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Help Accessing Legal Support Grant (HALS)

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Disclaimer

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

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1. Executive summary



In July 2022, the Access to Justice Foundation (ATJF) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) launched the Help Accessing Legal Support Grant (HALS), a nine-month grant programme that funded a range of early intervention services for individuals experiencing legal or rights-based problems.

Enhancing the legal support available to citizens through Legal Support grants is one element of the wider MoJ Legal Support Programme, which seeks to support the legal support sector to assist people with legal or rights-based problems, to resolve problems sooner and reduce negative impacts on individuals and demand on public services.

The HALS grant funded 55 organisations across England and Wales that deliver advice and support to people at different stages of their problem, within several areas of civil and family law. These are everyday issues (e.g. housing, debt, family etc) that can quickly escalate, derail people's lives with harmful consequences, and result in unnecessary court or tribunal proceedings. Early advice helps to reduce the impact on individuals and pressure on the justice system, and in cases where court or tribunal proceedings are necessary, can help individuals navigate the process effectively.

HALS aimed to enhance and sustain access to early legal advice, uphold partnerships and networks, customise legal services to user needs, and contribute to establishing a more robust evidence base in the legal advice and support sector.

To monitor the use of funds and assess whether the grant had met its objectives, each grantee collected and reported a range of quantitative and qualitative data regarding the advice and support they provided, the clients reached, and any barriers or enabling factors when delivering the grant services. This report presents the data collected by grantees during the funded period, from 1 October 2022 to 31 June 2023.

1.1 Key findings

Most HALS grantees (43 organisations) received between £25,001 and £75,000. Fewer grantees received less than £25,000 (five organisations) or more than £75,001 (seven organisations).

Organisations used the HALS funding to support 100,000 clients with 140,000 issues between 1 October 2022 and 31 June 2023. Most of the advice and support provided by HALS grantees was on welfare benefits (25%), family (22%) and housing (16%) issues. HALS grantees predominantly used the funding to provide initial generalist advice (59%), followed by casework (28%), with smaller amounts of pre-court advice and guidance (11%), and legal advice and representation at court (2%).

Some care should be taken when interpreting the data, as comparing the data from grantees shows significant variation in the number of clients and issues supported, which may in part be due to differing interpretations and ways of collecting the reporting data. Some organisations may have underreported the number of clients and issues supported (e.g. if their case management system did not enable them to provide all the data required) and other organisations may have over-reported (e.g. if they pooled funds and so could not isolate the number of clients supported by the HALS funding). Isolating and attributing advice provided to certain funding is an ongoing challenge for legal support grants.

Case studies suggest that the HALS support helped many people to increase their income, stabilise their housing situations and avoid further family conflict, improving the wellbeing of the clients and their families. Often clients did not know where to turn for help and felt relieved having someone to support them through the process of resolving their issue.

Some clients (around 25%) preferred not to disclose their protected characteristics. Removing those that preferred not to disclose this information, most clients were female (58%), between 25 and 54 years of age (66%) and white (64%). Around half (52%) of HALS clients reported having a disability, with 19 per cent experiencing physical mobility limitations, 16 per cent having moderate to severe mental health conditions, and 14 per cent reporting other types of disabilities. These demographics are similar to those reflected in Citizens Advice data and other MoJ Legal Support grants, suggesting that the HALS grant reached a similar cohort of users to other advice services.

The majority of the grant funds (82%) were used for staff costs, including recruitment and training. Eight per cent of funds were used for running costs of grantee services. Expenses related to office premises, IT/communications, and service expansion, each accounted for three per cent of the budget. The remaining two per cent covered 'other expenditure'.

Grantees noted an increase in demand for legal support in recent years, which they attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic, rising costs and increasing economic pressures. They reported adapting to this increase in demand with a blend of face-to-face, telephone, and online services. Many grantees noted that the HALS funding had enabled them to sustain these changes, emphasising the importance of a hybrid approach due to digital exclusion concerns and the unique strengths of face-to-face engagement, particularly when providing casework and support related to court hearings.

HALS grantees reported that the funding helped them to sustain a range of informal and formal partnerships with other advice services and community organisations. Informal partnerships often started spontaneously and involved steering or networking groups to share information. Formal partnerships involved deliberate planning and defined roles, such as partnerships with universities, which contributed to enhancing services.

HALS grantees reported facing many challenges in delivering the grant-funded services, such as staff retention and recruitment due to uncompetitive salaries and lack of job security due to short-term funding. Grantees shared that core funding was deemed essential for service sustainability amid increasing demand and limited resources.

Many grantees expressed positive sentiments regarding the grant mechanism, including the data collection and monitoring process, which they found to be manageable and not overly burdensome, and the proactive grant management from the ATJF. To improve the process, some organisations suggested using more narrative reporting to provide a more nuanced understanding of client experiences and building in an initial data collection implementation phase to familiarise themselves with the reporting requirements.

These findings support the conclusions in other MoJ grant reports, such as the Legal Support for Litigants in Person Grant, that grant funding to the advice sector increases access to legal support and assists people in serious and vulnerable situations struggling with social welfare and family problems.

2. Introduction



Since 2014, the MoJ has partnered with the ATJF to deliver several grant programmes that fund frontline services supporting people with a range of legal or rights-based problems who cannot access legal aid or other representation. These grant programmes include the Covid-19 Specialist Advice Service Scheme (CSASS) and the Sector Sustainability Grant (SSG), which provided financial support to advice organisations during Covid-19, and the more recent Legal Support for Litigants in Person Grant (LSLIP) and Cost-of-Living Support Grant (CoLLS).

The MoJ partnered with the ATJF to deliver the Help Accessing Legal Support Grant (HALS) which launched in July 2022. HALS invested over £4.5 million to support 55 legal support and advice organisations from 1 October 2022 and 31 June 2023, to meet the following objectives:

- 1. Improving and sustaining access to early legal advice:** To provide early legal advice and support to resolve problems at the earliest opportunity, achieve better outcomes for people, avoid unnecessary court proceedings and prepare litigants in person for cases where court proceedings were necessary.
- 2. Sustaining partnerships and networks:** To maintain partnerships and networks to ensure timely access to appropriate legal advice.
- 3. Delivering services based on user needs:** To tailor services to meet the needs of a range of citizens. This included utilising digital and remote advice methods while safeguarding in-person services, particularly for individuals considered to be vulnerable due to their circumstances.
- 4. Building a stronger evidence base:** To contribute to building a stronger evidence base that can inform service delivery and increase understanding of the value of early legal advice, to support evidence-based decision-making in the legal advice and support sector.

3. Funded services



Key points

- HALS grants were awarded to 55 organisations, including 17 Local Citizens Advice, 16 Law Centres and 22 independent organisations, offering diverse legal support services.
- The amount awarded to each HALS grantee varied considerably depending on the bid the organisation made. The smallest grant awarded was £13,000, made to one organisation, and the largest grant was £100,000, awarded to three organisations.

3.1 Grantee application process

The ATJF invited charitable legal support organisations across England and Wales to bid for HALS funding via its website.¹ To be considered for funding, prospective grantees were required to demonstrate how their service would meet the HALS primary objectives:

1. Enhancing and sustaining access to early legal advice and support,
2. Fostering partnerships and networks for timely and appropriate advice,
3. Delivering services based on user needs with a focus on digital and remote efficiency while safeguarding in-person services for the vulnerable, and
4. Contributing to building a robust evidence base to inform service delivery and highlight the value of early legal advice.

Grantees were also required to meet specific organisational criteria, including:

- Actively seeking and implementing improvements based on feedback, demonstrating a commitment to continuous learning and evidence-based impact assessment,
- Fostering strong connections with communities, collaborating with local community-led organisations and sharing knowledge within the sector.
- Possessing organisational infrastructure and capacity to lead partnerships, offer centralised services, and a proven track record in successfully delivering projects.

The initial funding cap was advertised as £75,000, but exceptions were made for organisations capable of efficiently utilising funds to meet programme aims within the specified timeline.

In addition to the objectives above, applications were assessed in consideration of both local needs and existing provision, whilst ensuring value for money.

1 [Our Grants – The Access To Justice Foundation \(atjf.org.uk\)](https://atjf.org.uk)

3.2 Overview of funded services

HALS grants were awarded to 55 organisations that provide a wide range of legal support services. Amongst the grantees were 17 Local Citizens Advice, which offer generalist and specialist legal advice and assistance, 16 Law Centres, which provide specialist legal advice, and 22 independent organisations, which often address specific legal needs, such as labour exploitation and trafficking, asylum and immigration and housing and homelessness.

Most bids for HALS funding aimed to sustain existing services, but a few proposed new services to address user needs, such as recruiting a mobile advisor to assist digitally unconfident clients with online forms in the community. Additionally, some organisations sought to utilise HALS funding to diversify delivery methods, enhancing their ability to support users using phone, email and the use of video link services. Overall, the HALS grant allowed organisations to use the funding flexibly, to address emerging areas of need without concern of missing prescribed targets.

Geographical distribution

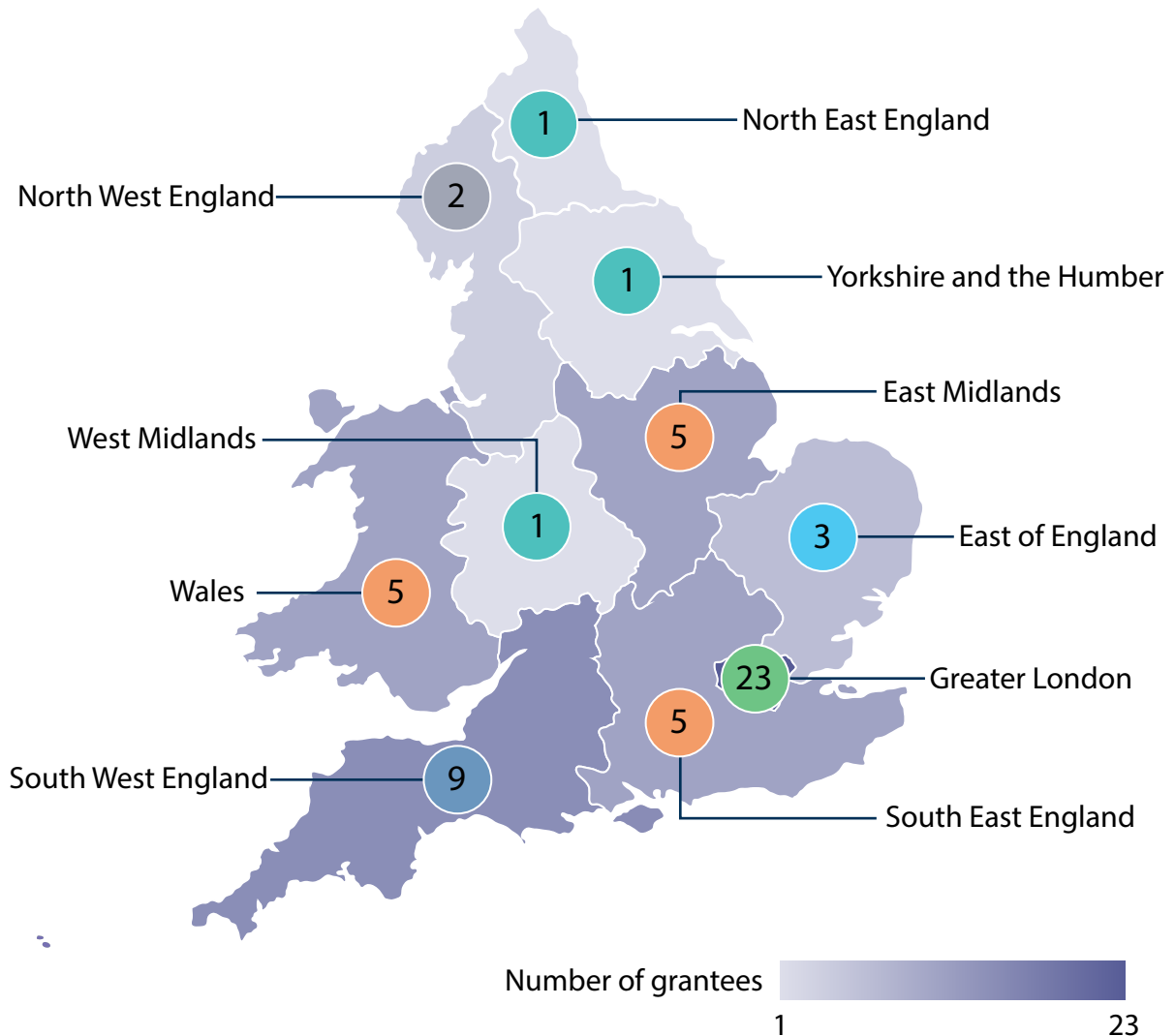
The 55 HALS grantees were located across England and Wales, as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1. The highest number of grantees are based in Greater London (23), followed by the South West (nine), specifically Bristol, Dorset, and Wiltshire.

Geographical spread is a consideration for the ATJF Grants Committee when awarding grants. Low representation from particular regions was likely due to quality or quantity of applications received from these regions. The short-term nature of the programme may have affected which organisations chose to apply.

Table 1: Number of HALS grantees within each region in England and Wales

| Regions in England and Wales | Number of grantees |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| East of England | 3 |
| Greater London | 23 |
| West Midlands | 1 |
| East Midlands | 5 |
| North West of England | 2 |
| North East of England | 1 |
| South East of England | 5 |
| South West of England | 9 |
| Wales | 5 |
| Yorkshire | 1 |

Figure 1: Heatmap illustrating the geographical distribution of HALS grantees across England and Wales



Funding allocation

The amount awarded to each HALS grantee varied depending on the initial bid made by the organisation, including the type of advice and scale of service to be funded. The smallest grant was £13,000, made to one organisation, and the largest grant was £100,000, made to three organisations. On average, HALS grantees received around £55,000. Table 2 provides further detail on the number of grants made within £25,000 increments. For a full breakdown on the funding amount awarded to each of the HALS grantees please see Appendix A.

Table 2: Number of organisations within each funding range

| Funding Range | Number of organisations |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| £0–£25,000 | 5 |
| £25,001–£50,000 | 21 |
| £50,001–£75,000 | 22 |
| £75,001–£100,000 | 7 |

Areas of law advised on

The HALS grant programme invited organisations to bid for funding for legal advice and support services that would enhance their current service offering and meet the needs of their local areas. This was in recognition that each local area would have different needs depending on the local population and the services already available. As a result, HALS grantees provided a range of services across multiple areas of civil and family law. Appendix A provides details on each of the 55 grants awarded, including the areas of law each grantee provided advice and support in.

