



# A SUMMARY OF LEGAL ASSISTANCE 2017-18

You can find more detailed statistics at <http://www.slab.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/annual-report/>.

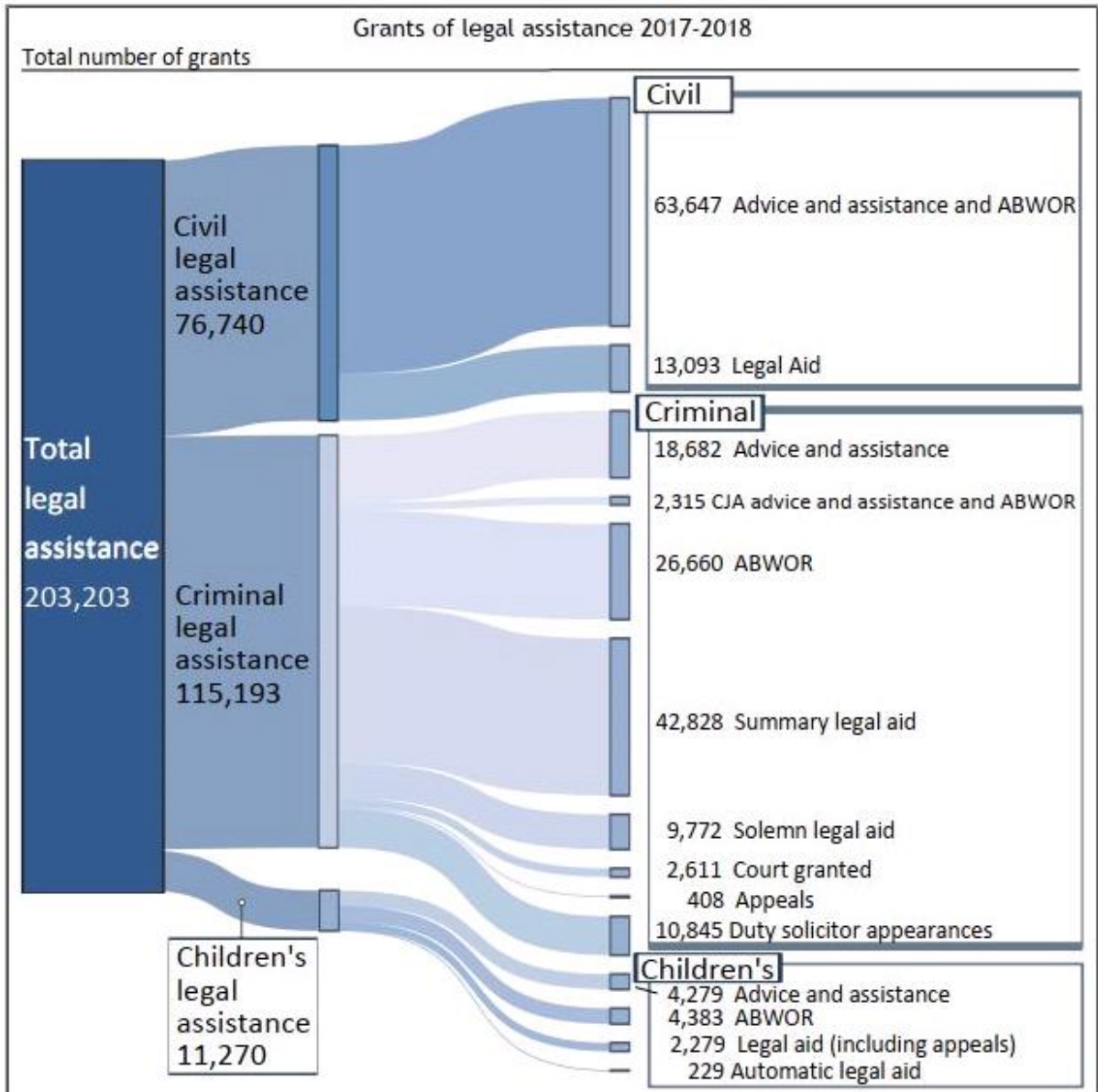
## GRANTS OF LEGAL ASSISTANCE

There were 203,203 grants of legal assistance made, of which:

