

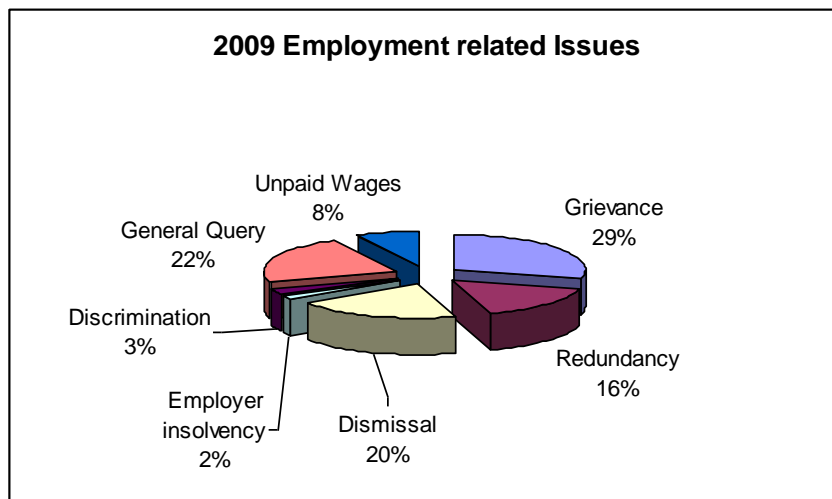
## ***Analysis of Employment Cases brought to Rushmoor Citizens Advice Bureaux during 2009***

This report is based on an analysis of Rushmoor Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) employment cases during the period 1 January 2009 – 31 December 2009.

### **1. Background and introduction**

- 1.1 Throughout the past year Rushmoor CAB has dealt with 1128 client employment cases. Due to the economic climate in 2009, employment issues saw a sharp rise of nearly 50%, and comprising 9% of the overall bureau workload. It is the fourth largest area of work for the bureau, behind benefits, debt and housing.
- 1.2 On average Rushmoor CAB received 94 employment related queries per month. The largest month by caseload was June 2009 (138) and the lowest was December 2009 (55).
- 1.3 In view of the growth in this area of work during 2009, an in depth analysis was undertaken in order to review the trends and underlying issues that this area of work illustrates.
- 1.4 The following analysis therefore breaks down the enquiries into different sections. By comparing January and October statistics, some of the trends during the year are illustrated.

### **2. Issues**



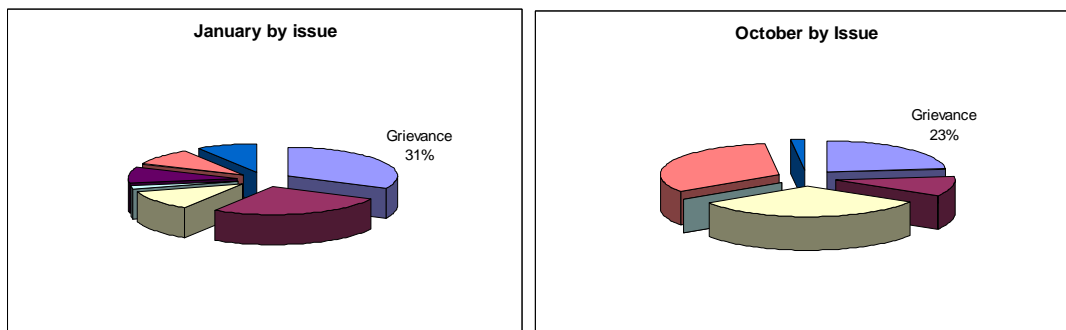
Due to the economic climate in 2009 employers looking to reduce financial costs impacted directly on employees in the following way (as categorised in CAB client issues):

- Grievances (changes to contract, wages etc)
- Redundancies
- Dismissals
- Insolvencies

## 2.1 Grievances

- 2.1.1 Many employers chose to alter their employment contracts, for example, changing employee working hours and wages. Employment grievances were the most frequent employment issue in 2009 (29% of all employment related queries).
- 2.1.2 However, in analysing the data on a month-by-month basis the percentage of grievance issues compared with other employment issues decreased over the year. In the first half of the year grievance issues amounted to between 31-37% of all employment related issues, whereas in the second half of the year grievance issues dropped to approximately 22-27% of all employment related issues.
- 2.1.3 The pie chart illustration below shows percentage of grievances in January and October compared to other employment related issues.

