Citizens Advice Hart
Impact Report 2024-2025

Life

Doesn't need to feel like a maze

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At Citizens Advice, we're here to help

Samantha Mabbott, Chief Executive

July 2025

Review of the Year

This year at Citizens Advice Hart, we've continued to be a vital lifeline for local people facing difficult and often overwhelming challenges. Whether it's dealing with the cost-of-living crisis, housing issues, debt, or benefits, our local charity has been there to help with free, impartial advice for everyone.

We supported over 4000 clients, thanks to the incredible dedication of our staff and volunteers. We continued to deliver our award-winning **Advice First Aid training** to local frontline workers, supporting them to spot issues early and signpost people for guidance. We deepened our **partnership working with local MPs**, helping raise awareness of the real issues our community faces.

We were honoured to be chosen as the **Hart District Council Chair's Charity of the Year**, which brought greater visibility to our work and helped drive **successful fundraising** efforts throughout the year.

While we're proud of our impact, we continue to face high demand and complexity. As a local charity, we rely on the generosity of our supporters to keep going. Our services are needed more than ever, but we can't do it alone. Thank you to everyone who has supported us this year.

As we look to the future and prepare for the changes arising from Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation, we will focus on strengthening value and sustainability of our service and seeking opportunities to collaborate with our colleagues and local partners. We remain committed to standing up for those who need us most and making sure no one in Hart and the surrounding areas has to face their problems alone.

Samantha Mabbott
Chief Executive

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The value of our work

We help people to solve their problems. In doing so, we create financial value. This means that we save the Government and society money by stopping problems that cost money. It's impossible to put a £ sign on all the crucial work that we do. But where we have the evidence to do so, talking about the financial value of our service tells a powerful story.

- Fiscal value - Financial savings to local and national Government due to fewer payments for out-of-work benefits, costly evictions, re-housing evicted tenants and less demand on the NHS.

- Public value - When people have fewer problems they have higher levels of wellbeing, participation in society and productivity.

- Value to the people we help - We know that some of our advice has a direct financial benefits to individuals, such as, helping clients to make a claim for benefits, get debts written off or get a refund from a consumer problem.

The value of our work

Fiscal Value

£2.52 for every **£1** invested

£1.16 million

Public Value

£17.18 for every **£1** invested

£7.9 million

Value to the people we help

£11.16 for every **£1** invested

£5.1 million

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Clients value our service

"The staff at Fleet were amazing. They made me feel very relaxed and were so helpful and helped me resolve many issues. I don't know how I would have done it without their help. Amazing, wonderful people. They deserve so much credit."

"This is a vitally important and well-respected service."

"I was treated with respect and kindness."

"Citizens Advice are definitely there for the people."

"I could never have got the outcome I got without your help."

"I will forever be grateful and appreciative for all the hard work the team at CA Hart have shown me. Thank you all so much you guys are really life-changing heroes."

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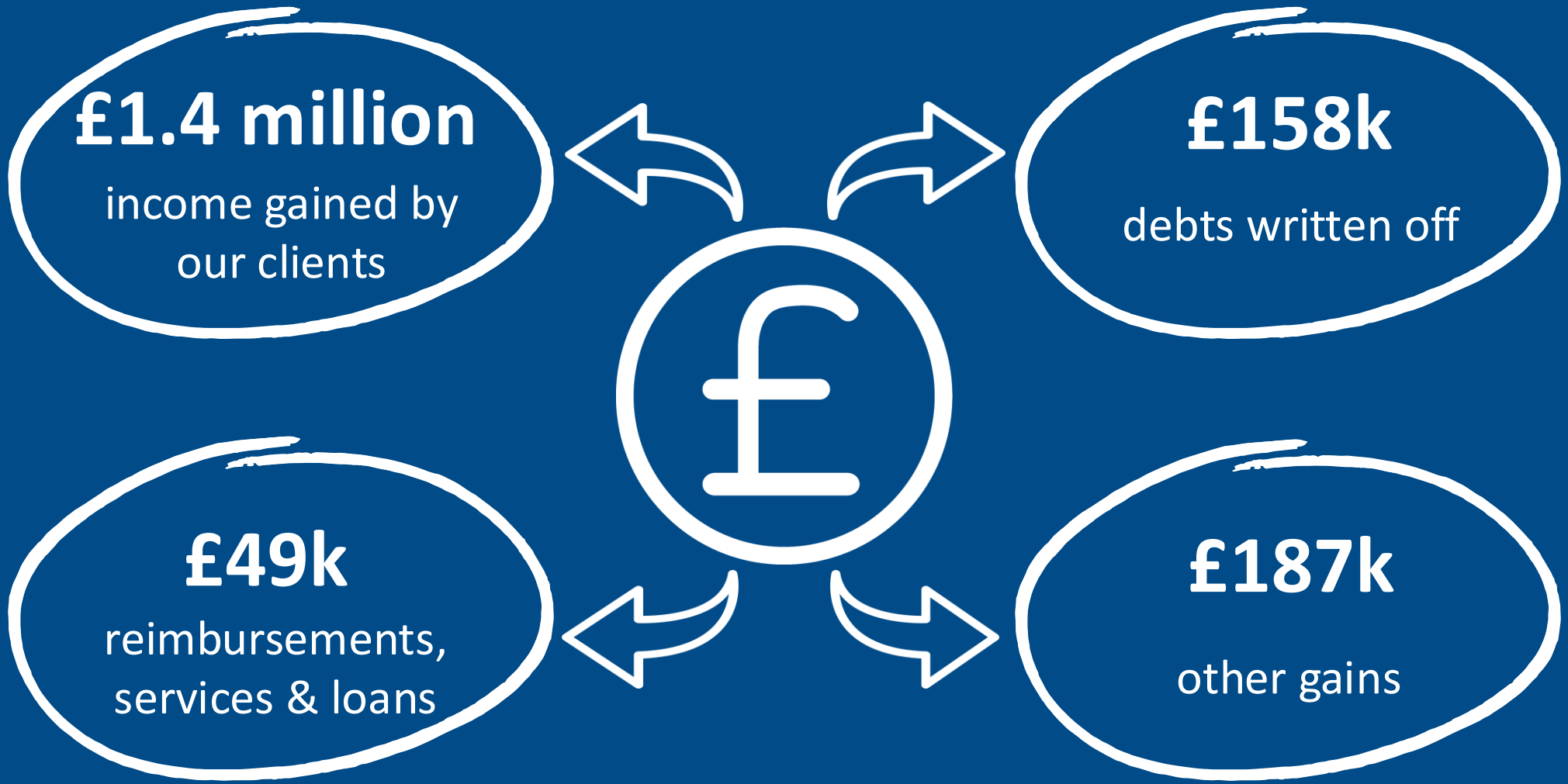
Our advice results in real outcomes



