

# Research and Campaigns Bulletin

March 2023

citizens  
advice

Bournemouth  
Christchurch  
& Poole

## Housing & Cost of Living

Local residents are facing extraordinary pressures in the face of rising costs.

Our data is telling us that there are worrying trends emerging in Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole, related to housing and accommodation.

Our unique position as a local advice provider means that we can offer real-time insights into how local residents are being affected. In January and February this year, we saw the following increases:

**100%**

Increase in issues around threatened homelessness

**75%**

Increase in problems with rent arrears

**82%**

Increase in issues for private rented sector property tenants

**63%**

Increase in issues for housing association property tenants

The South West has the highest number of clients being helped with private rental sector eviction issues per month out of whole of the UK.

Nationally, private sector renters are paying 43% more rent than those in social housing, with a higher risk of deficit budgets.

### Headline Cost of Living data



+51% increase in activities carried out by our advisers



+88% increase in financial crisis issues



+107% increase in debt issues

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### Case Study

**This case study of Annie\*, 31, from Bournemouth, demonstrates the pressures on local residents who are struggling to maintain basic needs, such as housing, due to the rising cost of living.**

\*Names and personal details have been changed

Annie attended one of our outreaches to speak to an adviser. She was struggling to afford increased rent, and was facing eviction due to arrears.

Annie had been signed off work due to mental health issues and was unable to return to her job due to these problems. Although Annie was receiving Universal Credit, it was still not enough to cover her rent and so she was having to choose between keeping her home or eating.

Annie's outgoings are higher than her income, meaning she has to go into her overdraft each month to pay her bills, further adding to her stress and worsening her mental health. Citizens advice helped Annie to apply for Limited Capacity for Work and Work Related Activity, which would increase her Universal Credit by over £300 each month. She was also assisted to contact BCP council's Early Prevention housing team so that they can help her understand her options.

Annie was also supported with her application to the Household Support Fund and also received a foodbank voucher to help her with food in the short term.