In keeping with previous MoJ-ATJF grant programmes, the advice provided by the grantees has been categorised into ten areas of civil and family law: housing, family, employment, welfare benefits, debt, discrimination, domestic violence, immigration, community care and public law. For more detail on the scope of each area of law and illustrative examples, please refer to the Legal Support for Litigants in Person Grant: Mid-Grant Review.²

Whilst this categorisation is helpful to gain a broad understanding of the type of problems experienced, some problems are not discrete and intersect with one or several areas of law. For example, an employment problem, such as unfair dismissal, may be due to discrimination. Some people may also have experienced several inter-related legal problems (known as a cluster of issues) across several areas of law. This may have led to some variation in how these problems were categorised and recorded by organisations.

Type of advice and support provided

To capture the volume of advice and support provided to people at various stages of their problem resolution journey, grantees reported their activities in each legal area across four key stages. This approach, adapted from the Advice Service Alliance's stages of legal advice, has been used in previous ATJF-MOJ grant programmes, including LSLIP.³ This approach has provided a more consistent way of capturing client volumes and characteristics across several advice services offering different forms of support.

The earlier stages support clients through triage, generalist advice, casework, signposting and referrals to resolve issues before a court of Tribunal case has been initiated. These referrals can often be to internal specialist advisers within organisations, as well as external organisations. The latter stages support clients with advice and support before court and at court, once a court of Tribunal case has been initiated. Table 3 provides more detail on these four stages of advice and support.

² [Legal Support for Litigants in Person Grant Mid-Grant Review \(LSLIP\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

³ The LSLIP grant, launched in April 2020, was a two-year program funding 11 projects across England and Wales. It aimed to provide early intervention services for litigants in person, offering advice on civil and family law at national, regional, and local levels.

Whilst the advice stages are helpful to gain a broad understanding of the advice and support being provided, there may be instances where advice sessions blend from one stage to another or cover multiple stages. This may have led to some variation in how advice was categorised and recorded by organisations.

Table 3: The four stages of advice and support provided by HALS grantees

| Before engagement with formal justice system | | During engagement with the formal justice system | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Stage 1 | Stage 2 | Stage 3a | Stage 3b |
| Generalist advice and triage | Casework | Pre-court advice, guidance and support | Legal advice and representation at court |
| Engaging people who may have a legal remedy to their problem/s but are unaware of this. Resolving the causes of their financial hardship or civil legal problem at the earliest opportunity through skilled triage to diagnose the problem/s followed by initial generalist advice. | Providing casework to the most vulnerable clients who approach advice agencies about possible action, uncovering all their legal needs to resolve problem clusters before a court case becomes necessary. | Providing advice, guidance and support to enable litigants in person to better represent themselves in court. This includes advising on how to prepare any necessary court documents, comply with court directions and conduct themselves in the court room. | Providing advice, guidance and support to enable litigants in person to better represent themselves in court. This includes advising on how to prepare any necessary court documents, comply with court directions and conduct themselves in the court room. |

4. Evaluation and monitoring approach



Key points

- A streamlined monitoring and evaluation approach was developed for the HALS grant, to ensure a good level of accountability while making sure the requirements were proportionate and pragmatic for the diverse range of services and the duration of the grant.
- The evaluation collected routine monitoring information from grantees that provided insight into the reach of services, demographic characteristics of clients, issues faced by clients, and the nature of support provided. Additional insight into the types of issues faced, support provided, and outcomes achieved for clients was generated from case studies submitted by grantees. Semi-structured interviews with a sample of grantees provided understanding of some of the operational challenges and enabling factors during the grant-funded period, including reflections on the grant funding mechanism.

The HALS grant funded a diverse range of legal support services for less than a year, which meant a proportionate and pragmatic approach to the evaluation was necessary. The evaluation sought to strike a balance between gathering data and evidence to monitor the use of funds and allowing organisations to focus resources on delivering advice and support.

Due to the short duration of the grant, the range of funded services and the variation in approach to service delivery and data collection, an experimental or quasi-experimental approach was deemed unfeasible due to the complexity of these methods. Instead, the grant focused on collecting monitoring information from grantees to gain insight into the reach of services, key demographic characteristics of clients, issues faced by clients, and the nature of support provided. Additional insight into the types of issues faced, support provided, and outcomes achieved for clients was generated from case studies submitted by grantees, to provide tangible examples of how people were helped. Semi-structured interviews with a sample of grantees provided understanding of some of the operational challenges and enabling factors experienced during the grant-funded period, including the grant funding mechanism. This approach was informed by experience from previous MoJ-ATJF grant programmes and was developed collaboratively with the ATJF.

Although the evaluation did not utilise an experimental or quasi-experimental research design, the monitoring and evaluation of the grant was still a challenging exercise that involved significant work from MoJ, ATJF and grantees. Considerable work was undertaken at the onset of the grant to develop a consistent reporting framework that could be utilised by 55 legal support and advice organisations that had differing service delivery models, case management systems and data capabilities. Organisations worked hard and invested time to engage with the monitoring requirements, adapt their systems and train their staff to capture additional data in their case management systems where necessary.

Reviewing, combining and analysing the data from the 55 grantees was a significant task due to the complexity of receiving, quality assuring and combining data from a large number of organisations. We are thankful to the organisations and the ATJF for patiently working through any data issues. The findings were then compared to findings from other MoJ Legal Support grant programmes and available advice sector data, to explore whether HALS services were reaching a similar cohort of people to other advice services.

4.1 Reporting mechanisms

Grantees demonstrated a commitment to monitoring and evaluation, collecting quantitative and qualitative measures related to their grant activities. To report this data, three reporting mechanisms were utilised:

1. Quarterly reports on volumes of clients, case studies and testimonials

The MoJ and the ATJF collaboratively developed spreadsheets for grantees to record and submit the monitoring data on a quarterly basis. All 55 HALS grantees provided data on:

- The number of clients supported,
- The number of legal issues supported at each stage,
- The number of legal issues supported in each of the ten areas of law,
- Details regarding protected characteristics (age, sex, ethnicity, and disability).

Other protected characteristics were not reported on due to their heightened sensitivity, lack of relevance to the support provided, and disproportionate effort required to gather this data.

The quarterly quantitative reports were accompanied by narrative case studies and testimonials that provided examples of the clients and problems supported, the advice provided, and outcomes achieved.

2. Semi-structured interviews

A sample of eight grantees were interviewed after the final quarter of data collection in June 2023. The interviewees consisted of representatives from the HALS grantee sample, including senior leaders, directors, funding officers, CEOs, development managers, and others. These semi-structured interviews were conducted by three research officers in the MoJ Access to Justice Evaluation team, with ATJF members present in the interviews.

The interviews reflected on the grantees project experiences, including project delivery, advice methods, delivery models, client reach, trends, delivery challenges and future work approaches. These interviews also gained insight into how the advice and support provided had improved outcomes for clients, such as any financial gains.

3. Expenditure report

HALS grantees submitted an expenditure report at the conclusion of the funding period, following the programme's extension until June 2023. These reports contained information about how the grant funds were spent, including spending on staff, premises, running costs, IT and communications, expansion of services and other expenditure.

4.2 Rounding convention

The rounding convention outlined in Table 4 has been applied throughout this report to strike a balance between accuracy and readability. The percentages provided are precise and correspond to the unrounded figures.

Table 4: HALS rounding convention

| Figures between | Rounded to the nearest |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 0–1,000 | 10 |
| 1,000–10,000 | 100 |
| 10,000–100,000 | 1,000 |
| 100,000 + | 10,000 |

4.3 Reflections on the evaluation approach

The HALS evaluation approach was informed by previous ATJF-MoJ grant programmes and wider MoJ legal support activities. These experiences provided insight on the types of data and evidence that legal support providers routinely collect and the way that data is captured. The HALS grant was shorter in duration than previous grants and funded a larger number of organisations, which necessitated a more streamlined set of monitoring data, focused on routine monitoring information already collected by organisations. Collecting quantitative data on outcomes was not incorporated into the monitoring requirements as it would have required organisations to set up new processes which would have been disproportionate to the length of the grant funding. Instead, organisations submitted a handful of case studies every quarter, using a template designed by MoJ analysts, which gave insight into the types of problems people were presenting with, the support provided and how the support helped people's situations. These case studies provide examples of socio-economic outcomes achieved for clients, such as income gained, housing situations stabilised, and improved health and wellbeing. If greater time and resource had been available, these could have been enhanced with interviews with clients, to gain greater insight into client experiences and their perceptions of the support.

Despite efforts to adopt a relatively modest approach, the data requirements still posed challenges for grantees, particularly in implementing the stages of advice. Some grantees were already familiar with the stage definitions as they had received previous MoJ-ATJF grant funding (e.g. LSLIP). Others had to implement new ways of working and changes to their case management systems which they had to quickly adapt to in a short timeframe. Whilst most grantees indicated that they were able to apply the advice stages categories to their services, some grantees reported that they experienced challenges.

“One of the key challenges was working out at what stage people are at, it is quite tricky because we had to unpick each case. Our case management system isn't set up to have a field that's easily reportable of those stages.”

For longer grant programmes, grantees would benefit from an initial testing phase to test and trial data collection requirements, such as capturing data on the stages of advice.

Comparing the reporting submissions from different organisations shows significant variation in the number of clients and issues supported, which means care should be taken when interpreting the data, as it may be that some organisations underreported the number of clients and issues supported (e.g. if their case management system did not enable them to provide all the data required) and other organisations overreported (e.g. if they pooled funding and could not isolate the number of clients supported by the HALS funding). There may also be slight differences in how clients and issues were counted, as there are not always distinct boundaries between different problems, stages or advice and/or sessions of advice during ongoing support. Isolating and attributing advice provided to certain funding sources is an ongoing challenge when monitoring and reporting on advice sector funding.

There is a delicate balance between the need for accountability, the benefits of evaluation, and the burden of data collection. It was important to ensure an appropriate balance was struck for HALS given the relatively short timeframe and the number and range of services funded. If greater time and resources had been available, quantitative data on the outcomes achieved for clients would have been gathered, including problem resolution and any socio-economic achievements, and interviews would have been conducted with clients, to capture more detail on how clients experience problems, receiving advice and any outcomes achieved.

“Regarding monitoring, we have found the HALS funding to be relatively light touch compared to some other grants we’ve received in the past. This has been a welcome relief as it means we can focus more on delivering our services to clients.”

5. Advice provided by the HALS grantees



5.1 Volume of clients and problems advised by HALS services

Key points

- Between October 2022 and June 2023, grantees provided advice and support to 100,000 clients on 140,000 legal issues.
- An average of 11,000 clients and 16,000 issues were supported each month across the grant period.

This section explores the number of clients and problems that grantees supported as part of their HALS funded services. A client is defined as an individual person and an issue is defined as a problem in one area of law, such as a problem with a welfare benefits appeal. The issue was only counted if the support provided was funded by the HALS grant.

Grantees made significant efforts to collect and report this data in a consistent manner within their case management systems and data collection processes. However, there may be instances where this categorisation and recording differed slightly between organisations and so care should be taken when interpreting this data.

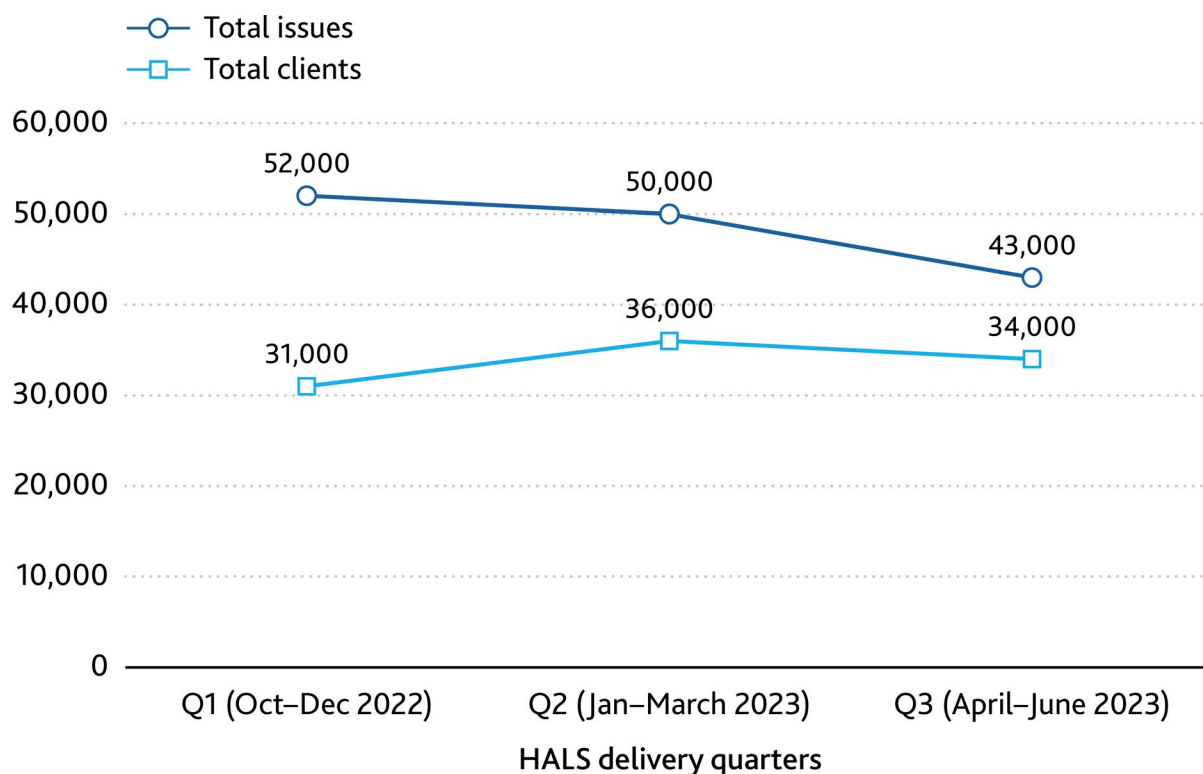
Between October 2022 and June 2023, HALS grantees provided advice and support to 100,000 clients⁴ on 140,000 legal issues.⁵

Figure 2 illustrates the number of clients and issues advised per quarter throughout the HALS grant. On average, 11,000 clients and 16,000 issues were supported each month across the grant period. The total number of issues peaked in the first quarter (1 October – 31 December 2022) at 52,000 and then gradually declined in the second (1 January – 31 March 2023) and third (1 April – 30 June 2023) quarters. The total number of clients advised remained relatively stable across the HALS reporting period, with a slight peak in the second quarter.

4 Some clients may have been individuals returning to the organisation for ongoing support or seeking advice on a new problem.

5 This reflects advice funded by the HALS grant exclusively. These clients may have been advised on other issues as part of the organisation's wider service provision, which will not be captured in this data.