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Our advice is effective

3 in 4 people

said their problem was solved following advice and 87% said they could not have resolved their problem without us

84%

of people felt less stressed, depressed or anxious as a result of the help they received

80%

of people would recommend our service and 74% found us easy to access

61%

of people felt their physical health had improved as a result of the help they received

79%

of people said we helped them find a way forward

4 in 10 clients

with a physical or mental health condition sought less help from a professional, following our advice*

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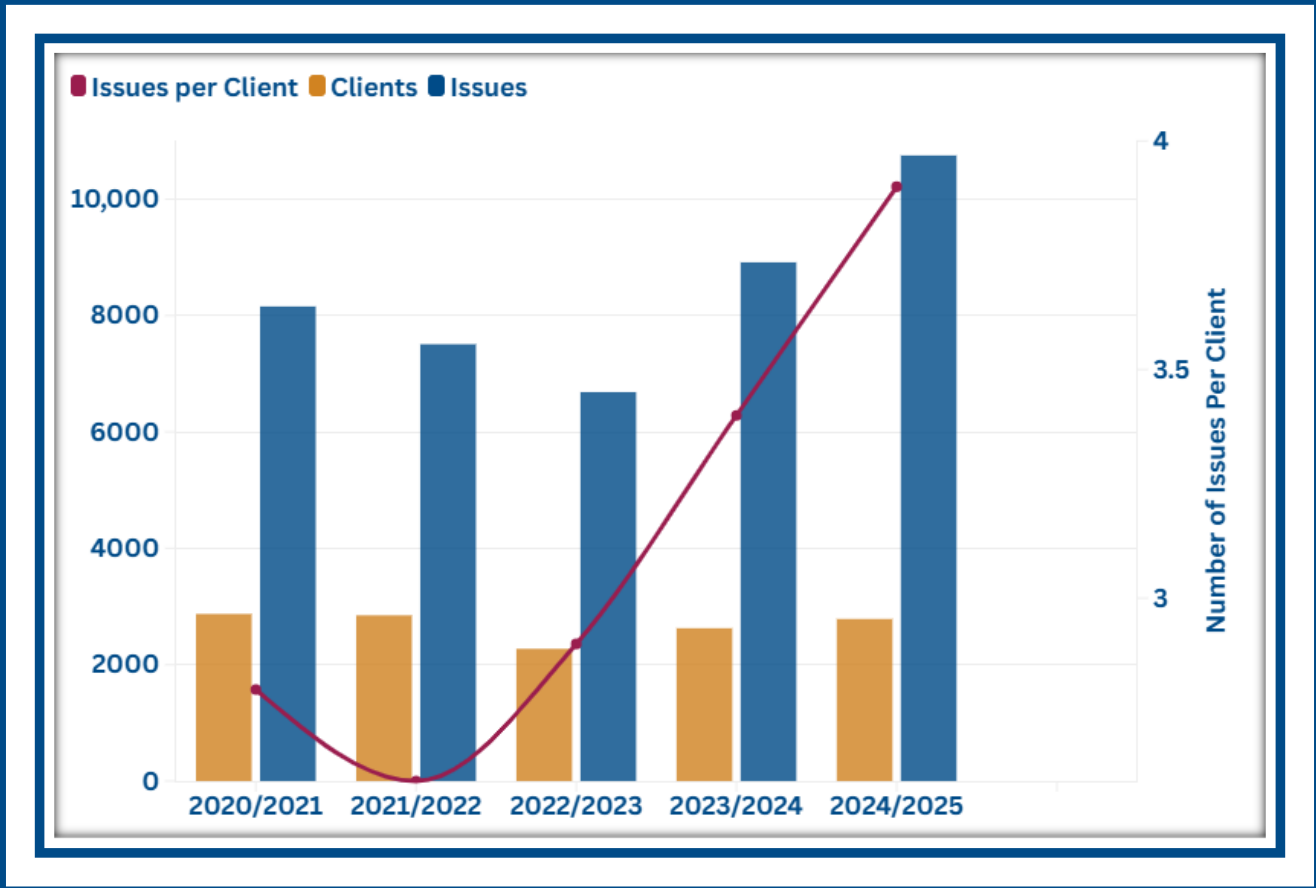
*NOIR 2020 Research