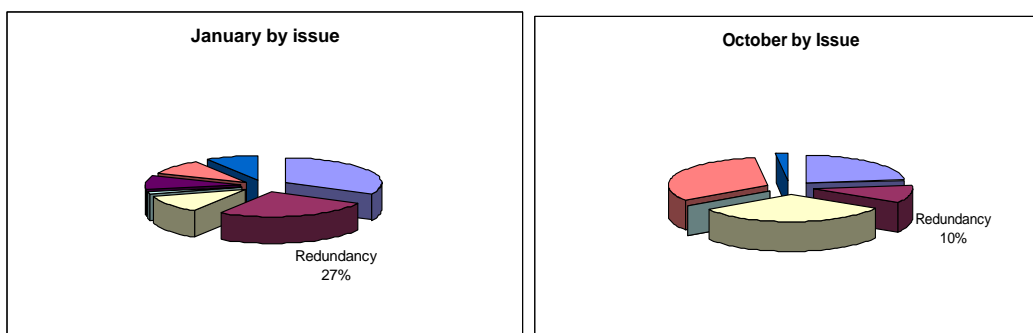
### **Grievances as Percentage of all Employment Issues**



## 2.2 Redundancies

- 2.2.1 Employers also made a number of employees redundant during 2009. Employers are obliged to follow set procedures in relation to redundancy. In checking entitlements and fair procedures, CAB was asked to help with 185 different cases of redundancy during the year, amounting to 16% of all employment related queries.
- 2.2.1 On a month-by-month analysis the redundancy issues reduced from 27% in the first half of the year to 10% in the second half of the year.
- 2.2.2 The pie chart illustration shows the % of redundancy issues in January and October compared to other employment related issues.

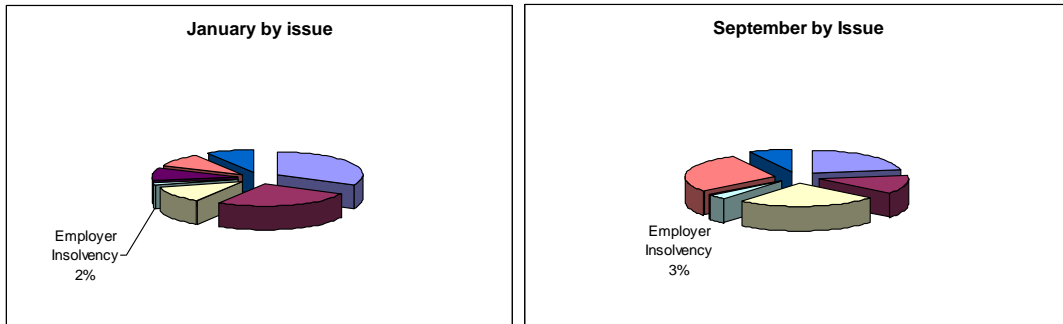
### **Redundancy as Percentage of all Employment Issues**



## 2.3 Insolvencies

- 2.3.1 Some employers became insolvent in 2009 which resulted in employee dismissals. CAB received 17 cases of employer insolvencies during 2009 (2% of all employment related queries). This percentage was constant in each month of 2009.
- 2.3.2 The pie chart illustration below shows the percentage of employer insolvency issues in January and September compared to other employment related issues.