Figure 2: Clients and issues advised by HALS grantees, per delivery quarter



5.2 Types of problems advised by HALS services

Key points

- The largest proportion of advice and support was provided on welfare benefits (25%), followed by family (22%) and housing issues (16%).
- Most advice and support provided by HALS grantees was initial generalist advice and support (59%), however there is some variation between the delivery quarters and different areas of law.

This section explores the types of advice and support provided by HALS grantees, including the number of problems advised in each of the ten areas of civil and family law and the volume of advice and support sessions at each of the four stages of advice.

In addition to the quantitative monitoring data, organisations submitted quarterly case studies about their HALS funded services. These case studies provide further insight into the types of problems people presented with, details about advice provided, and examples of how the advice and support contributed to improved situations for clients, including increased income, stabilisation of housing and improved wellbeing.

Nearly two thirds (62%) of the advice and support provided by the HALS grantees was on welfare benefits, family and housing issues.

The HALS grant allowed organisations to bid for funding for advice and support services that would enhance their current service delivery and meet the needs of their local areas, which means that the grant funded a variety of advice. The grant did not set specific targets for advice, so organisations could use the funding flexibly and respond to emerging areas of need.

Across the reporting period, the largest proportion of advice and support was provided on welfare benefits (25%), followed by family (22%), housing (16%) and other (11%) issues. This list is not exhaustive, but 'other' issues can include problems with civil litigation, education, destitution, consumer issues, small claims, medical negligence, probate, and access to direct financial support.

The proportion of advice provided on each area of law remained relatively stable throughout the grant period, aside from a reduction in debt advice in quarter two and quarter three (partly due to variation in debt advice provided by one organisation), and an increase in advice on family issues in quarter two (partly due to a large increase in family support by one organisation in quarter two, coinciding with the post-festive January period which can lead many to take action on family issues). This is broken down in more detail in Table 5 and Table 6, which show the volume of advice and support provided across all areas of law. It is important to emphasise that this does not reflect legal need or demand for advice more widely, and only reflects the advice funded by the HALS grant.

When compared to the LSLIP grant, HALS provided less advice on employment-related issues (5% compared to 22% in LSLIP) and more advice on welfare benefits issues (25% compared to 14% in LSLIP). This may be in part due to the differences in funded services, and in part due to the differing socio-economic contexts of LSLIP and HALS, with LSLIP delivered largely during the Covid-19 pandemic which had a large impact on employment, and HALS delivered during the rising costs and increasing economic pressures.

Table 5: Volume of issues supported by HALS grantees across different areas of law, per delivery quarter

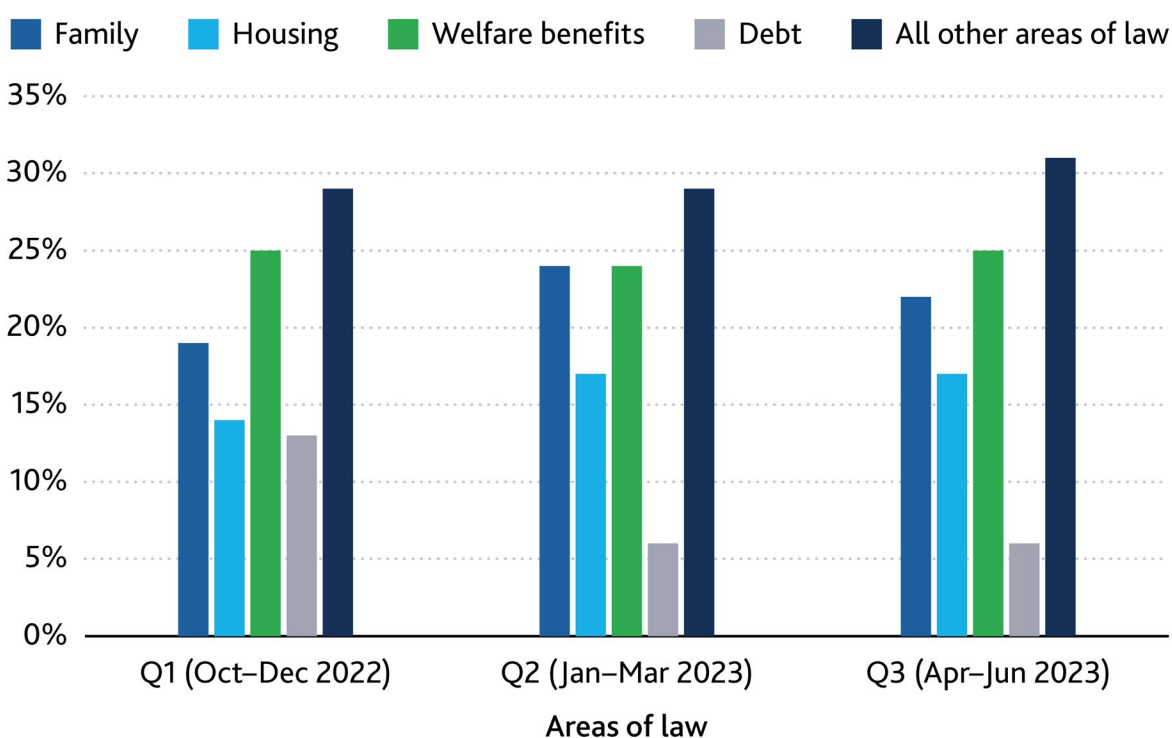
| | Family | Employment | Housing | Welfare benefits | Debt | Discrimination | Domestic violence | Immigration | Community care | Public law | Other |
|-------|--------|------------|---------|------------------|--------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|------------|--------|
| Total | 31,000 | 7,200 | 23,000 | 36,000 | 12,000 | 1,300 | 5,700 | 10,000 | 2,600 | 980 | 15,000 |
| Q1 | 9,700 | 2,400 | 7,000 | 13,000 | 6,700 | 460 | 1,500 | 3,200 | 1,000 | 360 | 6,300 |
| Q2 | 12,000 | 2,500 | 8,300 | 12,000 | 3,000 | 380 | 2,400 | 3,600 | 890 | 280 | 4,500 |
| Q3 | 9,400 | 2,400 | 7,400 | 10,000 | 2,400 | 430 | 1,800 | 2,900 | 760 | 330 | 4,600 |

Table 6: Percentage of issues supported by HALS grantees across different areas of law, per quarter

| | Family | Employment | Housing | Welfare benefits | Debt | Discrimination | Domestic violence | Immigration | Community care | Public law | Other |
|-------|--------|------------|---------|------------------|------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|------------|-------|
| Total | 22% | 5% | 16% | 25% | 9% | 1% | 4% | 7% | 2% | 1% | 11% |
| Q1 | 19% | 5% | 14% | 25% | 13% | 1% | 3% | 6% | 2% | 1% | 12% |
| Q2 | 24% | 5% | 17% | 24% | 6% | 1% | 5% | 7% | 2% | 1% | 9% |
| Q3 | 22% | 6% | 17% | 25% | 6% | 1% | 4% | 6% | 2% | 1% | 10% |




A visual depiction of the advice in each area of law provided throughout the HALS grant is contained in Figure 3. It shows how the overall mix of advice remained relatively steady throughout the grant period.

Figure 3: Distribution of areas of law across HALS quarters






A significant amount of HALS advice was provided on family issues (22% of all advice), ranging from support on child arrangements, advice on Special Guardianship Orders and Children Act Disputes. The case study in Figure 4 demonstrates how the advice provided to a client on child arrangements not only relieved the client’s stress but reduced parental conflict which created a more settled environment for their children.

Figure 4: Case study 1 – Advice given to a client on child arrangements

| Advice given to a client on child arrangements | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Problem</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joe shares three children with his former long-term partner and was struggling to reach an agreement on child arrangements. The conflict was impacting on their ability to communicate and reach an agreement. This was causing Joe and the children much confusion and upset. The client wanted an ongoing role in the children’s lives and that the relationship with the children not be affected by their separation. |
| <p>Action</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joe attended a local outreach session and was referred to the funded service. Advice was given as to Parental Responsibility, legal status, rights, roles and responsibilities in respect of the children and the effects of this. Mediation and its benefits were explored to avoid court intervention and the option of court applications was discussed as a last resort. Support was then provided to Joe to draft a letter setting out the concerns and proposals to the other party. |
| <p>Outcome</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The practical advice and information on improving communications between the parties resolved the clients issues. They have had open, calm and constructive conversations to avoid issues escalating. Agreement has been reached on the child arrangements with improved regular communication about how they can both meet the children’s needs. Joe now feels more confident and less stressed and the children are noticeably happier and settled, allowing them to adjust to the changes post their parents’ separation. |

Many case studies provided on issues related to debt, welfare benefits and housing also mentioned having a positive impact on families, as individuals were less stressed, had increased income and greater housing stability. The case study in Figure 5 demonstrates how socio-economic outcomes achieved for clients can have wider impacts on families.


Figure 5: Case study 2 – Advice given to a client seeking welfare benefits support

| Advice given to a client seeking welfare benefits support | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Problem  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Anna faced multiple disadvantages as she is unable to read or write. Anna was in financial distress and sought help challenging her benefits decision. |
| Action  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">The advisor supported Anna to ask for her benefit decision to be reviewed through the mandatory reconsideration process. As it is likely to take over 12 weeks for a decision to be made, the advisor signposted her to other organisations that could help, such as foodbanks, and helped her to apply to the Local Authority hardship fund. |
| Outcome  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Anna is still waiting for the final decision on her benefits, but her situation has improved.Anna was able to get weekly supplies from partner organisations and was able to feed the family. Anna's landlord was informed of the challenges she is facing and has been understanding, which has reduced Anna's stress. Anna is less stressed, which has had a positive impact on the family.Anna said, "Your service is vital for people like me. The service is a lifeline for the community. Without it, I do not know how I would have managed." |


Several case studies provide examples of how clients received additional income as a result of their problem being resolved, most commonly as a result of increased welfare benefit claims, backdated welfare benefits payments, and grant payments (e.g. Discretionary Assistance Funds). This provided clients with significant relief from financial hardship, and enabled them to clear debt, pay for caring needs and generally improve their standard of living. The case study in Figure 6 contains an example of how HALS funded advice supported a client with a mental health disability with welfare benefits advice to gain nearly £5,000 additional income.

Figure 6: Case study 3 – Advice given to a client experiencing issues with welfare benefits


Support given to a client with Schizophrenia ahead of a Tribunal hearing

Problem 

- The client had a diagnosis of Schizophrenia. She had difficulties maintaining employment and was in recovery phase after a period of psychosis. The client was vulnerable in many ways and consequently was not independent.
- The client needed assistance appealing a PIP decision at Tribunal, as they were only awarded four points in the Daily Living component.
- Their family had already lodged the appeal but did not have an adequate understanding of the PIP regulations and procedure.

Action 

- The client was referred to us by Citizens Advice. They received advice in the run up to the hearing. The decision was then explained to client and her family after the hearing.




Outcome 

- The client was entitled to Daily Living and Mobility components of PIP at the standard rate. The backdate was approximately £4,830 and a five-year recommendation.
- Client’s mother: “I would just like to thank you very much for the help and advice you have given us over the past months. Although making the appeal was quite an ordeal for Carla, she is very thankful for the outcome which will help her to move forward and lead a more independent life. We are very grateful for the service that you provide.”

Several organisations submitted case studies which detailed the impact of housing advice on clients and how it contributed to stabilised housing situations, which relieved significant stress. This often involved managing clients with their rent arrears to prevent eviction, reviewing clients banding on housing registers (to review their position), challenging Section 21 notices, and challenging local authority decisions to end their housing duty. The case study in Figure 7 contains an example of how HALS funded advice helped to prevent a client from becoming homeless and to transition to an assured tenancy.

Figure 7: Case study 4 – Advice given to a client facing a housing possession hearing

Advice given to a client facing a housing possession hearing

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Problem</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Luke', aged 73, had lived alone in his property for six years. He approached Citizens Advice after receiving a Section 21 notice from his landlord, which caused him considerable distress. |
| <p>Action</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upon examining Luke's documents, it was determined that the notice was invalid because it had been issued too long ago to support a possession claim. Despite communicating this to the landlord, they proceeded with a court application. ▪ Citizens Advice Central Dorset assisted Luke in completing the defence form. When a court hearing was scheduled, Luke was referred to Shelter, a housing and homelessness charity, for representation. |
| <p>Outcome</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The outcome was favourable; the possession claim was dismissed, and Luke incurred no costs. Consequently, the landlord was required to serve a new valid notice, granting Luke an additional three to four months in the property. This intervention not only prevented Luke from becoming homeless but also supported Luke in the transition to a Housing Association bungalow through the Council's Prevention duty, securing an assured tenancy for him. |

Notable across all case studies was the recognition that the advice and support helped to improve client health and wellbeing, in part due to the positive outcomes they achieved and in part because they felt listened to, understood and supported. Often clients did not know where to turn for help and felt relieved having someone to support them through the process of resolving their issue.

"The impact that these grants have on people's lives is life changing. People say 'you have changed my life' 'you have massively reduced my stress and improved my wellbeing'."

Most advice and support provided by HALS grantees was initial generalist advice and support (59%), however there is some variation between the delivery quarters and different areas of law.

As well as flexibility over the areas of law, the HALS grant allowed organisations to provide the type of advice and support their local areas required. As previously outlined, to capture the different forms of advice and support in a consistent way, grantees reported on advice sessions at four stages.

The majority of advice and support (59%) was at the initial generalist advice stage (stage 1), but there were considerable volumes of advice and support provided at the casework (stage 2) and pre-court advice and guidance (stage 3a) stages (28% and 11%), as illustrated in Table 7. This suggests that the grant met its objective of enhancing and sustaining access to early legal advice and support.