**76,740**  
were for civil cases

**115,193**  
were for criminal cases

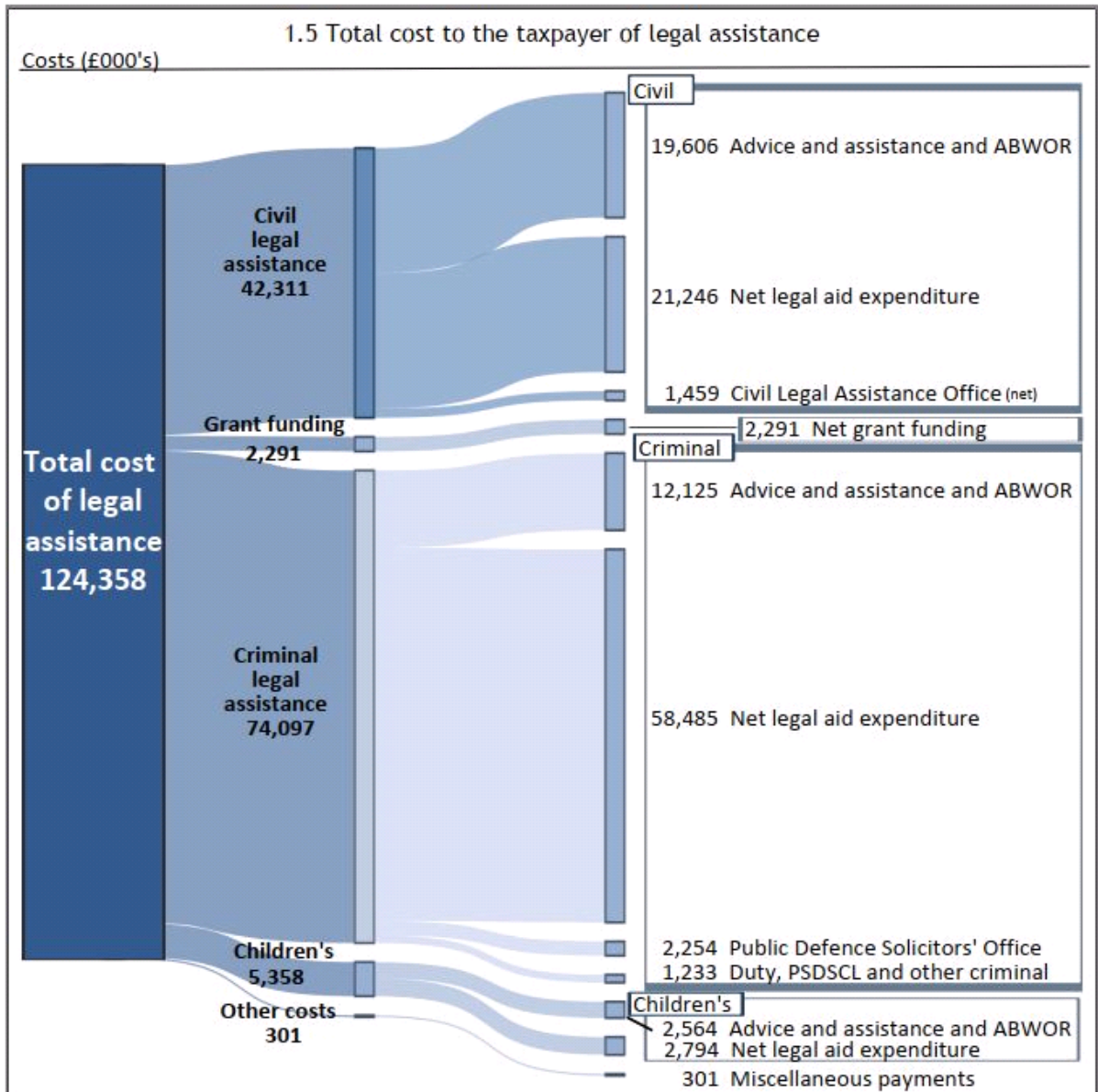
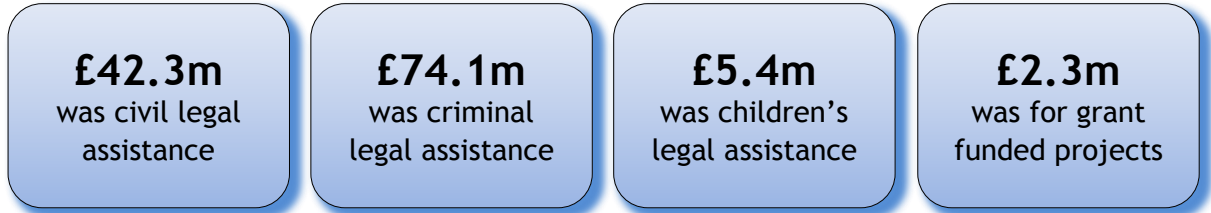
**11,270**  
were for children's cases