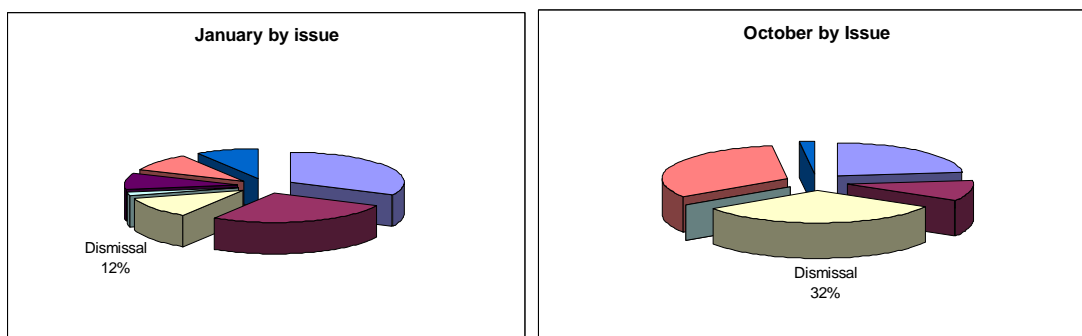
### Insolvency as Percentage of all Employment Issues



## 2.4 Dismissal

- 2.4.1 Dismissals in other cases, not insolvency related, amounted to 20% of the employment related issues in 2009.
- 2.4.2 The proportion of dismissals on a month-by-month analysis increased during the year from 14-20% at the start of the year to 22-32% at the end of the year.
- 2.4.3 The pie-chart illustration below shows % of dismissal queries in January and October compared to other employment related issues, suggesting that towards the end of the year dismissal was increasingly being turned to as an option.

### Dismissal as Percentage of all Employment Issues

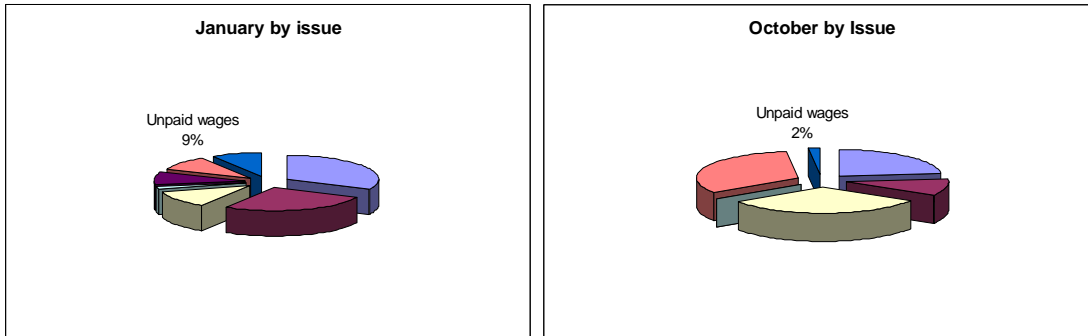


## 2.5 Unpaid wages

- 2.5.1 Some employers attempted to reduce financial costs by withholding employee wages which resulted in many clients visiting the CAB. CAB received 87 queries related to unpaid wages during 2009 and the clients tended to be contractors or temporary workers, which amounted to 8% of all employment related queries.
- 2.5.2 On a month-by-month analysis this was more of a recurring issue in the first half of the year (9-11%) than the second half of the year (2-3%).

2.5.3 Unpaid wages pie-chart illustration showing % of unpaid wage queries in January and October compared to other employment related issues.