Table 7: Support provided by HALS grantees at each stage

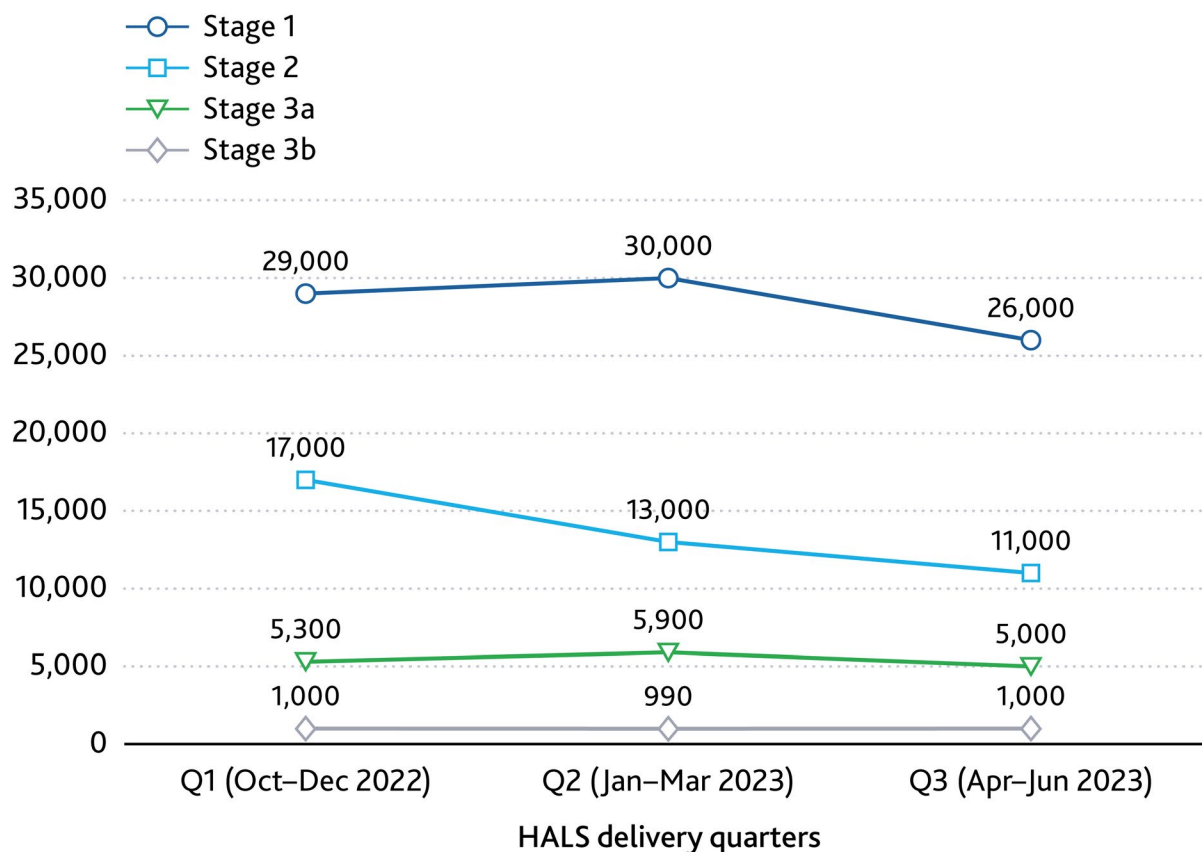
| Stage | Support provided | Total volume of issues advised | Proportion of all issues |
|----------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Stage 1 | Initial generalist advice triage | 85,000 | 59% |
| Stage 2 | Casework | 40,000 | 28% |
| Stage 3a | Pre-court advice, guidance, and support | 16,000 | 11% |
| Stage 3b | Legal advice and representation at court | 3,000 | 2% |

Some grantees noted in the interviews that they aimed to enhance the accessibility and reach of their service amongst people in the early stages of legal issues, providing advice and escalating support when necessary.

“The two main goals were to make the advice easily accessible, but also to provide expert advice that goes beyond what other local organisations could provide, so we took steps to make it as easy as possible for potential clients to contact us and seek advice at the earliest stage as possible.”

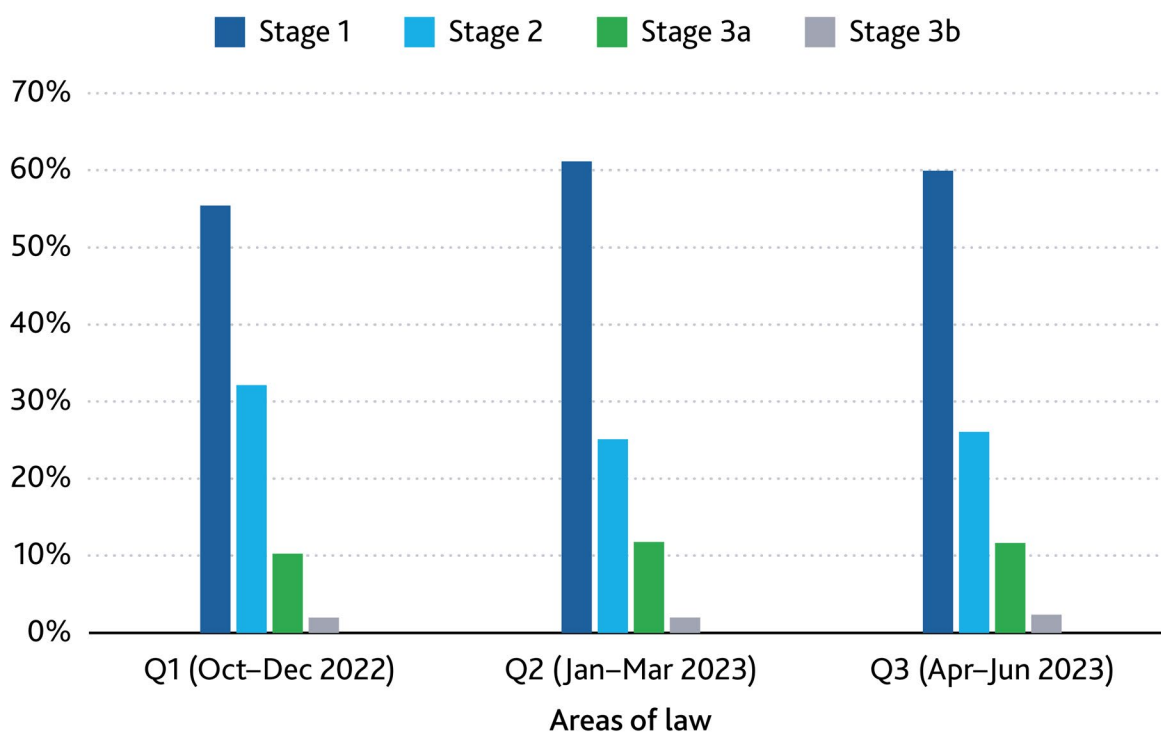
Figure 8 depicts the number of issues advised at each stage throughout the reporting period. Initial generalist advice (stage 1) was consistently high, peaking at 30,000 clients in quarter two and reaching its lowest at 26,000 clients in quarter three. Casework (stage 2) had its highest point in quarter one with 17,000 clients given advice, followed by a drop in quarter two (13,000 clients) and quarter three (11,000). Pre-court and at-court advice and support (stages 3a and 3b) remained consistent across the grant period. It is common to see the volumes of advice fall during the final quarter of grant programmes, as services end staff contracts towards the end of the grant and/or staff move on to other employment as the end of their contracts near.

Figure 8: Number of issues advised at each stage by HALS grantees, per delivery quarter



The volumes of advice at each stage varied during the reporting period, but the overall mix of advice and support remained steady, as can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Overall mix of advice and support provided by HALS grantees, per delivery quarter



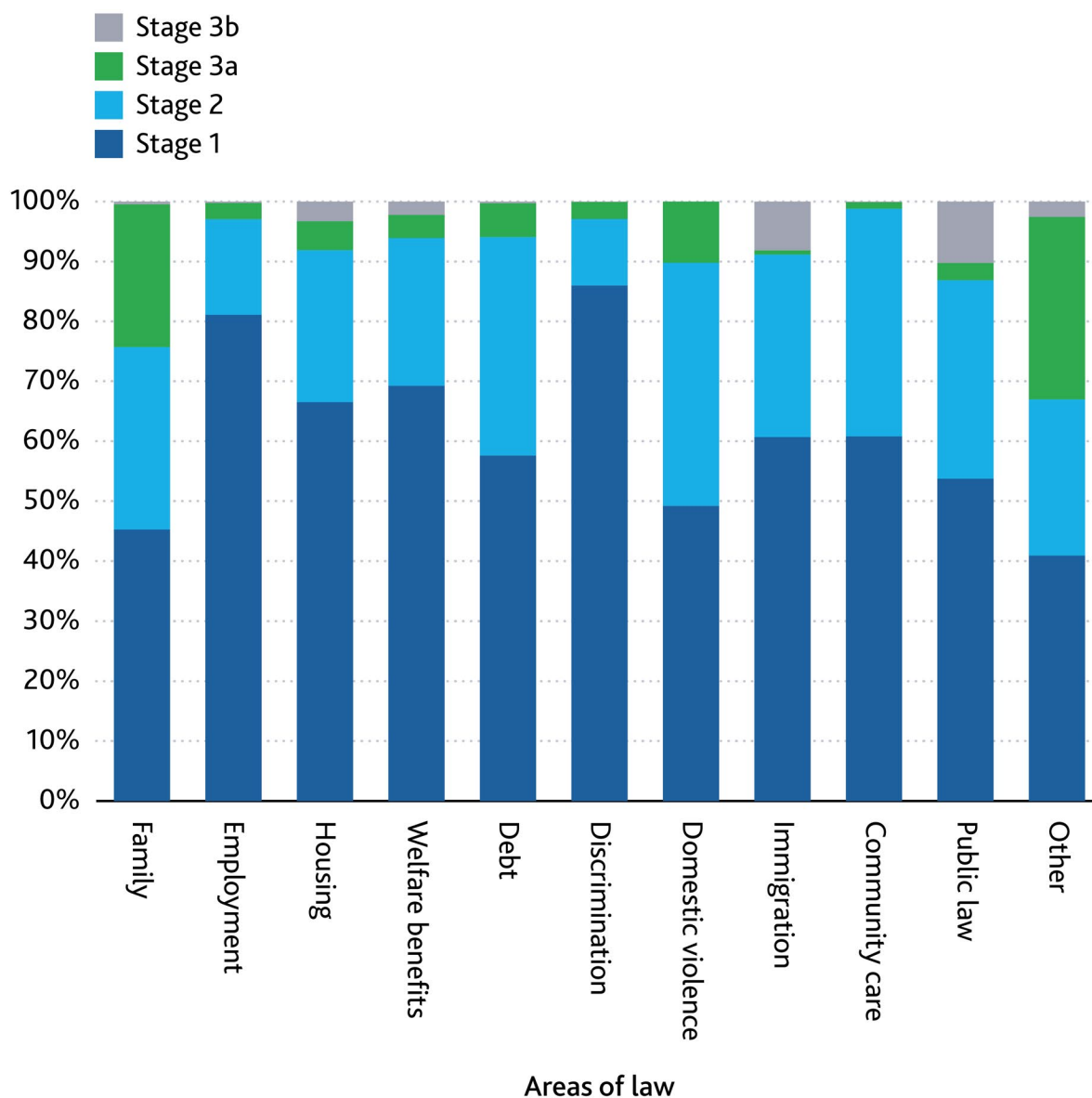
There was some variation in the types of advice and support provided between the areas of law, with a greater proportion of initial early advice and support provided on some issues compared to others. Table 8 provides a breakdown of the volumes of advice and support at each stage, per area of law.

Table 8: Volume of issues advised by HALS grantees at each stage, per area of law

| | Family | Employment | Housing | Welfare benefits | Debt | Discrimination | Domestic violence | Immigration | Community care | Public law | Other |
|----------|--------|------------|---------|------------------|-------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|------------|-------|
| Stage 1 | 14,000 | 5,900 | 15,000 | 25,000 | 7,000 | 1,100 | 2,800 | 5,900 | 1,600 | 520 | 6,300 |
| Stage 2 | 9,400 | 1,200 | 5,800 | 8,800 | 4,500 | 140 | 2,300 | 3,000 | 1,000 | 320 | 4,000 |
| Stage 3a | 7,400 | 200 | 1,100 | 1,400 | 690 | 40 | 580 | 70 | 30 | 30 | 4,700 |
| Stage 3b | 150 | 20 | 750 | 800 | 40 | <10 | - | 800 | <10 | 100 | 400 |

This variation is depicted visually within Figure 10. The variation in types of advice provided partly reflects the services funded by the HALS grant, with some organisations offering greater support at court than others. For example, one HALS funded Law Centre used the funding to provide substantial volumes of housing, welfare benefits and immigration advice at court (accounting for 56% of all stage 3b housing advice, 31% of all stage 3b welfare benefits advice, and 68% of all stage 3b immigration advice), therefore substantially increasing the volumes of advice at this stage in these areas of law. The variation in types of advice provided also partly reflects the different nature of problems, the people experiencing them and the action required to resolve them. For example, individuals with family problems were provided with larger proportions of casework (30% advised at stage 2) and pre-court advice (24% at stage 3a) than other types of issues. The desire for emotional closure on a complex family issue or traumatic experience can often lead many individuals to seek a decision at court and therefore frontline advice agencies may support more people with family issues through court proceedings.⁶

Figure 10: Proportion of issues advised by local and regional grantees at each stage, per area of law




⁶ See: [The role of court fees in affecting users' decisions to bring cases to the civil and family courts \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.service.gov.uk)

Many case studies provided by grantees noted that Stage 3 support provided before court or at court had provided clients with more confidence and empowerment to participate in proceedings actively and appropriately. The case study in Figure 11 contains an example of how HALS funded advice increased the confidence of a client ahead of their Family Court hearing, which improved their experience at court and improved their wellbeing.

Figure 11: Case study 5 – Advice given to a client ahead of a Family Court hearing


Support given to a client ahead of a Family Court hearing

Problem




- Katy has a ten year old son who has lived with her since she separated from his father eight years ago. Sadly, the relationship between Katy and her ex-partner was characterised by domestic abuse including violence, coercive and controlling behaviour and emotional harm.
- Katy has unexpectedly received notification from the Family Court that her ex-partner has applied to reinstate contact. Safeguarding checks have identified ongoing domestic abuse in the father’s subsequent relationships, a string of offences related to the abuse and drug and alcohol misuse and an offence of a sexual nature.
- Katy has needed support in understanding the considerations of the Court and voicing her concerns at a hearing.

Action



- Katy was told about the advice service by a local solicitor and was given information about what to expect at a hearing, advised about the considerations of the Court, the role of CAFCASS and types of assessments/reports that CAFCASS can carry out to consider the individual set of circumstances and what is in the child’s best interests.

Outcome



- Following the advice given, the client reported that she felt confident in understanding the court procedure, identifying safeguarding concerns and highlighting those to the Court during the hearing itself.
- She felt listened to by the Court and that the advice given had equipped and empowered her to more confidently engage in the proceedings to ensure any steps taken were child focused and also considered her child’s wishes and feelings.
- Katy stated “I was so much more confident going into court representing myself this time around, I actually spoke and stated all my concerns, I know it was only one session we had but I can’t thank you enough for all your help and advice in that short period of time! You were simply amazing.”

5.3 Characteristics of HALS clients

Grantees collected data on four protected characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity, and disability) to gain insight into the individuals supported through the HALS grant. This data also supports the MoJ to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

To maintain the trust and rapport between clients and advisors, grantees only gathered data on age, gender, ethnicity and disability where it was volunteered during the advice appointment or where it was deemed appropriate to ask. This means that complete data was not collected for all four characteristics and only a sample is available. Many clients did not disclose this information and therefore this sample may be skewed towards certain groups and may not be representative of all clients. The disclose rate for each characteristic has been included to indicate the proportion of clients this data represents.

