.6	17.1	18.6
Region			
East Midlands	8.4	9.8	8.4
East of England	8.7	10.5	8.7

London	12.8	11.1	12.8
North East	6.8	7.3	6.8
North West	14.8	11.1	14.8
South East	11.4	11.5	11.4
South West	7.3	11.3	7.3
Wales	6.7	5.6	6.7
West Midlands	11.9	11.5	11.9
Yorkshire & H	11.2	10.4	11.2

AA

	Population figures (%)	**Sample - unweighted (%)**	**Sample - weighted (%)**
Gender			
Male	37.6	37.8	37.6
Female	62.4	62.2	62.4
Age			
66-74	15.6	20.9	15.6
75+	84.4	79.1	84.4
Year of claim			
2012-13	17.2	11.2	17.2
2014-15	8.3	7.0	8.3
2016-17	12.1	10.1	12.1
2018-19	18.7	18.9	18.7
2020-21	25.1	27.2	25.1
2022-23	18.6	25.7	18.6
Region			
East Midlands	8.6	9.5	8.6
East of England	10.8	11.0	10.8
London	9.4	8.3	9.4
North East	5.5	5.4	5.5
North West	13.5	10.6	13.5
South East	14.7	16.7	14.7

South West	10.5	12.1	10.5
Wales	7.2	6.8	7.2
West Midlands	10.6	10.8	10.6
Yorkshire & H	9.3	8.8	9.3

SP

	Population figures (%)	Sample - unweighted (%)	Sample - weighted (%)
Gender			
Male	48.6	51.3	48.6
Female	51.4	48.7	51.4
Age			
66-74	48.1	58.3	48.1
75+	51.9	41.7	51.9
Year of claim			
<2006	27.6	20.4	27.6
2006-07	9.0	6.9	9.0
2009-09	9.9	8.5	9.9
2010-11	8.7	11.6	8.7
2012-13	9.4	10.3	9.4
2014-15	8.8	9.7	8.8
2016-17	8.7	9.7	8.7
2018-19	7.3	8.3	7.3
2020-21	7.7	10.1	7.7
2022-23	2.9	4.5	2.9
Region			
East Midlands	7.9	8.8	7.9
East of England	10.6	11.4	10.6
London	8.2	5.6	8.2
North East	4.2	4.2	4.2
North West	11.1	9.2	11.1
Scotland	8.6	9.4	8.6

South East	15.5	22.4	15.5
South West	10.9	11.6	10.9
Wales	5.2	4.5	5.2
West Midlands	9.1	7.2	9.1
Yorkshire & H	8.5	5.8	8.5

PC

	Population figures (%)	**Sample - unweighted (%)**	**Sample - weighted (%)**
Gender			
Male	25.1	26.3	25.1
Female	74.9	73.7	74.9
Age			
66-74	29.2	41.4	29.2
75+	70.8	58.6	70.8
Year of claim			
<2006	25.2	15.4	25.2
2006-07	5.8	5.8	5.8
2009-09	6.0	4.9	6.0
2010-11	6.1	4.0	6.1
2012-13	5.8	6.2	5.8
2014-15	6.4	4.5	6.4
2016-17	7.7	8.5	7.7
2018-19	10.3	13.1	10.3
2020-21	15.3	20.5	15.3
2022-23	11.4	17.1	11.4
Region			
East Midlands	7.3	7.8	7.3
East of England	8.5	11.1	8.5
London	13.0	10.3	13.0
North East	5.3	6.2	5.3
North West	12.5	12.3	12.5

Scotland	8.7	8.0	8.7
South East	11.7	10.9	11.7
South West	8.8	11.1	8.8
Wales	5.8	5.6	5.8
West Midlands	9.6	8.9	9.6
Yorkshire & H	8.7	7.8	8.7

BSP

	Population figures (%)	**Sample - unweighted (%)**	**Sample - weighted (%)**
Gender			
Male	45.0	27.8	45.0
Female	55.0	72.2	55.0
Age			
25-34	1.5	0.0	1.5
35-44	7.9	6.4	7.9
45-54	22.2	18.0	22.2
55-60	29.7	27.6	29.7
61-65	38.6	48.0	38.6
Year of claim			
2020-21	20.3	16.0	20.3
2022-23	79.7	84.0	79.7
Region			
East Midlands	9.4	9.4	9.4
East of England	10.4	13.2	10.4
London	8.9	6.0	8.9
North East	5.1	5.5	5.1
North West	14.0	11.6	14.0
South East	14.8	16.9	14.8
South West	10.3	10.0	10.3
Wales	6.0	7.3	6.0
West Midlands	10.7	9.8	10.7

Yorkshire & H	10.3	10.3	10.3