### Wages as Percentage of all Employment Issues

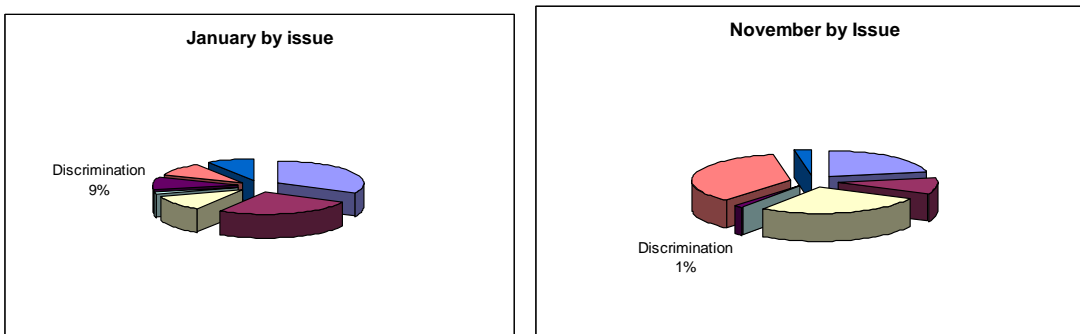


### 2.6 Discrimination

2.6.1. CAB always receives a number of discrimination-related issues (age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality and disability). The CAB received 34 cases of discrimination (3% of all employment related queries) during 2009 and the percentage decreased during the year.

2.6.2. The following pie-chart shows the percentage of discrimination queries in January and November compared to other employment related issues. In October 2009 CAB did not receive any discrimination related issues.

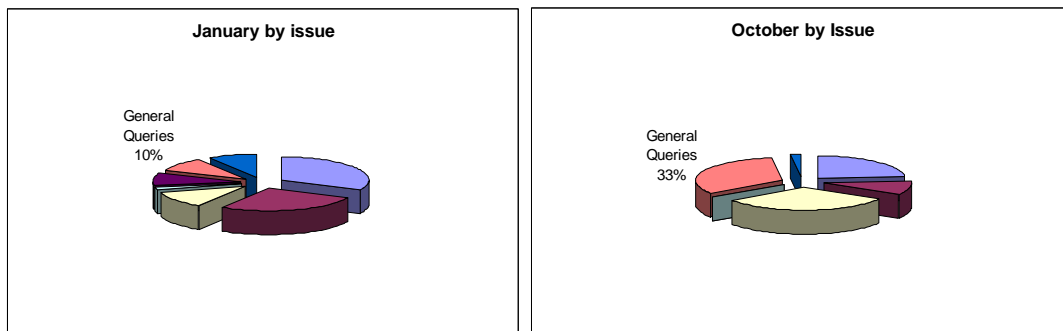
### Discrimination as Percentage of all Employment Issues



## 2.7 General Queries

- 2.7.1 CAB often has clients who do not have queries which fall into one of the above categories. For example: A client started a new job and has realised she is pregnant; a client has a query on whether she is entitled to rest breaks; A client wants to start a new career and a client wants to know how to go about joining training programme, or a client wants to be a volunteer. This is not an exhaustive list but gives a flavour of the types of issues which constitute general queries.
- 2.7.2 General queries amounted to 22% of the employment-related issues in 2009 which was the second most common classification. On a month by month analysis the percentage of general queries increased dramatically during the year from around 10% in the first half of the year to 33% at the end of the year.
- 2.7.3 The pie-chart illustration below shows the percentage of general queries in January and October compared to other employment related issues.

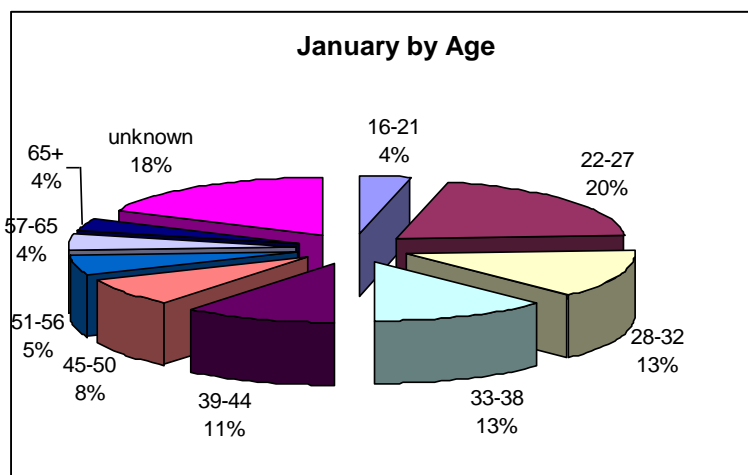
### General Employment Queries as Percentage of all Employment Issues