To explore if the people supported by HALS funded services have similar characteristics to other people with legal needs, other advice clients and the general population, HALS data has been compared to several other publicly available sources of data. This includes data from Citizens Advice⁷ (Dec 2023), the MoJ Legal Support for Litigants in Person Grant (LSLIP),⁸ the 2021 Census⁹ and the MoJ Legal Problem and Resolution Survey (LPRS).¹⁰ These data tables are in Appendix B.

Age

Key points

- Removing those that preferred not to say, two thirds (66%) of clients were between 25 and 54.
- The age distribution among HALS clients shows similarities with other advice clients, including LSLIP grantees and Citizens Advice clients from December 2023.

Nearly three quarters (73%) of HALS clients disclosed their age or indicated that they preferred not to say. Removing those that preferred not to say, two thirds (66%) of clients were between 25 and 54.

7 [Advice Trends Dec 2023 | Tableau Public](#)

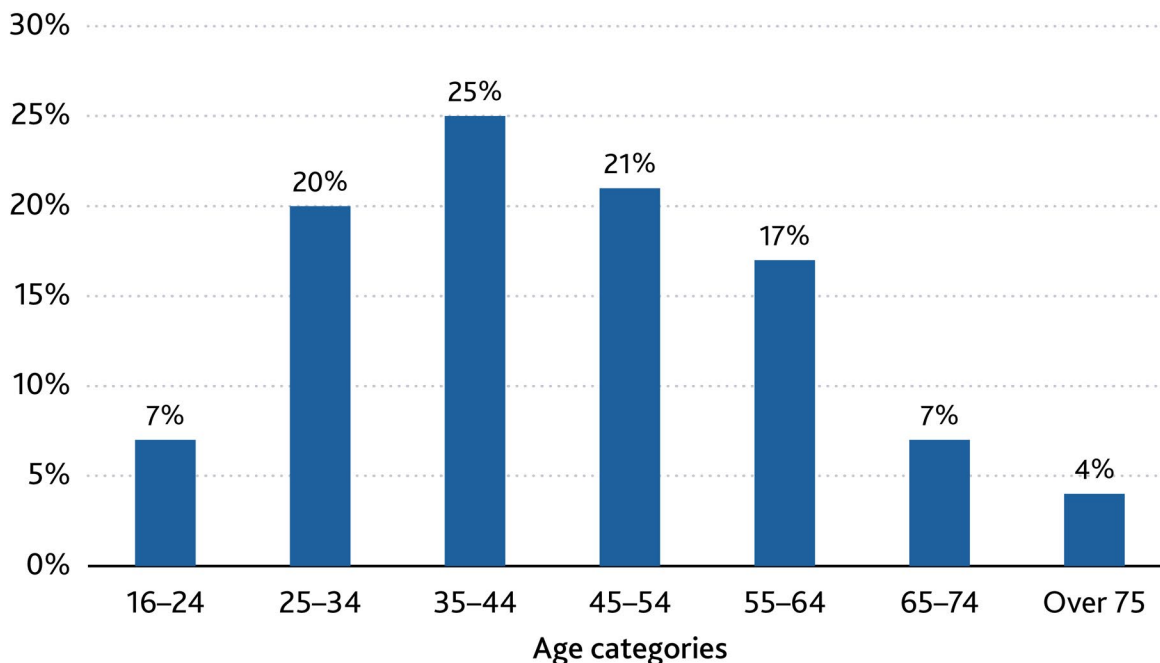
8 [Legal Support for Litigants in Person Grant – Final report – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

9 [Population and household estimates, England and Wales – Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

10 [Summary of findings from the Legal Problem and Resolution Survey, 2014–15 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Figure 12 illustrates that among HALS clients who revealed their age, 25 per cent were between 35 and 44 years old, followed by 21 per cent in the 45-55 age bracket. The lowest proportions were at the ends of the age spectrum, with four per cent of clients over 75 and six per cent of clients aged 16-24.

Figure 12: Age of HALS clients, removing those who prefer not to say

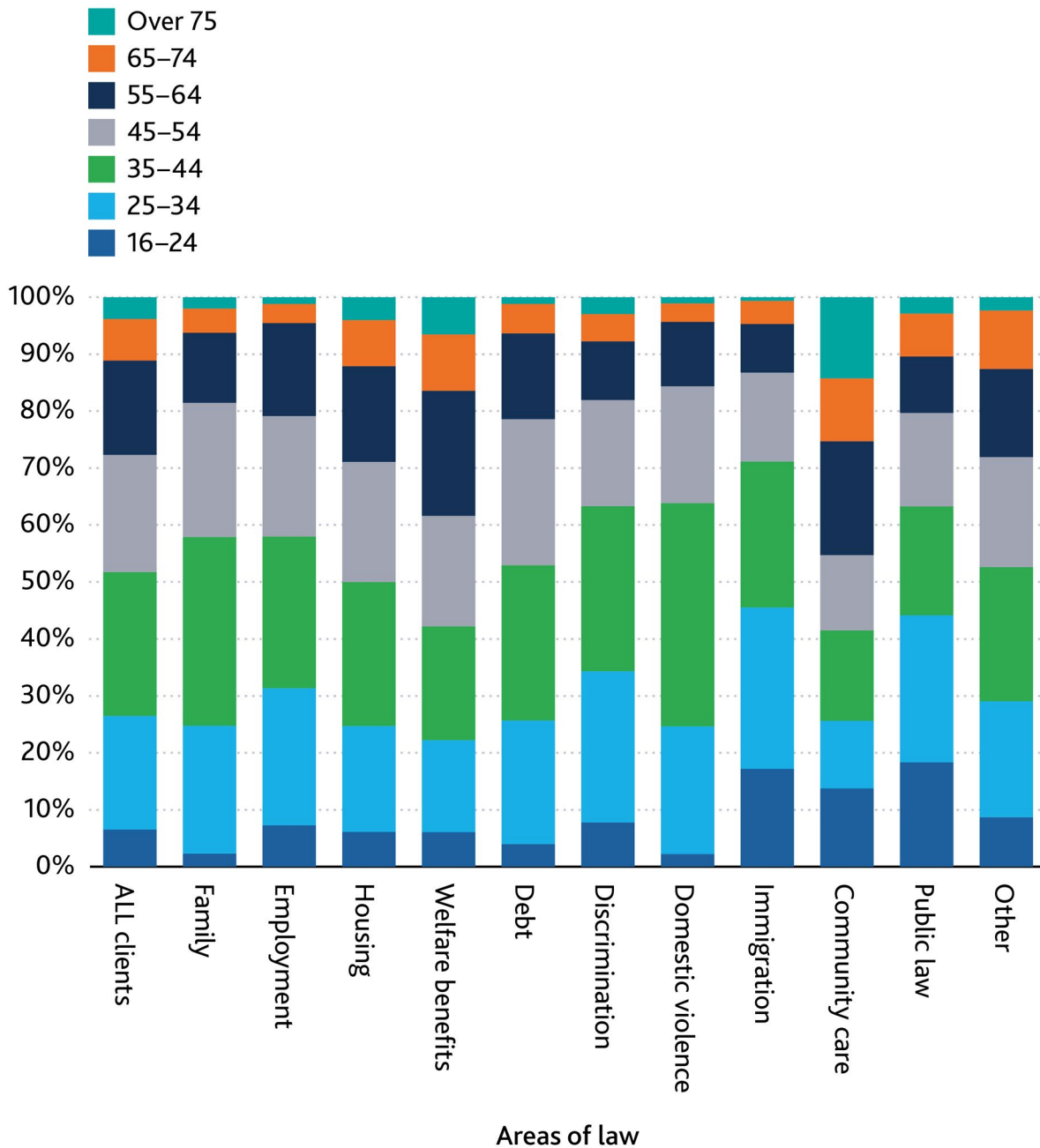


The age distribution among HALS clients shows similarities with LSLIP grantees, Citizens Advice clients from December 2023, and MoJ LPRS (published in 2017). As shown in Table 10, HALS grantees reached similar aged clients as Citizens Advice and LSLIP, suggesting that grantees reached similar aged cohorts of users as other advice services. HALS grantees did not reach large volumes of people over 65, despite the LPRS indicating that 43 per cent of people reporting a problem were over 65. However, as LSLIP and Citizens Advice also had a similar proportion of clients over 65, it may be that seeking help from a not-for-profit advice organisation is not the resolution strategy this older cohort pursues. It is important to note that those that did not disclose their age may have been in this age bracket.

Figure 13 illustrates the age distribution of HALS clients across the areas of law. Community care had larger groups of younger and older clients compared to other areas of law (14% aged 16-64 and 14% over 75). Community care law addresses challenges to decisions by social services or government agencies regarding the provision or funding of services for children, young people, and vulnerable adults, which can include safeguarding of vulnerable adults, care standards regulation, and funding and financial assistance, therefore an older and younger cohort of advice seekers may be expected.

A larger proportion of clients over 75 were also seeking support with welfare benefits issues (7% of clients), which likely relates to support with benefits related to older age such as state pension, pension credit, winter fuel payment, and attendance allowance.

Figure 13: Age of HALS clients with issues in each area of law, removing those who prefer not to say



Sex

Key points

- Removing those that preferred not to say, 58% of clients identified as female, 41% identified as male and less than 1% identified as non-binary.
- Areas of law such as discrimination, domestic abuse, and employment-related matters had the highest reported proportion of female clients, while public law, immigration, and 'other' areas of law had the highest proportion of male clients.

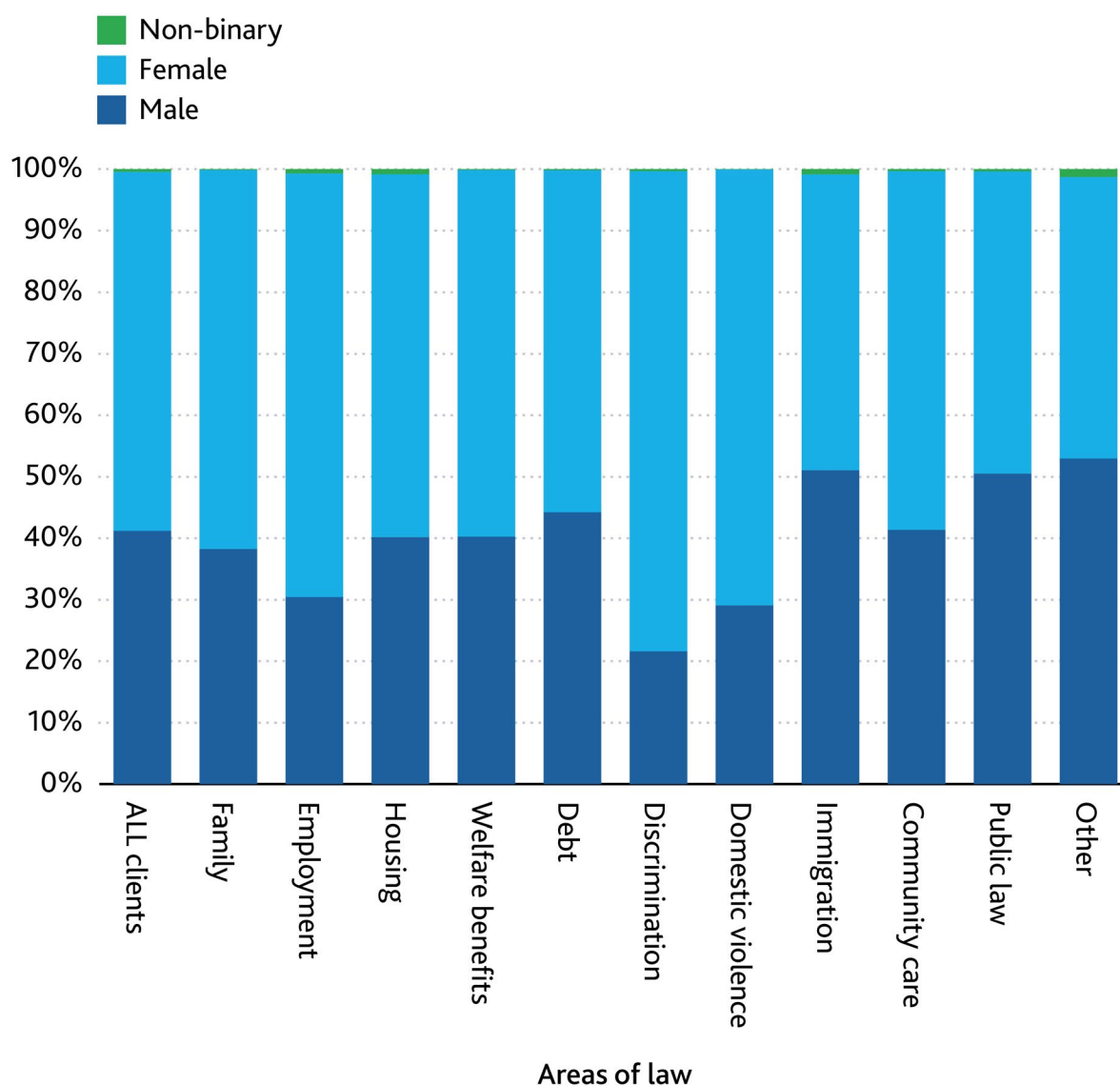
Nearly three quarters (73%) of HALS clients disclosed their sex or indicated that they preferred not to say. Removing those that preferred not to say, 58 per cent of clients identified as female, 41 per cent identified as male and less than one per cent identified as non-binary.

Figure 14 illustrates the sex distribution of HALS clients across ten areas of law. Female clients made up more than half of all clients in most areas of law, with the exception of immigration, public law and 'other' problem types.

Discrimination (78%), domestic abuse (71%) and employment-related matters (69%) had the highest proportion of female clients. Public law (51%), immigration (52%) and other areas of law (53%) had the highest proportion of male clients. Individuals identifying as non-binary comprise one per cent or less across all areas of law.

As shown in Table 11, LSLIP and Citizens Advice data from December 2023 also indicate that the majority of clients were female (59% and 61%), suggesting that women receive more free legal support.