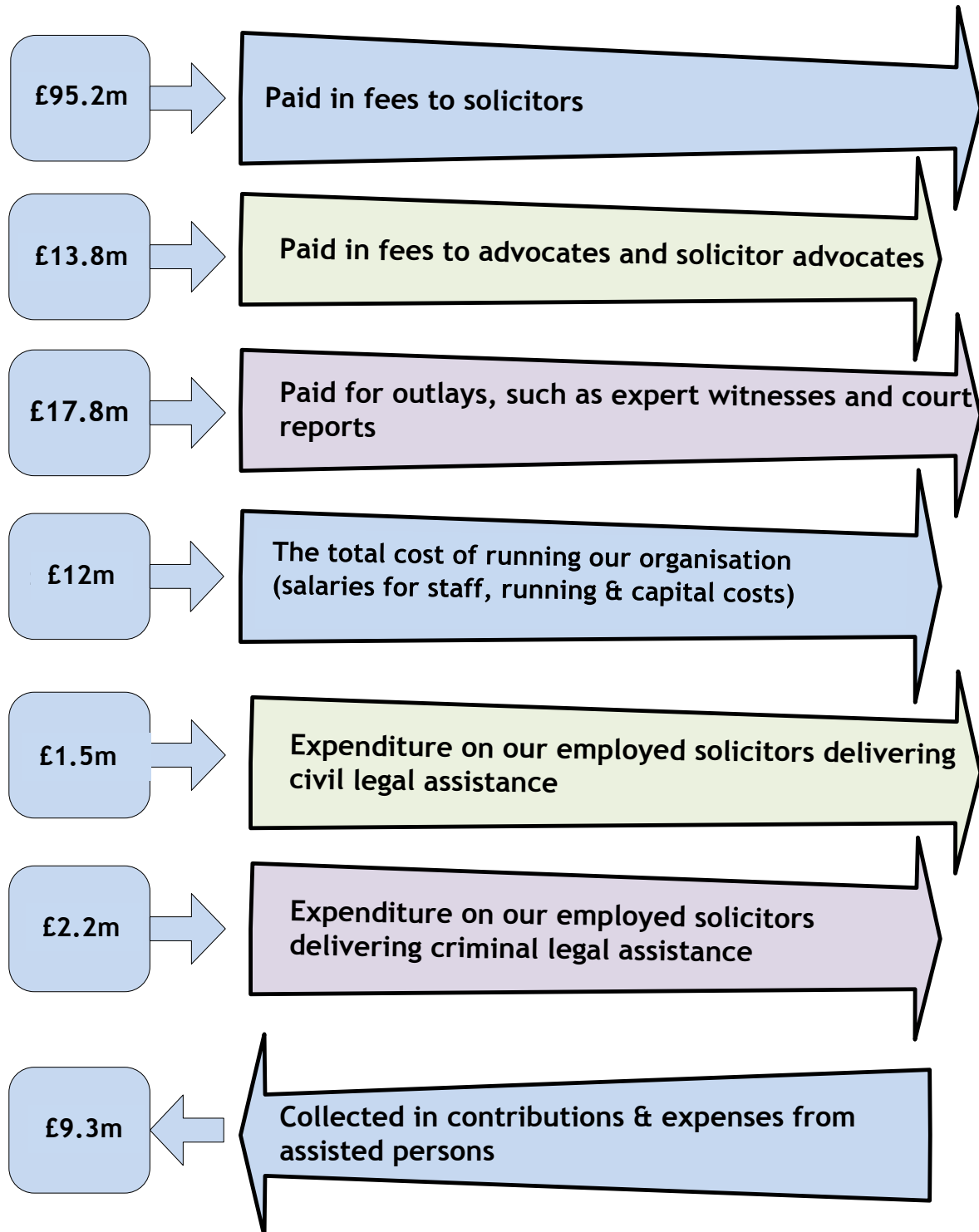
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## LEGAL ASSISTANCE EXPENDITURE