Increasingly complex issues

We supported **4,255 clients** with **10,751 issues** in 2024-2025 (a 6% increase in clients and a 21% increase in issues from the previous year)

Each client who comes to us presents with an average of **3.9 issues** they need help with. We are seeing a dramatic increase in number of issues our clients are facing.



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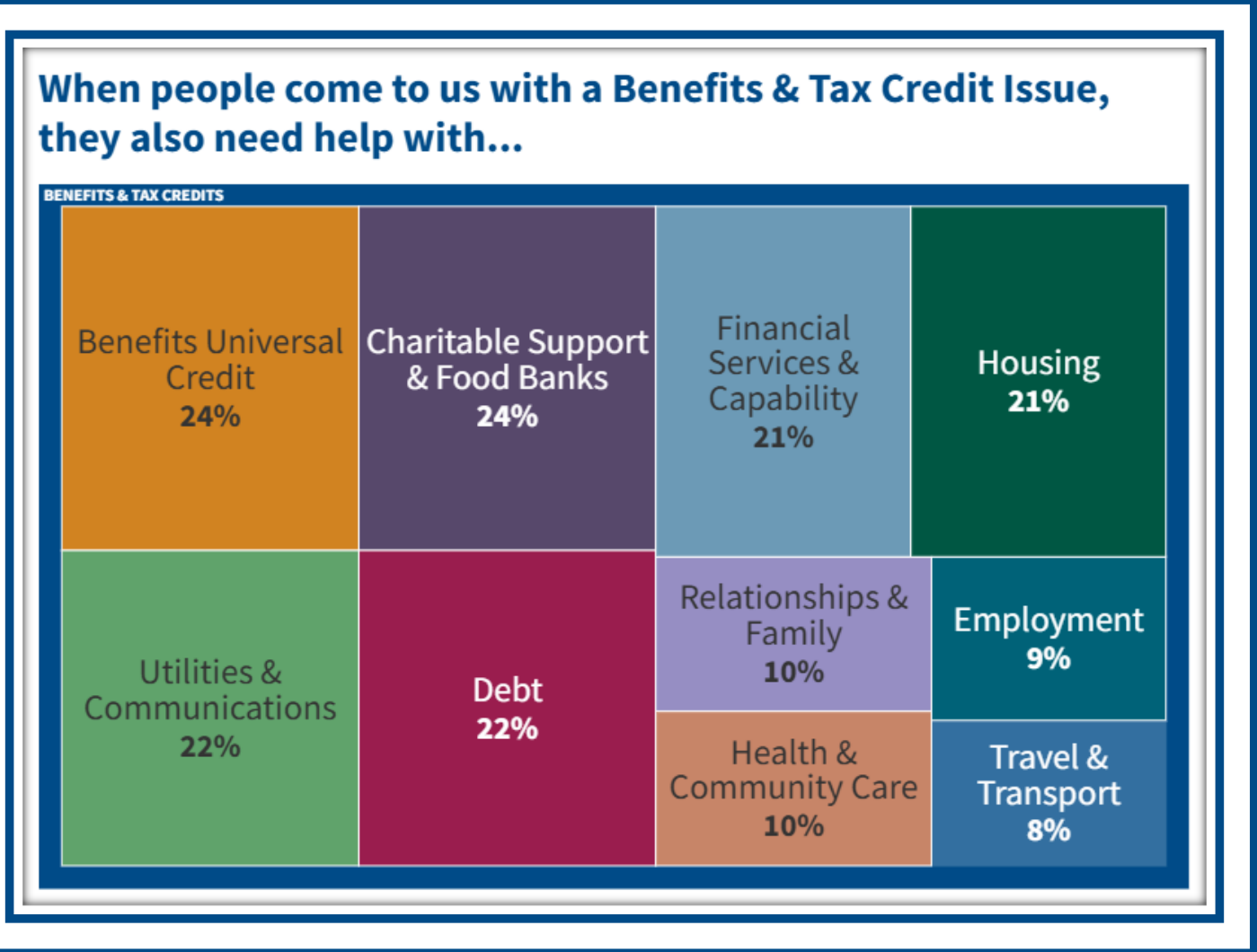
Complexity in detail