Figure 14: Sex of HALS clients with issues in each area of law, removing those who prefer not to say



Ethnicity

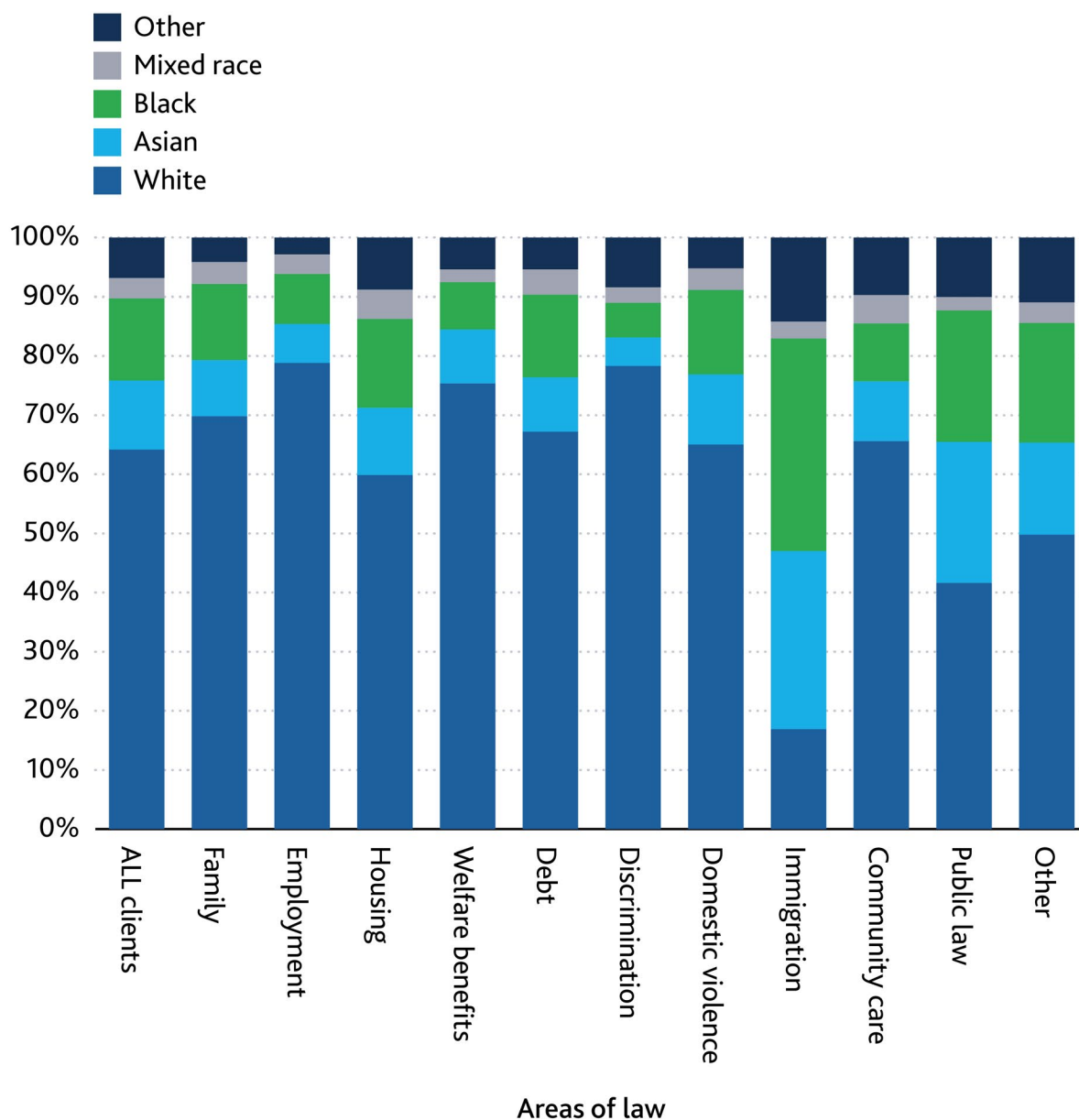
Key points

- Removing those that preferred not to say, the majority of clients identified as white (64%).
- A large number of clients did not disclose their ethnicity, so this data may not be an accurate representation of all clients supported by HALS funded services.

Most HALS clients disclosed their ethnicity or indicated that they preferred not to say (58%). Removing those that preferred not to say, nearly three quarters (64%) of clients identified as white, 14 per cent of clients identified as black, 12 per cent identified as Asian, seven per cent identified as other and three per cent identified as mixed race.

Figure 15 illustrates the ethnicity of HALS clients across the ten areas of law. Those identifying as 'white' constitute the majority of HALS clients overall, forming a particularly large majority of clients seeking legal advice related to employment (79%) and discrimination (78%) issues. The largest diversity is among clients seeking support for immigration-related issues, with the data suggesting that 36 per cent identified as 'black' and 30 per cent identified as 'Asian'.

Figure 15: Ethnicity of HALS clients with issues in each area of law, removing those who prefer not to say



HALS grantees observed a higher proportion of clients from ethnic minority backgrounds seeking assistance compared to previous MoJ-funded grants, the 2021 census data, and Citizens Advice. As indicated in Table 12, HALS grantees documented a higher percentage of black clients than LSLIP and Citizens Advice (14% compared to 2% and 7% respectively). Similarly, HALS recorded a higher percentage of Asian clients than LSLIP, Citizens Advice and the general population (12% compared to 3%, 7% and 9% respectively).

Disability

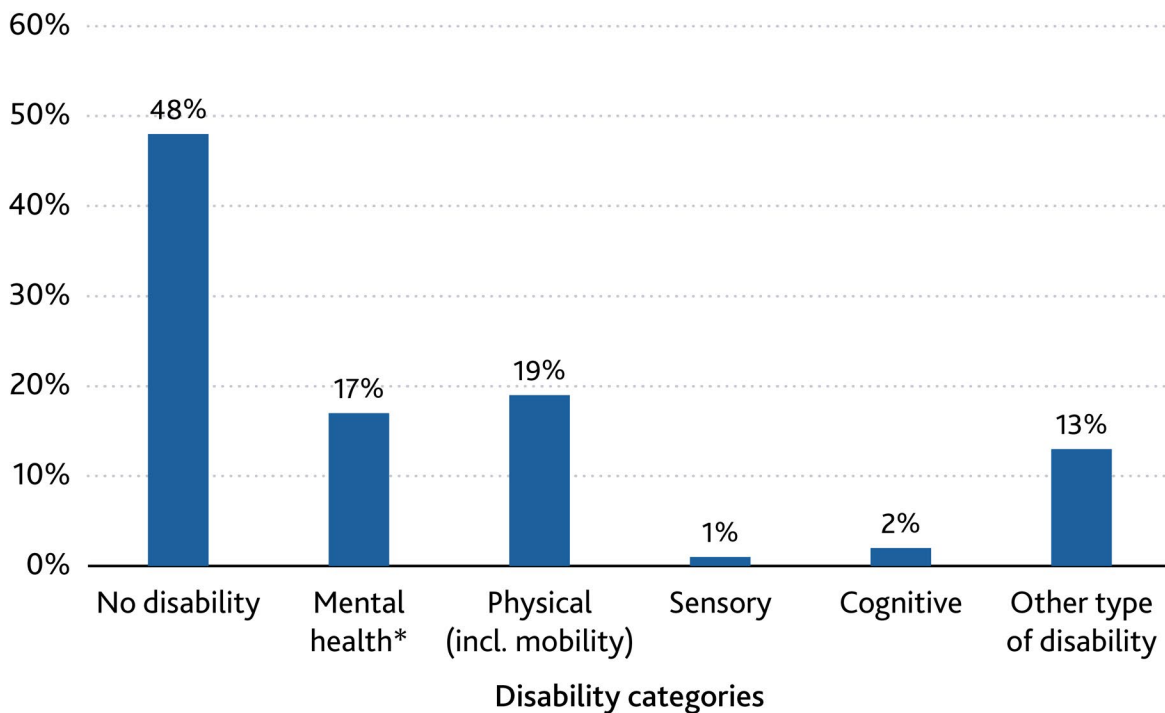
Key points

- It is difficult to accurately gauge the proportion of clients with a disability as some clients may have had more than one disability, which is difficult to identify from the aggregate data. However, the best estimate would suggest that around half (52%) of HALS clients reported having a disability.
- Nearly one fifth (19%) of HALS clients reported experiencing a disability that affected their physical mobility, 16 per cent identified with having moderate, severe, and enduring mental health conditions, and 14 per cent reported other types of disability.

It is difficult to accurately identify the proportion of clients with a disability as grantees submitted aggregate figures, and some clients may have had more than one disability. However, assuming that each record of disability belongs to one client, and removing those that would prefer not to say, suggests that 52 per cent of clients had a physical, sensory, cognitive or mental health disability.

As can be seen in Figure 16, 19 per cent of HALS clients reported experiencing a disability that affected their physical mobility, 16 per cent identified with having moderate, severe, and enduring mental health conditions, and 14 per cent reported other types of disability, such as a health condition linked with substance dependency.

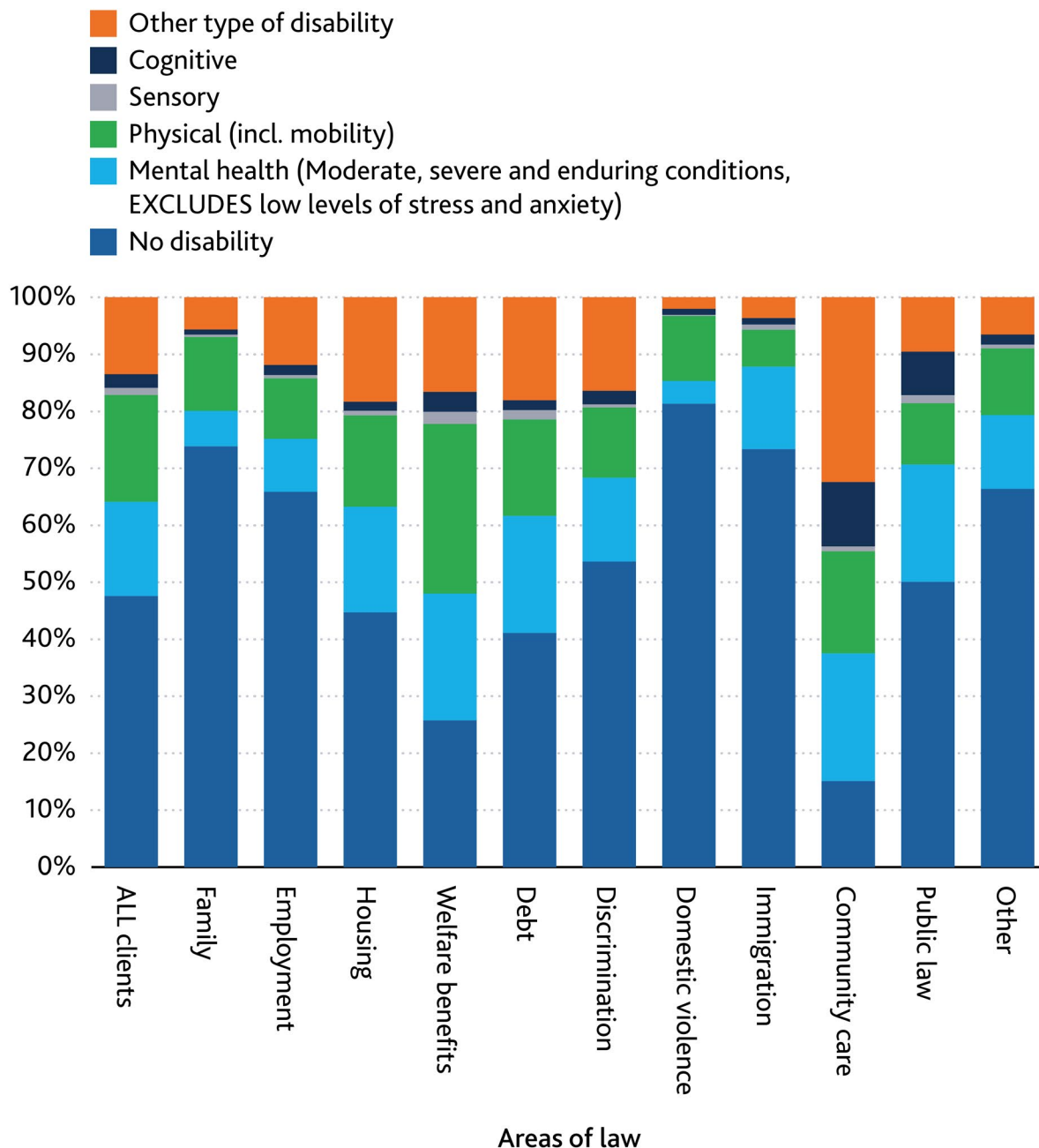
Figure 16: Reported disability characteristics of HALS clients



*Moderate, severe and enduring conditions, EXCLUDES low levels of stress and anxiety

The breakdown of disability among HALS clients in various areas of law is depicted in Figure 17. In most areas of law, the majority of clients reported no disability. Clients seeking support for welfare benefits and community care issues had the highest rates of reported disability, likely due to the nature of these issues.

Figure 17: Prevalence of disability within HALS clients with issues in each area of law



A detailed breakdown of the disability of HALS clients, removing those that preferred not to say, is available in Table 13. HALS grantees reported they assisted more clients with a disability (52%) than LSLIP grantees reported (31%). Citizens Advice report similar levels of disability amongst its clients, reporting that 7 per cent of clients have a disability and 41 per cent have a long-term health condition. There is a large difference between the prevalence of disability amongst advice clients compared to the 2021 census, which found that 24 per cent of the UK population have a disability.

6. Implementation and delivery



Key points

- Since the pandemic, which necessitated a shift towards remote services, many organisations have been providing advice using a blended mix of face-to-face, telephone and online advice, which has helped them to meet the additional demand for their services.
- Staff retention and recruitment challenges were a prominent challenge for organisations. Grantees pinpointed various reasons for the difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, including competitive salaries in other sectors.
- Grantees reported a dual challenge: not only were they contending with a surge in the influx of cases, but they were also facing a complexity in these cases and encountering challenging behaviours that they have not previously experienced.
- Many grantees expressed positive sentiments regarding the grant mechanism, including the data collection and monitoring process, which they found to be manageable and not overly burdensome, and the proactive grant management from the ATJF, which helped services align reporting requirements with their service delivery.

This section explores the perspectives and experiences of eight grantees that participated in the semi-structured interviews towards the end of the HALS grant. The discussions centred around their engagement with the HALS grant application process, the nuances of implementing and establishing HALS-funded services, and the successes and challenges encountered during this grant. Key areas explored include unforeseen challenges, the strategic utilisation of pre-existing partnerships, the use of flexibility in service delivery, and the extent to which they reached their intended client base amidst the broader landscape of growing sector-wide demand. These findings help to understand the delivery landscape of the grant and contextualise the broader findings within the evaluation.

Additionally, significant attention was given to examining the grantees experience of the HALS grant mechanism, including the application process, programme management and the monitoring requirements. This aligns with the MoJ's ongoing learning approach and provides significant learning which the MoJ and the ATJF can reflect on to improve delivery in the future.

6.1 HALS grant programme management

Application process

One grantee shared that while the funding was crucial for sustaining their organisation and aiding in cash flow, the application process seemed overly burdensome for a relatively short funding period. Future grant programmes should consider the resource implications of the application process on organisations of different types and sizes.