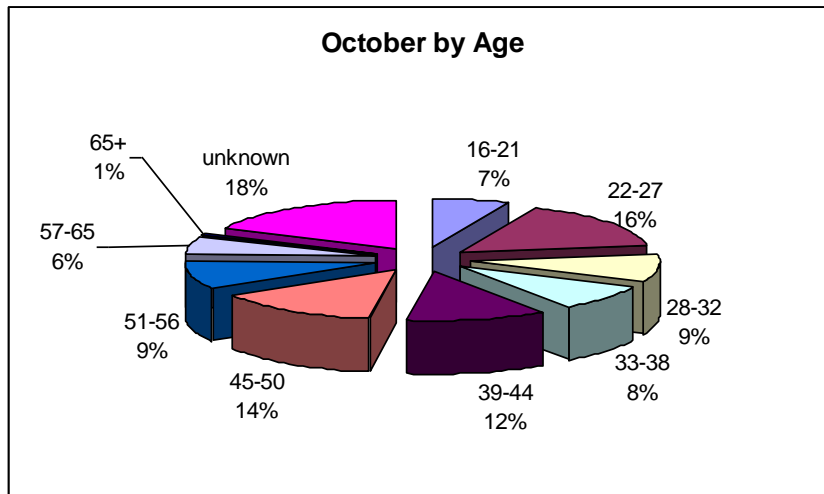
## 3 Age

- 3.1 The most affected age group in relation to employment queries in 2009 were the 22-27 year olds.
- 3.2 On a month-by-month analysis the second half of the year brought a significant number of 45-55 year olds to the CAB.
- 3.3 The pie chart illustrations below shows age groups as a percentage of all clients with employment issues in January and October