Clients are coming to us with increasingly complex and interconnected issues. **Almost a third** of clients who came to us for help with Benefits & Tax Credits also needed help with another issue:

- **24%** needed charitable support and food banks
- **22%** needed help with debt issues
- **21%** needed help with financial capability



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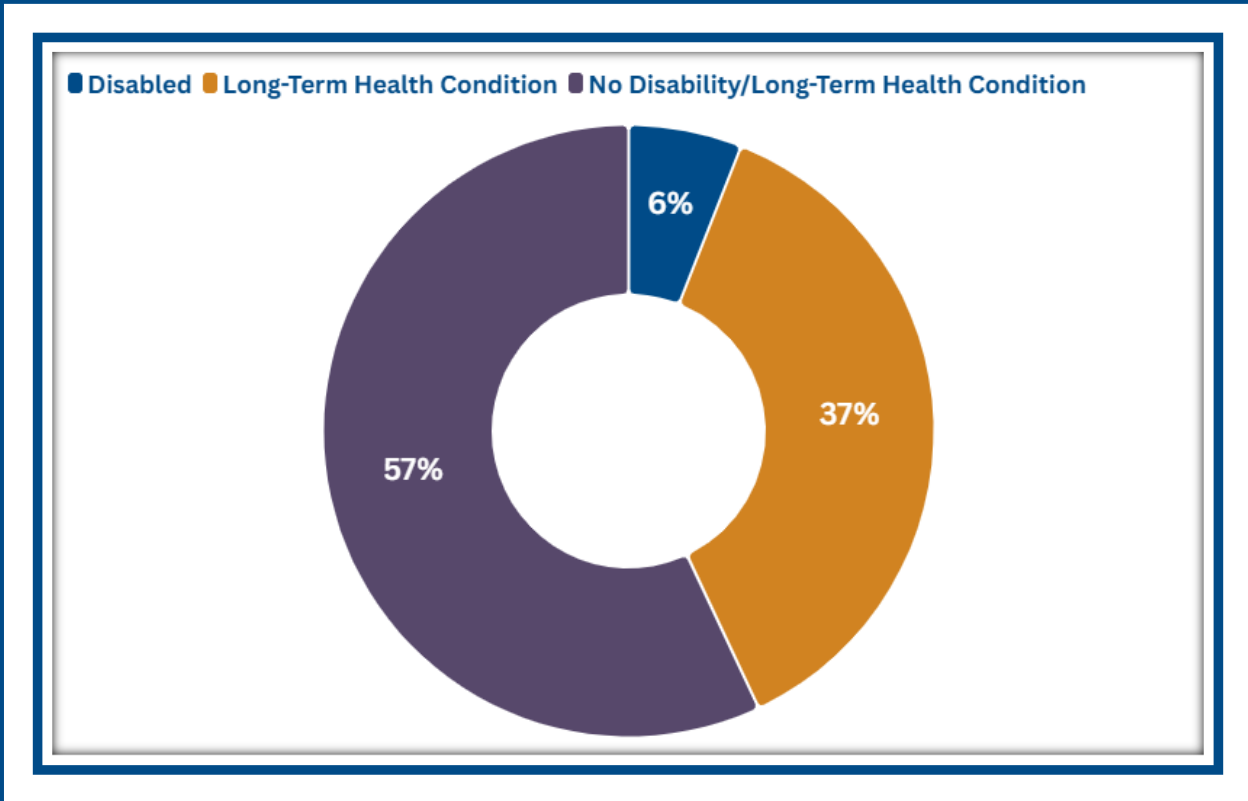
We are seeing clients with complex health issues

Increasing numbers of clients presenting to us have health issues.

43% of our clients had either a long-term health condition or disability (compared to 21% of the local population in Hart). **41%** of these disclosed having **multiple impairments** and **22%** disclosed **mental health** issues.



Whether it's tackling problems with debt or housing, or helping with benefits and employment advice, Citizens Advice solves practical problems that improve health and wellbeing.