“The application process for this particular grant was quite difficult and sometimes agonising, making it resource intensive. While we are grateful for the funding and the efforts put into the application were worth it, the time and resources required were significant drawbacks.”

Not all grantees shared this sentiment. One organisation reported that the HALS application process was straightforward and enabled them to clearly articulate their intended approach for utilising the funding. They highlighted that the application process was easy to use, emphasising the potential impact that a well-structured application process can have on the success of future grants.

“The application process for HALS funding was generally straightforward... While some aspects of family legal advice didn’t fit neatly into the standard categories, the process was intuitive overall. The Access to Justice Foundation has made efforts to ensure the application is user-friendly and not obstructive.”

Programme management

Grantees conveyed that the support provided to them by the ATJF was both helpful and informative, such as dedicated workshops organised during the application phase.

“ATJF are great at supporting applicants with dedicated workshops and information.”

One grantee specifically noted that the ATJF demonstrated considerable flexibility by tailoring resources to better align with the requirements of their organisation. The proactive management of the grant programme contributed to the positive experiences of the grantees.

“I remember right at the beginning the foundation was very flexible in changing the Excel spreadsheet to try and achieve or record what we wanted. I think that was a real plus side as well.”

Data collection and monitoring

During the initial stages of the HALS project, feedback from grantees prompted adjustments to the reporting framework. Specifically, there were suggestions to streamline the reporting requirements to be more proportionate to the funding timeframe. As a result, the framework was streamlined to focus on collecting the number of clients assisted per month. This data was further categorised based on areas of law, stages of client cases, and four protected characteristics being collected.

“I think [ATJF/MOJ] initially received some feedback right at the start that there was quite a lot of reporting compared to the time scale of the project. And then it was reduced, which I also did appreciate.”

Many grantees expressed positive sentiments regarding the HALS data collection and monitoring process, emphasising its “light touch” nature, which they found to be manageable and not overly burdensome. This approach allowed them to channel their efforts towards effective service delivery and client assistance. A noteworthy aspect highlighted by some grantees was the early sharing of the reporting framework at the project’s inception. One grantee underscored the significance of quantification, stating:

“Being able to quantify and incorporate that into the analysis is important; I was pleased that it was a key part of the framework.”

One grantee shared the view that the existing data requirements for HALS were advantageous due to their alignment with their current case management system. Specifically, the grantee noted that the data elements related to gender, ethnicity, disability, and age were already integral components of their routine data collection practices.

Other grantees reported that it could be difficult to isolate and report on HALS clients exclusively, as the grant funded a portion of the service and/or was pooled. This grantee expressed that early guidance on whether to provide demographic breakdowns for all clients or specifying the proportion funded by the grant, would have been beneficial.

“We needed to report on only the proportion of clients that the grant supported. This task can be time-consuming.”

Some grantees reported challenges not only in identifying and reporting sensitive information but also in finding the appropriate timing to broach and confirm certain delicate identities during appointments.

“[When recording disabilities such as mental health issues] we don’t necessarily quantify them, but that doesn’t mean they’re absent. As X mentioned about the client who carried a knife, they had a significant history of self-harm, but the severity might not be fully conveyed even if I indicated ‘yes, one person has mental health issues’. Particularly with recording equalities and client identities, establishing rapport is paramount.”

Another grantee emphasised the importance of patience and multiple conversations in eliciting more personal information.

“When it comes to more personal information, individuals usually require multiple conversations with us to build confidence and trust. It takes time and patience for them to feel comfortable enough to share those aspects of themselves with us.”

Grantees proposed two potential solutions to address these challenges. Firstly, they suggested championing narrative reports, which can provide a more nuanced understanding of clients’ experiences. Another suggested approach was to continue advocating for qualitative reporting methods, such as narrative reporting. Similarly, one client found value in a MOJ template for narrative report writing.

“Early on, we came across a fantastic template in one of the MOJ impact reports from LSLIP that we found useful... We could still demonstrate the positive outcomes we achieved for the clients, even if their situation continued to change.”

6.2 Increased demand and complexity of issues

Grantees attributed the increase in demand for legal support in recent years to the challenging circumstances brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic and the rising costs and increasing economic pressures. One HALS grantee observed that the need has come from particular groups in the population.

“There is huge demand for advice on benefits for new families, low-income families and how they can keep their head above water”.

In addition to increased demand, many grantees also stated that clients are presenting to them with more complex cases, which can be more difficult to resolve.

“The cases we are handling have become more complex as individuals find themselves in multiple areas of crisis simultaneously.

Grantees reported that these complex and entrenched problems, combined with poor mental health issues, were leading them to experience challenging behaviours that they haven’t encountered before.

“We had a client come to the office with a knife saying that if he’d lost his appeal against being evicted from his asylum seeker accommodation. We’re having to face much more challenging behaviour really than we’ve ever done from clients, you know, because of their poor mental health”.

6.3 Hybrid delivery methods

Since the pandemic, which necessitated a shift towards remote services, many organisations have been providing advice using a blended mix of face-to-face, telephone and online advice, which has helped them to meet the additional demand for their services. One grantee highlighted that, with the aid of grants such as HALS, they have expanded their service by around 20 per cent, allowing them to reach and assist more clients.

Grantees noted that the groundwork for remote service delivery was initially laid by previous grants, such as LSLIP, and more recently, CoLLS. HALS has played a crucial role in sustaining and fortifying these changes.

“We have had a hybrid model in place depending on client base. It was nice that HALS allowed the flexibility as it suited what we were already doing”.

During the interviews, grantees emphasised the importance of retaining a hybrid approach, as they highlighted that fully transitioning to digital services could prove detrimental to assisting clients in need of legal support. A grantee emphasised the significant issue of digital exclusion, highlighting that “35 per cent of these individuals are not confident in using the Internet.”

“It [hybrid delivery] is a mixed bag of advantages and challenges. For some clients, phone calls can be more efficient. However, for others, face-to-face meetings are essential to properly address their complex issues.”

Grantees shared proactive measures taken to minimise digital exclusion, demonstrating a conscious effort to balance technological advancements with practical alternatives, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity in legal support services.

“I can see why organisations have spoken about the challenge of digital exclusion. I feel that our engagement with clients isn’t overly demanding digitally. We offer various communication options to minimise digital exclusion, allowing clients to interact through WhatsApp, drop in papers, or opt for straightforward phone appointments. Zoom/Teams aren’t default methods, and there’s always flexibility based on individual client preferences.”

In the case of organisations equipped to help in stage 3a (pre-court) and 3b (at court), the integration of remote working has yielded notable benefits. This shift has allowed for enhanced support to a broader audience, particularly during remote hearings. A grantee acknowledged that the advantage of conducting proceedings remotely lies not only in facilitating wider accessibility but also in providing a level of comfort for individuals who can engage in legal processes from the familiarity of their homes. With the return of face-to-face court hearings, grantees demonstrated flexibility by continuing their support wherever clients required it. This underscores the role HALS funding played in assisting organisations to be agile in their adaptation to changes in the sector.

“Now that hearings have returned to face-to-face, we’ve begun sending our volunteers to the two other courts in Yarmouth and Kings Lynn, where family hearings are held.”

One grantee shared that having the provisions to assist clients over the phone has helped with getting more information and richer data from clients.

“Over the phone, clients tend to share their full backstory, leading to longer sessions, which can be helpful for less complex cases. This allows us to offer more support to more people.”

They also highlighted that remote services have had advantages for their staff members who have gained flexibility in where they can work.

“Remote work has provided flexibility for volunteers, allowing them to contribute from home or come into the office based on their preferences. Overall, remote services have not only improved accessibility for clients but also enhanced the efficiency and flexibility of our operations.”

6.4 Staff retention and recruitment

Staff retention and recruitment challenges were prominent issues mentioned several times in the interviews.

“We have really struggled to recruit housing solicitors, welfare benefits caseworkers, and debt caseworkers”.

At least two out of eight grantees mentioned what they refer to as the ‘great resignation’, which they cite has significantly impacted the advice sector.

“The [great resignation] phenomenon has also affected the advice sector, making it harder to find and keep staff”.

Grantees pinpoint various reasons for the difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, including the allure of competitive salaries in city areas like London. Furthermore, another grantee referenced “the short-term nature of some funding and it’s timing later in the year” as a challenge for long-term planning, staff recruitment, and retention. In response to these challenges, some grantees discussed strategies for managing staff retention and recruitment: one grantee mentioned the effectiveness of upskilling their staff and utilising apprentice schemes. Another grantee cited the HALS funding as a method to mitigate these challenges.

“Despite sporadic funding, grants like HALS have expanded our services and helped retain staff without relying heavily on reserves”.

6.5 Partnerships and networks

In this section, the Citizens Advice Bureau Partnership Guide¹¹ has been utilised to define and categorise the collaborative partnerships that contributed to HALS service delivery. Grantees disclosed that they frequently manage multiple partnerships simultaneously, each with varying levels of involvement. These partnerships were classified into distinctive types: informal and formal collaborations.

Informal collaboration: Steering or networking group

Informal collaborations typically start spontaneously and lack clearly defined governance, relying on mutual trust and understanding. Steering or networking groups, are an example of informal collaboration happen when individuals from different organisations convene regularly to exchange knowledge, share information about best practices, and enhance working relationships. Several grantees mentioned the emergence of spontaneous informal collaborations, with HALS playing a key role in sustaining or expanding these partnerships.

“Although the HALS funding wasn’t a partnership bid, we’ve continued to collaborate with NCLS, sharing best practices and information about family private children matters through monthly meetings”.

11 [Microsoft Word – What type of partnership \(asauk.org.uk\)](https://www.asauk.org.uk)

Similarly, another grantee, acknowledged that the creation of the county-wide voluntary sector advice network in Suffolk was not directly caused by the HALS funding “but facilitated its support to legal triage”. With the involvement in this network, they were able to benefit from a warm referral system established by Suffolk County Council. Some grantees refer to previous funding projects like LSLIP, which helped establish networks they continue to rely on. These networks contribute to delivering services funded by new streams. For instance, a grantee mentioned that while writing their bid “...it was after speaking to our partners, we identified that family and community care were the two areas that we felt were needed”. Furthermore, a grantee who mentioned the establishment of their pro-bono work across North and Mid-Wales would not have been possible “without the HALS and LSLIP project”.

Throughout the interviews, grantees emphasised the significance of maintaining a physical presence in public spaces to connect with potential service users organically. One grantee exemplified this approach by leveraging informal networks with local venues, enabling their mobile caseworker to reach clients who might not seek their services through other channels, such as online platforms.

“The volunteers working in community venues play a crucial role in our efforts. We find that having a strong connection between employees, volunteers, and other venues in the community projects is essential”.

Information and referrals flow in both directions, allowing HALS grantees to track trends, issues, and the capacity of partner organisations. This information enables HALS grantees to adjust their own capacity, offer support, and anticipate emerging trends, acknowledging that events in one organisation affect others within the network.

“We have the strong referral pathways and will know about the capacity of other organisations that may be able to offer support”.

Development and upskilling have been another benefit of informal networking groups, as one grantee noted “We maintain a mutual referral system with [Lighthouse Women’s Aid] and hold regular meetings. They have also provided training for our team”. While some grantees receive training and upskilling, some offer specialised training and for other members of the network, “we have been working with [Camden Disability action] for years, providing fortnightly supervisions to the welfare rights specialist”, highlighting that these informal connections are mutually beneficial to all types of organisations, either new or established.

Referral pathways were frequently mentioned during the interviews. Grantees highlighted the benefits of informal partnerships, such as steering groups, in extending their services to a broader audience and expanding referral avenues for people to access their services.

“We work closely with local community organisations and advice networks, and we get a lot of referrals which is increasing more now. Because we are having those discussion with local organisations it gives us a picture of what the need is out there and whether we are accessible”.

One grantee stated that they also have a referral system online where agencies can refer clients to each other, providing detailed information to ensure a proactive approach. For certain grantees, becoming an established part of the referral pathway poses challenges when the number of clients referred in exceeds the availability of quality services to refer them to. One grantee highlighted the closure of three major legal aid providers in South Wales over the past year, resulting in a situation where despite their efforts to maintain a solid network with legal aid providers, they find themselves facing a shrinking pool of high-quality referral options.

“I do fear whether funds like HALS are not going to be enough to supplement these craters that are now left in the legal aid system where immigration and asylum law are concerned. I know that sounds quite apocalyptic, but it really is the truth.”

Formal collaboration: Co-ordinated activity

Formal collaborations take deliberate planning and partnership establishment, with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes. One of the most common types of collaborative activity were HALS grantees having partnerships with universities. At least two grantees mentioned having partnership programmes with their local universities, which involve onboarding and providing students with experience in law or legal advice. This arrangement not only offers valuable development and learning opportunities for students but also provides grantees with a pool of potential candidates to hire as paid staff upon their graduation. Another form of academic collaboration highlighted in the interviews involved grantees sharing data with academics, who subsequently produce reports pertaining to the legal support sector that could be used to bolster funding bids.

“It’s been a good experience to have that support working with Bangor University because I feel like we’re doing more for the students as they’re still learning by giving them practical experience”.

Two grantees mentioned that their partnerships allow them to extend their services to pro-bono, one grantee said they are “on the pro-bono committee for Wales and advocate chairs that as well”, while the other grantee explicitly cite the HALS and LSLIP project as integral to the establishment of their “pro-bono work across North and Mid-Wales which we will be keeping lead on that. Without the HALS and LSLIP project, we would not have been able to do that”.

Numerous grantees emphasised that their formal partnerships have increased their ability to signpost and refer clients to specialist assistance. For example, one grantee noted that they have established connections with various service providers across different regions in Wales. This includes a robust network with refugee support charities such as Oasis and the Welsh Refugee Council, as well as domestic violence organisations like Women’s Aid in different parts of Wales. Another grantee reported having a network comprising unions, national advice services, and other charities actively involved in advocating for employment rights.

“Good networks are critical, and we definitely have those”.

6.6 Competition and funding

Another challenge faced by HALS grantees is the competitive and unstable nature of funding.

“The competitive nature of some funding bids is another problem. While it encourages organisations to apply for the money, it can also lead to uncertainty and undermine the effectiveness of projects. This competition can be arbitrary and challenging for organisations trying to plan and operate effectively”.

One grantee has observed that during the lockdowns, there was more support given by grant-giving organisations, however as normality returned, they noticed that the funding landscape became tougher, primarily due to the rising costs and increasing economic pressures.

“The number of people seeking help and support has significantly increased, leading to overwhelming demand for limited funds. The feedback we’ve received from unsuccessful grant applications is not about the quality of our proposals or the value of our work. Instead, it’s simply a matter of the overwhelming competition for the available funds, as numerous organisations are vying for the same limited resources”.