### Age percentages for all clients with Employment Issues - January

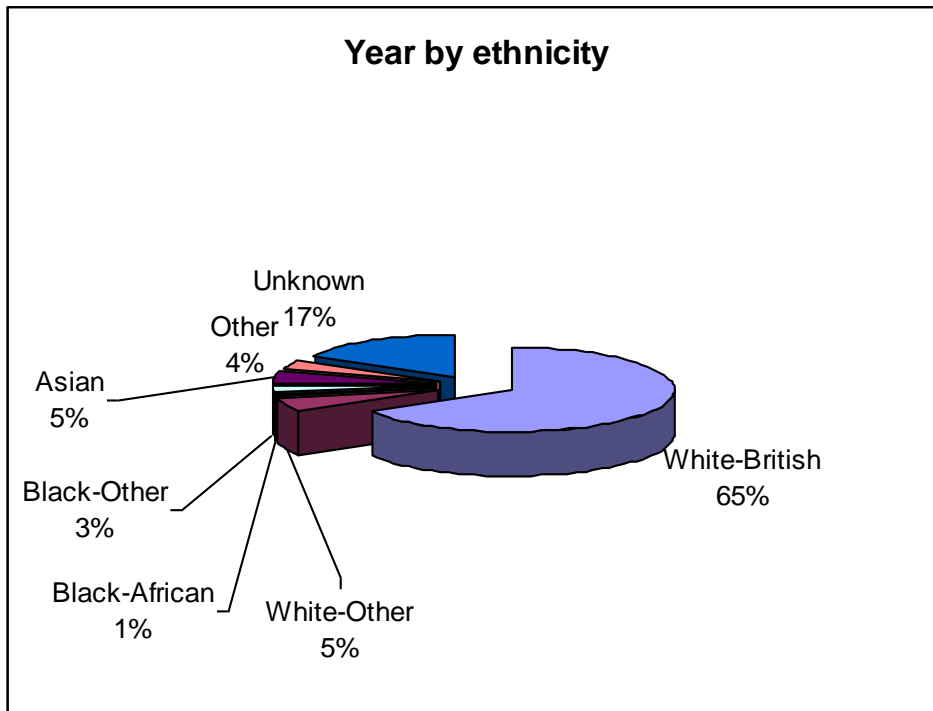


### Age percentages for all clients with Employment Issues - October



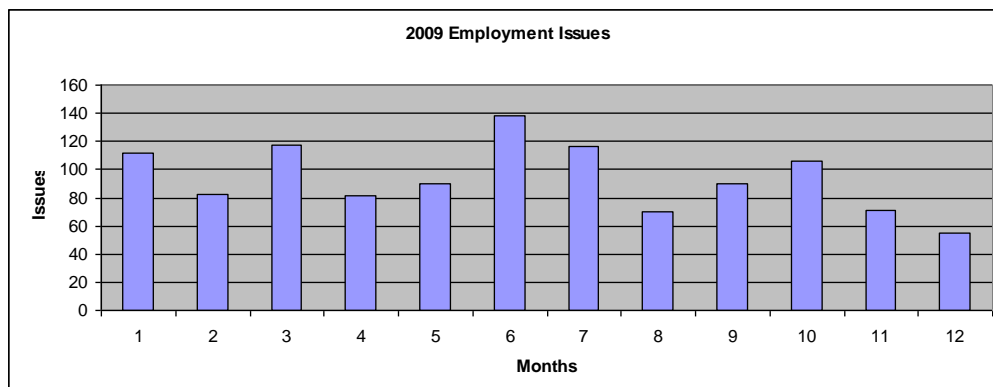
## 4 Ethnicity

- 4.1 The most common ethnic group who visited the CAB on employment issues were of White-British ethnicity (65% of all employment-related clients - 339 clients).
- 4.2 A significant proportion of clients refused/ declined to give their ethnicity on the CAB records (17%). Case records indicate that a high proportion of these cases were non-European clients; possibly reflecting language difficulty in completing the relevant form.
- 4.3 The following pie chart illustration shows all client ethnicities in 2009 in employment related issues.



## 5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The most recurrent issue during the year related to employment grievances as detailed below (29% of all employment related queries) and the least recurrent issue during the year related to employer insolvency (2% of all employment related queries).
- 5.2 The most affected age group during the year were the 22-27 year olds (14% of all employment related clients). One interpretation of this is that this group tend to be the junior employees and therefore more targeted by employers as they carry less financial costs (eg salary, pension and redundancy package). As expected, the least affected age group were 65 and over (2% of all employment related clients); as we would generally assume the larger proportion of people in this age group to be retired.
- 5.3 Clients were most commonly of white-British ethnicity in 2009 in reference to employment issues (65%); although this proportion is relatively low compared to the community profile which shows 95% of the local population as white-British. Although 17% of clients declined to give their ethnicity, information available suggests that many of these were of Nepalese origin, and may have omitted completion of the full profile due to language difficulties.
- 5.4 Although 2009 employment queries mainly related to grievances, dismissals, redundancies and insolvencies the percentage of such issues gradually decreased over the year and the percentage of general queries increased. This trend shows how employers towards the end of 2009 have not been making the significant cuts to employee numbers as they were doing in early 2009.
- 5.5 Although the most common employment related clients tended to be 20- to 30-year-olds in 2009 we saw more 40-50-year-olds as the year progressed. This coincided with the rise in dismissal enquiries, implying that companies began to dismiss older and typically more senior employees.
- 5.6 As a whole the number of employment issues decreased over the year. The bar graph below illustrates all the employment issues in 2009 and shows decline in numbers between the first and second halves of the year.
- 5.7 We anticipate the number of issues to continue at the current rate and coincide with the current economic climate.



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