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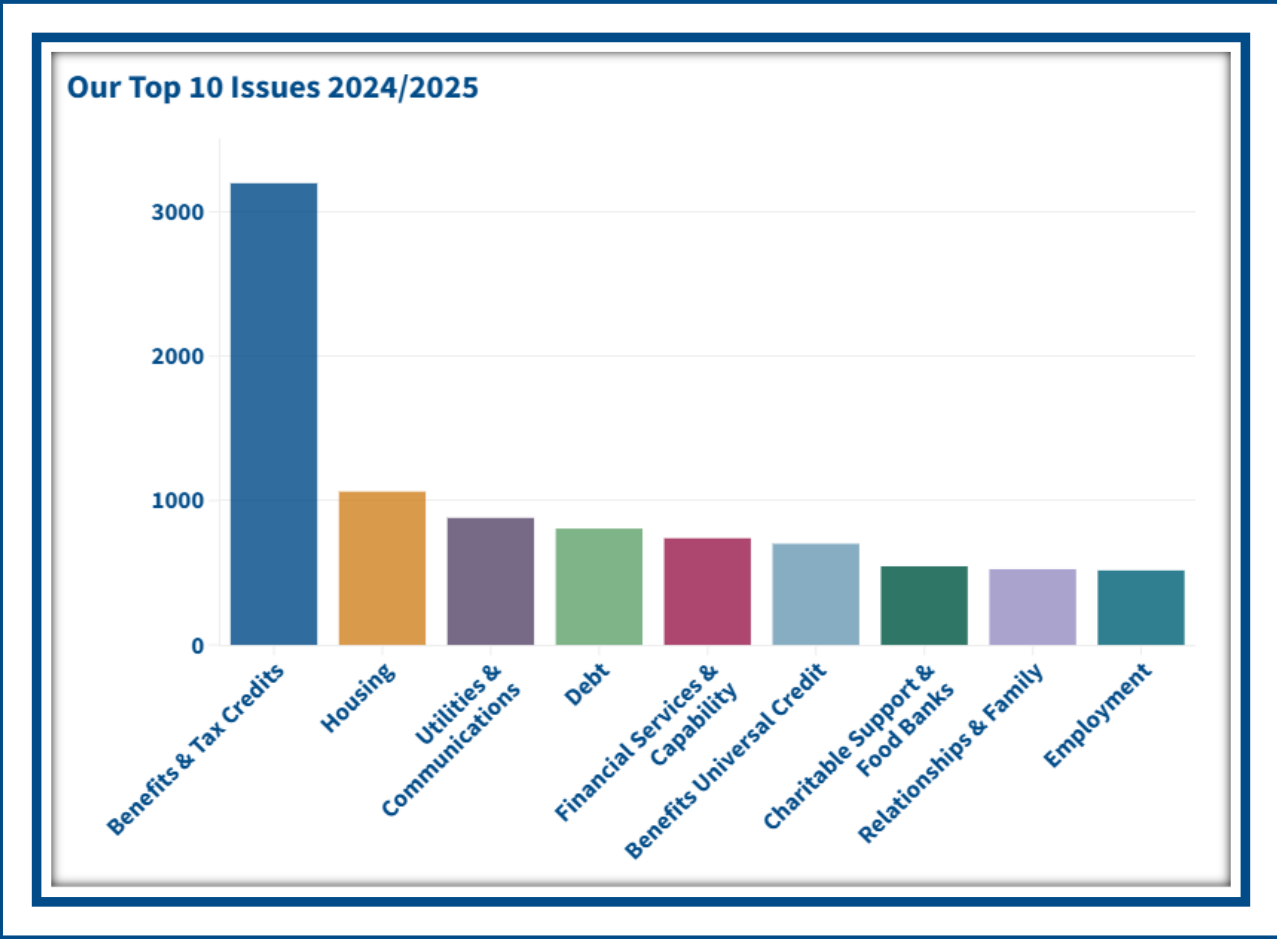
Benefits & Tax Credits issues remain high

Our most common issues relate to **Benefits & Tax Credits**, where we have helped over **3,000** clients with issues such as applying for benefits and PIP, council tax reductions and housing benefits (a **43% increase** from last year).

We have also seen large increases in the requirement for help with **Utilities & Communication** (73% increase) and **Financial Services & Capability** (82% increase).