Many grantees consistently brought attention to the value of having long-term core cost for an organisation’s service sustainability.

“The uncertainty surrounding grant funding has made it difficult to establish the kind of secure foundation we truly need for our growth and service improvement”.

7. Expenditure



Key points

- Staff costs represent the largest portion of grantee expenditure, accounting for 82% of the funding.

7.1 Grant expenditure

At the conclusion of the HALS grant, a total of £4,490,764.08 was granted to 55 organisations under HALS program¹². However, during this period, there was a cumulative overspend of £14,400, which was attributed to nine organisations.

Table 9 presents a detailed breakdown of total grantee expenditure by cost type. It indicates that staff costs represent the largest portion of expenditure, accounting for 82 per cent of the funding. Running costs follow as the second highest at eight per cent, with the lowest allocation being attributed to 'other expenditures' (e.g., support staff salaries, management fees, governance costs) at two per cent.

Table 9: Total grantee expenditure breakdown and proportion of spending by cost type

| | Spend | Proportion (%) |
|-----------------------|------------|----------------|
| Staff costs | £3,700,000 | 82% |
| Office & premises | £130,000 | 3% |
| Running costs | £350,000 | 8% |
| IT/Communications | £120,000 | 3% |
| Expansion of services | £140,000 | 3% |
| Other expenditure | £93,000 | 2% |

Grantees disclosed during interviews that their primary objective in bidding for HALS funding was to support their existing staff's work or to recruit new staff to enhance services. This focus is evident in the allocation proportions detailed in Table 13, potentially explaining why the majority of funding (82%) was directed towards staff costs, encompassing training, recruitment, and retention efforts. One grantee highlighted the importance of maintaining their clinic and retaining experienced staff as a priority to meet the growing demand for client support during the HALS reporting period:

"The two main goals were to make the advice easily accessible, but also to provide expert advice that goes beyond what other local organisations could provide"

¹² Of the 55 HALS grantees, one organisation did not submit an expenditure report and so information related to their activities are not included within this section of the report. This grantee was awarded £82,000 of the HALS funding, which brings the total funding awarded to £4,505,194.49. As data is not held on this £82,000, the report explores the remaining £4,490,764.08 spend.

8. Conclusion



This report draws together the data and evidence collected by the 55 organisations that were funded by the HALS grant. Overall, the findings suggests that the funding was successful in meeting the primary objectives set for the grant: improving and sustaining access to early legal advice, sustaining partnerships and networks, delivering services based on user needs and building a stronger evidence base.

Improving and sustaining access to early legal advice

Grantees reported utilising the HALS funding to maintain and enhancing existing services, with one organisation stating that the funding helped them to expand their reach by around 20 per cent. Overall, the HALS funding was used to provide legal support to 100,000 clients between October 2022 and June 2023, primarily supporting clients with early initial generalist advice on welfare benefits, family and housing issues, but also providing small volumes of later stage advice to clients with more complex problems that required casework or had court or Tribunal hearings initiated. Demographically, most clients were female, aged 25-54, and white, with significant proportions reporting disabilities. As demonstrated by the case studies throughout this report, this advice and support helped many people to increase their income, stabilise their housing situations and avoid further family conflict, improving the wellbeing of the clients and their families.

Sustaining partnerships and networks

The grantees highlighted the importance of both informal and formal partnerships. Informal collaborations, such as steering or networking groups, allowed for knowledge sharing and best practices, while formal collaborations, like those with universities, provided structured support and development opportunities. The interviews demonstrated that these networks can be long lasting if provided with ongoing nurture and investment, with many organisations noting that they were building on partnerships first created by previous MoJ grants (e.g. LSLIP).

Delivering services based on user needs

The Covid-19 pandemic necessitated a shift towards remote services, leading to a blended mix of face-to-face, telephone, and online advice. HALS funding enabled grantees to continue this hybrid model, which proved essential in meeting the heightened demand.

Grantees encountered significant challenges in staff retention and recruitment, increased demand for services, and dealing with complex and challenging client behaviours, which posed challenges for service delivery. They emphasised the need for long-term core funding to ensure service sustainability amid increasing demand and limited resources.

Building a stronger evidence base

The HALS grant funded a diverse range of legal support services for less than a year, which meant a proportionate and pragmatic approach to the evaluation was necessary. The evaluation sought to generate data and evidence on the use of the funds, whilst allowing organisations to focus resource on delivering advice and support. Whilst some grantees experienced some challenges with the data collection, many appreciated the streamlined and 'light touch' process, which suggests that the right balance was struck for this grant. Future grant programmes should consider building in an initial implementation phase for organisations to familiarise themselves and trial the data collection process, to overcome any initial teething issues.

This report provides insight into the reach of HALS funded legal support services, key demographic characteristics of clients, issues faced by clients, and the nature of support provided. It builds on previous MoJ legal support grant reports to inform service delivery and increase understanding of early legal advice and support, to assist evidence-based decision making in the legal advice and support sector.

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10. Appendix A: Amount awarded to each HALS grantee, and the areas of law they provided advice in



| Funded Project | | | Area of Law | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|--------|------------|---------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|------|
| | Name of Organisation | Grant awarded | Location | Family | Employment | Housing | Welfare benefits | Discrimination | Community care | Immigration | Debt |
| 1 | Anti Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit (ATLEU) | £40,000 | Bermondsey & Southwark | | Yes | Yes | | | Yes | Yes | |
| 2 | Asylum Justice | £35,000 | Cardiff South & Penarth | Yes | | | | | | Yes | |
| 3 | Bristol Law Centre | £55,000 | Bristol West | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 4 | Bristol Refugee Rights (BRR) | £45,000 | Bristol West | Yes | | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 5 | Cambridge House | £58,833 | Camberwell and Peckham | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 6 | Canolfan Cynghori Citizens Advice Ynys Mon | £41,511 | Ynys Môn | Yes | | | | | Yes | | Yes |
| 7 | CASCAIDr (Centre for Adults' Social Care – Advice Information and Dispute resolution) | £100,000 | South West Surrey | Yes | | Yes | Yes | | Yes | | Yes |

| Funded Project | | | Area of Law | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 8 | Citizens Advice Caerphilly Blaenau Gwent in partnership with Citizens Advice Rhondda Cynon Taff | £53,400 | Caerphilly | Yes | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Citizens Advice Central Dorset | £85,462 | West Dorset | Yes | Yes | Yes | | | Yes | | | |
| 10 | Citizens Advice Chelmsford in partnership with Community Legal Centre Essex | £54,921.26 | Chelmsford | Yes | Yes | Yes | | | | | | |
| 11 | Citizens Advice Denbighshire | £41,160 | Vale of Clwyd | Yes | | | | | | Yes | | |
| 12 | Citizens Advice in North and West Kent (CANWK) | £75,000 | Tunbridge Wells | | | Yes | Yes | | | | | |
| 13 | Citizens Advice Mid Mercia | £46,209 | South Derbyshire | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| 14 | Citizens Advice North Yorkshire | £89,700 | Richmond (Yorks) | Yes | | Yes | | Yes | | Yes | | |
| 15 | Citizens Advice Sherwood & Newark | £25,000 | Newark, Sherwood / Mark Spencer | | | Yes | Yes | | | | | Yes |
| 16 | Citizens Advice Teignbridge | £50,000 | Newton Abbot | Yes | | | | | | | | |

| Funded Project | | | Area of Law | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 17 | Community Advice and Law Service | £60,000 | Leicester South | | | Yes | Yes | | | Yes | Yes |
| 18 | Coventry Citizens Advice | £50,000 | Coventry South | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 19 | Croydon Citizens Advice | £36,736 | Croydon Central | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 20 | Cumbria Law Centre | £52,500 | Carlisle | | Yes | | | | | Yes | |
| 21 | Derbyshire Law Centre | £60,000 | Chesterfield | | Yes | | | | | Yes | |
| 22 | Disability Law Service | £35,000 | Vauxhall | | | Yes | | | Yes | | |
| 23 | Ealing Law Centre | £35,000 | Ealing | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | | | Yes | |
| 24 | Family Rights Group (FRG) | £75,000 | Islington South and Finsbury | Yes | | | | | | | |
| 25 | First Light South West | £13,000 | Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport | Yes | | | | | | | |
| 26 | Free Legal Advice Group for Domestic Violence (FLAG DV) | £40,000 | Newbury | Yes | | | | | | | |
| 27 | Friends, Families and Travellers | £50,000 | Brighton, Pavilion | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes |
| 28 | Hammersmith & Fulham Law Centre | £75,000 | Hammersmith | | Yes | Yes | Yes | | | | |

| Funded Project | | | Area of Law | | | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 29 | Harlow Advice Centre (Harlow & West Essex Law Centre). | £48,704 | Harlow | | Yes | Yes | Yes | | | |
| 30 | Harrow Law Centre | £50,000 | Harrow West | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes |
| 31 | Hastings Advice and Representation Centre | £19,020 | Hastings and Rye | | | | Yes | | | |
| 32 | Just for Kids Law Ltd | £100,000 | Islington South and Finsbury | | | Yes | | Yes | Yes | |
| 33 | Law for Life | £75,000 | Holborn and St Pancras | | | | | | | |
| 34 | LawWorks | £75,000 | Holborn and St Pancras | Yes | Yes | Yes | | | | Yes |
| 35 | Manchester Refugee Support Network | £41,127.74 | Manchester Central | | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes | |
| 36 | Mary Ward Legal Centre | £55,000 | Holborn and St Pancras | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | | | Yes |
| 37 | Maternity Action | £87,000 | Islington North | | Yes | | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| 38 | Norfolk Community Law Service Ltd | £38,531 | Norwich South | Yes | | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes |
| 39 | North Bristol Advice Centre | £25,000 | Bristol North West | | | | Yes | | | Yes |

| Funded Project | | | Area of Law | | | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 40 | North East Law Centre | £88,970 | Newcastle upon Tyne East | Yes | Yes | | Yes | | | |
| 41 | North Kensington Law Centre | £75,000 | Kensington | | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes | |
| 42 | Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council | £34,544 | Northampton North | | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes | |
| 43 | Plumstead Community Law Centre Ltd | £25,000 | Greenwich and Woolwich | | Yes | | Yes | | Yes | |
| 44 | Project for the Registration of Children as British Citizens (PRCBC) | £30,000 | Hammersmith | | | | | | Yes | |
| 45 | RCJ Advice | £75,000 | Cities of London and Westminster | Yes | | | | | | |
| 46 | Refugee Support Devon | £30,000 | Exeter | Yes | | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes |
| 47 | Release | £60,000 | Bethnal Green and Bow | | | | | Yes | | |
| 48 | Rights of Women | £75,000 | Islington South and Finsbury | Yes | Yes | | | Yes | Yes | |
| 49 | South West London Law Centre (SWLLC) | £65,000 | Croydon Central | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes |

| Funded Project | | | Area of Law | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|----------|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|-----|-----|-----|
| 50 | Speakeasy Law Centre | £61,935 | Cardiff Central | | | Yes | Yes | | | | |
| 51 | Suffolk Law Centre | £50,500 | Ipswich | Yes | Yes | Yes | | | | Yes | |
| 52 | Support Through Court | £75,000 | Royal Courts of Justice | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | | | Yes | Yes |
| 53 | Wiltshire Citizens Advice | £35,000 | | | Yes | Yes | Yes | | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 54 | Wiltshire Law Centre | £75,000 | South Swindon | | | | Yes | | | | |
| 55 | Working Families | £100,000 | postcode not recognised | | Yes | | | | Yes | | |

11. Appendix B: Protected characteristic data tables



Table 10: Age distribution of HALS clients, removing those that preferred not to say, compared with Moj LSLIP grant data, Citizens Advice data, the Moj Legal Problem and Resolution Survey and 2021 Census data

| | HALS grantees | | LSLIP grantees | Citizens Advice (December 2023) | Moj LPRS (2017) | Census (2021) |
|----------------|---------------|-----|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | Volume | % | | | | |
| 16-24 | 6,000 | 6% | 7% | 5% | 4% | 13% |
| 25-34 | 19,000 | 20% | 21% | 17% | 24% | 17% |
| 35-44 | 23,000 | 25% | 22% | 20% | | 16% |
| 45-54 | 19,000 | 21% | 21% | 18% | 28% | 16% |
| 55-64 | 15,000 | 17% | 18% | 22% | | 15% |
| 65-74 | 6,800 | 7% | 7% | 19% | 40% | 23% |
| Over 75 | 3,500 | 4% | 5% | - | 17% | |

Table 11: Sex distribution of HALS clients, removing those that preferred not to say, compared with Moj LSLIP grant data, Citizens Advice data, the Moj Legal Problem and Resolution Survey and 2021 Census data

| | HALS grantees | | LSLIP grantees | Citizens Advice (December 2023) | Moj LPRS (2017) | Census (2021) |
|------------|---------------|-----|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | Volume | % | | | | |
| Female | 56,000 | 58% | 61% | 59% | 55% | 51% |
| Male | 40,000 | 41% | 38% | 41% | 45% | 49% |
| Non-binary | 440 | 0% | 0.1% | - | - | - |

Table 12: Ethnic distribution of HALS clients, removing those that preferred not to say, compared with Moj LSLIP grant data, Citizens Advice data, the Moj Legal Problem and Resolution Survey and 2021 Census data

| | HALS grantees | | LSLIP grantees | Citizens Advice (December 2023) | Moj LPRS (2017) | Census (2021) |
|-------|---------------|-----|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | Volume | % | | | | |
| White | 54,000 | 64% | 92% | 81% | 91% | 82% |
| Asian | 9,800 | 12% | 3% | 7% | 3% | 9% |
| Black | 12,000 | 14% | 2% | 7% | 3% | 4% |
| Mixed | 2,900 | 3% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 3% |
| Other | 5,800 | 7% | 1% | 3% | 1% | 2% |

Table 13: Prevalence of disability in HALS clients, removing those that preferred not to say, compared with MoJ LSLIP grant data, Citizens Advice data, the MoJ Legal Problem and Resolution Survey and 2021 Census data

| | HALS grantees | | LSLIP grantees | Citizens Advice (December 2023) | MoJ LPRS (2017) | Census (2021) |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-----|----------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------|
| | Volume | % | | | | |
| No disability | 45,000 | 48% | 69% | | | |
| Mental health ¹³ | 16,000 | 16% | 14% | Disability: 7% | Long-standing illness or disability: 38% | 24% |
| Physical | 18,000 | 19% | 13% | | | |
| Sensory | 1,200 | 1% | 2% | Long term health condition: 41% | | |
| Cognitive | 2,300 | 2% | 1% | | | |
| Other | 13,000 | 14% | - | - | - | - |

13 Mental health disabilities in this case refer to moderate, severe and enduring conditions, and does not capture individuals experiencing low levels of stress and anxiety.



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