The total cost of legal assistance was £124.4m, of which:



## LEGAL ASSISTANCE EXPENDITURE - KEY COSTS AND INCOME





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## SUMMARY OF SLAB ACTIVITY

We delivered a range of key activities that contributed to the delivery of our Strategic Objectives.

To deliver improvements to legal aid processes that increase efficiency and improve the experience of system users and customers



To advise Scottish Ministers on the strategic development of legal assistance and its contribution to a Scotland in which rights are supported and disputes are resolved fairly and swiftly



To ensure that our organisation has the culture and capability to be responsive to our customers, the justice system and developments in legal and advice services

















To build and maintain effective and collaborative relationships with the legal and advice sector and our public sector partners as we seek to achieve our purpose and contribute to wider Scottish Government aims



<p><b>Risk Review</b> We reviewed the way we assess and manage risks.</p> <p>The project delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a risk appetite policy;</li> <li>• a revised Risk Management Framework;</li> <li>• a new approach to the use of risk registers;</li> <li>• a new Corporate Risk Register;</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Corporate Governance Review</b> We implemented a range of corporate governance improvements during the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a revised tool to assess Board effectiveness.</li> <li>• a revised approach to Board Member appraisal.</li> <li>• a revised Board Member skills matrix.</li> <li>• a more proactive approach to the promotion of Board Member vacancies and formulation of a Succession Plan.</li> <li>• a review of our FOI(S)A procedures, resulting in changes to procedures and publication of staff guidance.</li> <li>• initial improvements to the handling of Executive Team Meetings.</li> </ul>	



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<p><b>Online Accounts</b> We delivered a range of improvements to the submission of online accounts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• new accounts for Criminal A&amp;A and ABWOR</li><li>• a new initial layout of Legal Aid Online and the application tabs</li><li>• improvements to the electronic synopsis for paper accounts</li><li>• a new credits process</li><li>• improvements to the wording of the financial verification notifications</li><li>• a new online account negotiation process</li></ul>	 
<p><b>Cloud Based Services</b> We moved our Finance systems over to Oracle Cloud.</p>	 
<p><b>PDSO Business Plan</b> We developed and are now implementing business plans for our Public Defence Solicitors' Office network.</p>	 
<p><b>Grant Funding</b> We successfully managed a range of grant funded projects. <a href="https://www.slab.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/policyanddevelopmentoverview/#powers">https://www.slab.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/policyanddevelopmentoverview/#powers</a></p>	  
<p><b>Performance Framework</b> We continued to develop our new performance framework.</p> <p>We developed and delivered a SLAB Operational Performance Overview Report (SOPOR) which is being used in operational areas to monitor some areas of performance and this will be developed further during 2018-19. We have also launched a new survey tool to get feedback from solicitors which will take us significantly forward in the development of the customer satisfaction part of the framework.</p>	 
<p><b>Fee Reform</b> We developed and delivered advice to Ministers on summary and solemn criminal fee reform and engaged extensively with the profession on the resulting proposals. Substantial progress was also made in identifying options for reform of counsel's first instance criminal fees.</p>	  
<p><b>Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 Implementation</b> Part 1 of the Act was implemented on 25 January 2018. To compliment this, new legal aid regulations were successfully passed alongside a revised Code of Practice for Criminal Legal Assistance. A new and improved police station advice claim and payments system was also implemented.</p>	