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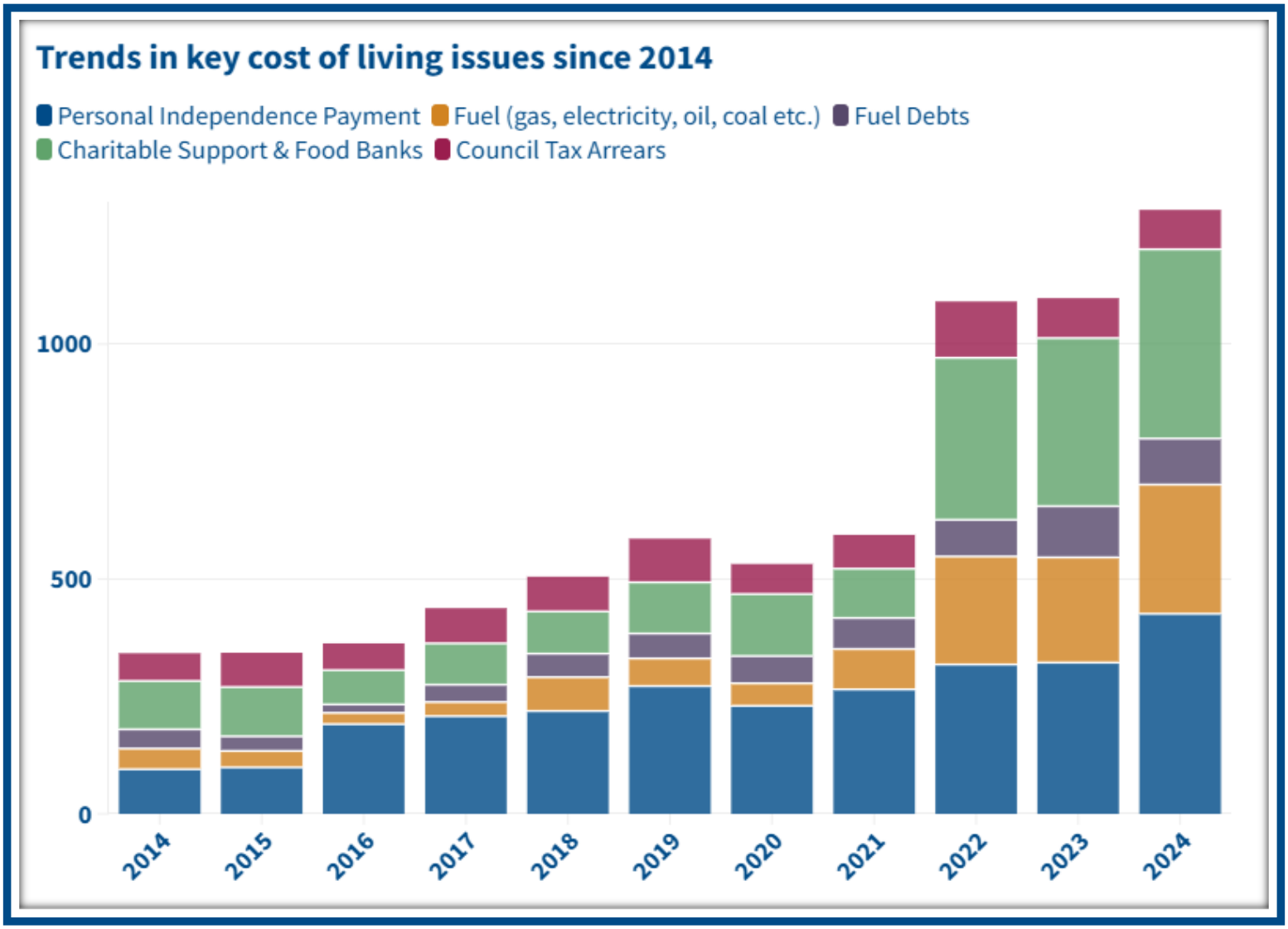
Cost-of-living related issues rising

We have helped **17%** more clients with **cost-of-living** related issues in 2024 than in 2023.

2024 was a record year for **crisis support** with a 20% rise.

We saw a 33% increase in clients with issues relating to Personal Independence Payments and 8% rise in energy issues.



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Urgent, face to face emergency support

- Helped **1044** drop-in clients
- Distributed **270** Food Bank vouchers
- Encountered **99** safeguarding concerns
- Helped with **210** issues related to homelessness (up 34% from last year)
- Supported **82** issues related to Gender Violence and Abuse & Hate Crime (up 17% from last year)
- **16%** of our clients rated their problem as **urgent**
- Distributed SIM cards and mobile devices to individuals who are digitally excluded

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How do we provide advice?

We deliver advice through a range of channels to ensure we meet all our clients' needs and preferences*

47% of our advice is delivered over the **telephone**, making or receiving over 11,000 calls

23% of our advice is delivered **in person**; we held **626 face to face** appointments

24% of our advice is delivered via **email**

11k active users of our refreshed Citizens Advice Hart **website** (up 9% on last year)

69 clients have used our new **Webchat** facility to get advice since it launched in July 2024

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*Other channels including webchat, letter etc make up 6% of our delivery

Client Stories

John* contacted CA Hart because his PIP application had been rejected. He was undergoing cancer treatment and had other underlying medical conditions. He had outstanding debts and was accessing foodbank for food and essentials. The adviser assisted with John's PIP appeal resulting in a successful outcome with an estimated lump sum of £16k plus £9k additional payments until March 2028.

Rachel* wanted help with a new boiler through the boiler upgrade scheme. She was supported by the CA Hart Home & Well Team to complete the forms to make the application. She is digitally excluded and unable to use a computer. In addition, we helped set her up on the Priority Services Register for South East Water and SSEN for additional support.

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*Names changed to protect anonymity

Client Stories

Andrea* dropped into Hart Foodbank to receive a food parcel and essentials. She has a 9-month-old baby and due to mental health and medical conditions, she struggles with daily activities and mobility and asked for help with how to apply for PIP assessment. Time was given to Andrea to talk at her pace about the issues she is struggling with. Following the assessment and immediate support with accessing information, Andrea stated that her visit to the foodbank was the first time she felt truly supported.

Alison* was being migrated from a number of legacy benefits to Universal Credit by the DWP. The process has a 5-week timescale to complete and is primarily an online process. Alison did not have an email address or internet access, so required assistance from CA Hart throughout the process. Without that support Alison would not have been able to apply for Universal Credit.

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*Names changed to protect anonymity

More than one advice service

Our award-winning **Advice First Aid** programme trained 52 people to support individuals with guidance, using the public Citizens Advice website for self-help and referring to us where advice was needed. To date, 295 people have been trained through this programme.

Our **Outreach** service takes our advice into the heart of the community and has helped **238** clients in person with **759** different issues who otherwise may not have been able to access our services.

In 2024 we launched our **Work Out Your Money (WOYM)** programme in conjunction with local schools. WOYM is designed to transform how individuals engage with and manage their finances. Since launching in October 2024, we have worked with **330** pupils.

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Our projects are impactful

Our **Macmillan** project helps to deliver a consistent, targeted, and holistic service for people affected by cancer to **314** clients achieve outcomes worth over **£1 million**.

In partnership with Hart Foodbank, our **Foodbank** project helped **64 clients** with **480 issues** last year, with clients expected to achieve outcomes in excess of **£70k**.

Our **Home & Well** project helps people return home quickly and efficiently following a hospital stay and many vulnerable clients. Since November we have helped **45 clients**.

Between December 2024 and March 2025, we worked with Citizens Advice offices across Hampshire on a **Digital Exclusion** project. Over **700 people** were helped with almost **6,000 issues** due to digital exclusion. Clients are expected to make income gains of over **£800k** and gains through energy grants and social tariffs of around **£121k**. In 2024-2025 we provided over **£22k** worth of fuel vouchers to Hart residents and advice under the Household Support Fund.

We campaign

- We use our clients' experiences, stories and evidence to research and campaign for positive change both locally and nationally using evidence forms

- During 2024-2025 we raised 361 evidence forms highlighting unfair practice within a range of areas including Housing, Benefits & Tax Credits, Universal Credit, Debt and Utilities & Communication

- We supported National and Local campaigns throughout the year with advice given online, via social media and face to face in the community. Campaigns included:

- Scams Awareness
- Consumer Campaign
- Council Tax Support Campaign
- RTS (Radio Teleswitch Service) Switch Off Campaign
- Broadband Social Tariffs Campaign
- Disability Green Paper
- Autumn Budget
- Universal Credit
- Digital Exclusion

Our strength is our team

- We are a volunteer led service - **62%** of our team are volunteers
- Last year our volunteers gave nearly **12,000 hours** of time which was worth **over £260k**
- Developing the skills and employability of our volunteers adds **£14k** to the economy
- Volunteering also gives value back to our volunteers with increased life satisfaction estimated to be worth over **£50k** and savings to the NHS through improved mental health of over **£19k**

"Citizens Advice Hart has always been supportive of my wellbeing, showing genuine care"

100% of our team feel we care about their wellbeing

100% of our team feel they are treated with fairness and respect

"Great atmosphere to work in"

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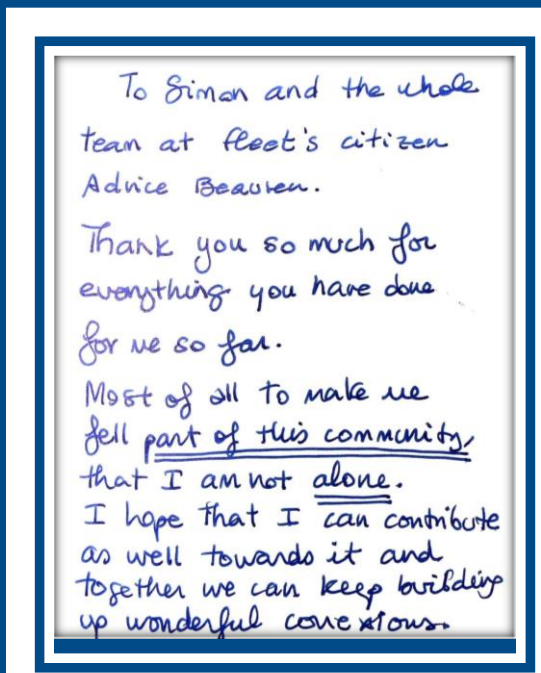
#WeAreCitizensAdvice



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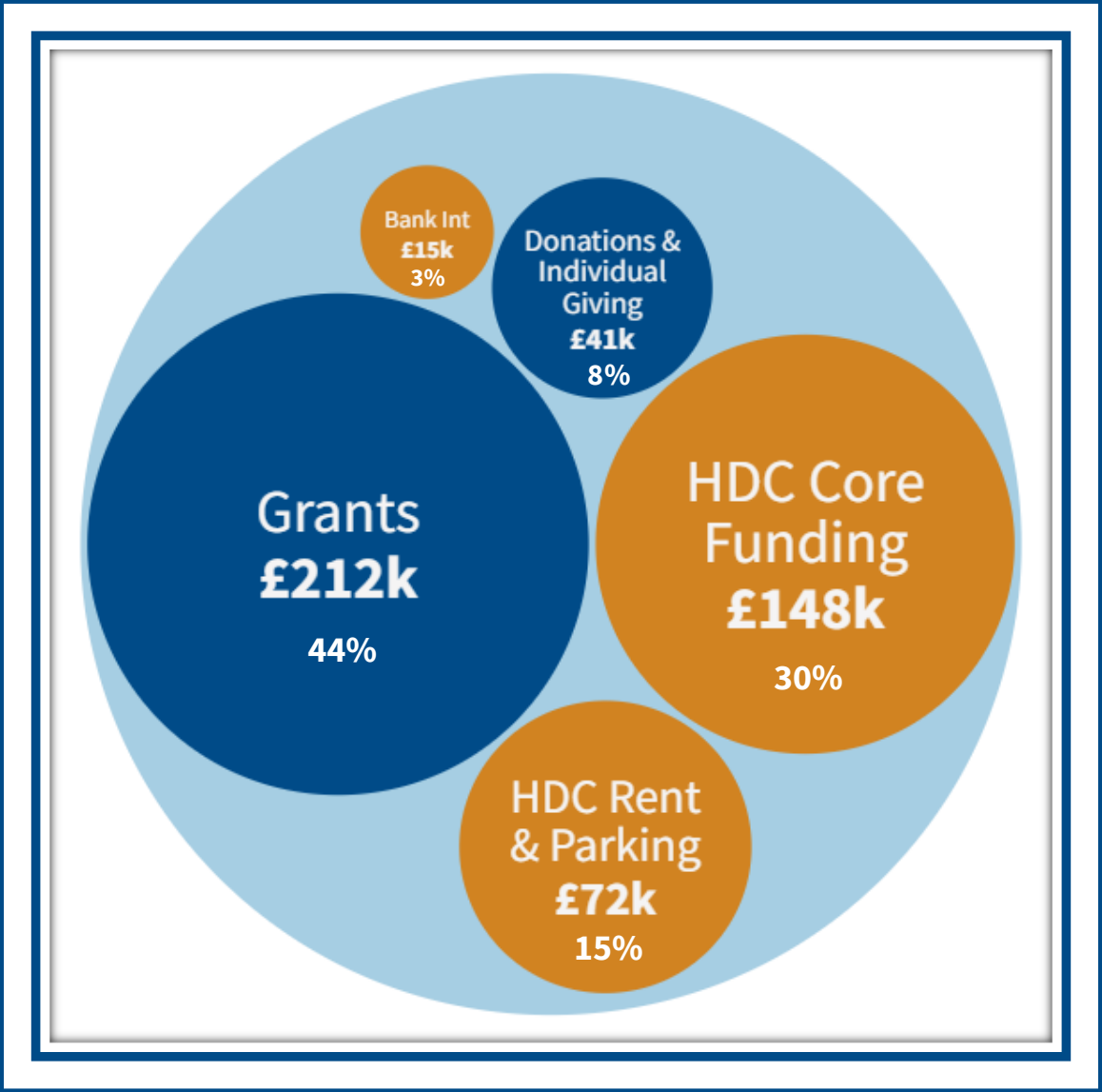
Funding – Income 2024-2025



- 30% of income from Hart District Council (HDC) discretionary grant for advice services granted on a year-by-year basis
- 44% of income from grants to deliver projects/advice services – applied for on a rolling basis throughout the year
- No long-term funding commitment – fundraising target set on yearly basis
- Forecast expenditure 2025-2026 £534,932

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Thank you to our local Town and Parish Councils for your support

- Blackwater & Hawley Town Council
- Church Crookham Parish Council
- Crondall Parish Council
- Crookham Village Parish Council
- Elvetham Heath Parish Council
- Eversley Parish Council
- Ewshot Parish Council
- Fleet Town Council
- Hook Parish Council
- Odiham Parish Council
- Winchfield Parish Council
- Yateley Town Council

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We are an independent local charity, and we rely on our funders and partners – thank you

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