

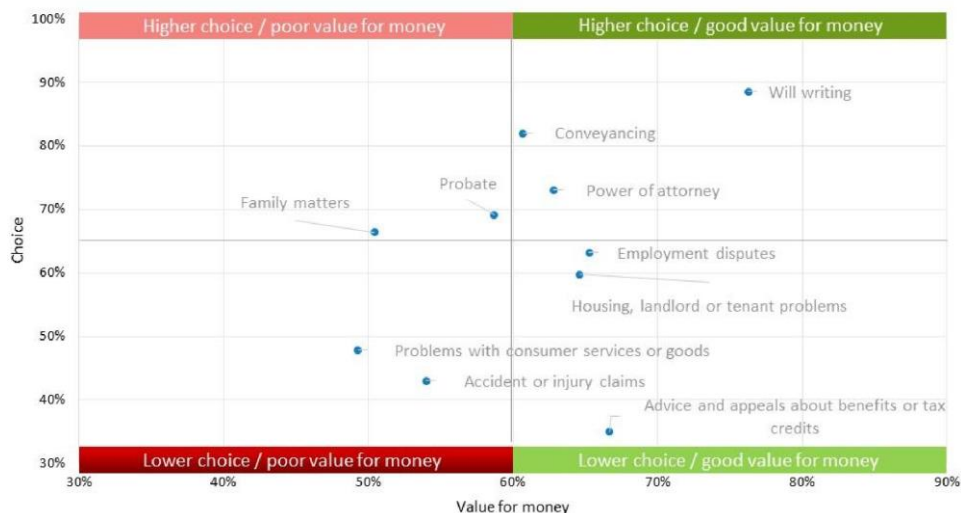
Outcome of the Legal Service Consumer Panel Survey 2019

On the 30 July, the Legal Services Consumer Panel (LSCP) published the results of its latest survey on consumers' use of legal services (16 pages). With the permission of the (LSCP) we have extracted the key findings which relate to Private client law. For full survey results see <https://www.legalservicesconsumerpanel.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/2019-07-25-How-consumers-are-choosing-2019-FINAL.pdf>

Extract re Private Client law

- Will writing is rated highest in terms of both choice of providers (89%) and value for money of the service they receive (76%).
- 51% of consumers use a fixed fee arrangement. This rises to 69% of those using a will writing service, 63% conveyancing and 59% power of attorney.
- In line with last year's findings, those who use conveyancing are most likely to shop around (38%), followed by those using will writing (30%) and those using family services (29%). In contrast, only 16% of consumers using services for accident or injury claims report shopping around.
- Older consumers, though less likely to shop around, are more likely than their younger counterparts to say they have a fair or great deal of choice (77% of 55+ vs. 64% of 18-34). This may tie in with the type of service older consumers are likely to be using, with 89% saying they have a choice in will writing and 82% in conveyancing, compared to accident or injury claims (43%) or advice and appeals about benefits or tax credits (35%).
- Satisfaction with value for money is highest amongst those that use a will writing service (76%) and lowest for consumer issues (49%) and family matters (50%).
- Figure 2 shows a comparison of how much choice consumers feel they have against the value for money they feel they receive across a number of different service areas. Consumers rate will writing highest in terms of both choice of providers and value for money of the service they receive. Conveyancing has relatively high levels of choice, though scores slightly lower for value for money. Accident and injury claims is the service area users rate as having the lowest choice and value for money.

Figure 2: Choice and value for money by legal service type



The professional body for solicitors

- Reputation is particularly important for will writing (84%). This is a service with less of a time pressure in most cases, so unsurprisingly, 60% of will writing consumers say that speed of delivery is important compared to 79% of those using conveyancing.
- Whether having used a provider in the past is most important to choice in probate and will writing, with 55% of probate consumers and 49% of power of attorney consumers rating this as important.
- The use of fixed fees is highest for services relating to will writing (69%), conveyancing (63%), and power of attorney (59%).
- Users of probate services and family matters are most likely to only find out the price when they receive the bill (14% and 13%). Those using a conveyancing service (78%) or a will writing service (68%) are most likely to have had a discussion with the provider to determine the price (78%).
- For the majority of consumers (77%) it is easy to understand the information about the price of the service they used. By service area, those using will writing are most likely to say they find it easy to understand the information about the price (89%). Conveyancing (80%), power of attorney (79%) and probate (76%) are also areas where consumers find it easy. By contrast, 13% of those using a service for family matters find it very or quite difficult.
- White British consumers are more likely than BAME consumers to say that it is easy to understand the information about the price (79% vs. 67%). Older consumers, 55+ age group, who may have previous experience of using legal services, are most likely to say they find the information easy to understand (81%) compared with 35-44 years old (68%) and 25-34 years old (61%).
- The CMA has also recommended that legal services providers should publish a description of their services, such as details of different staff who deliver services, a timeline showing when key stages of the work will be completed and any factors that could affect these.

When shopping around for a provider, 40% of consumers can recall seeing information on staff, services or timings for delivery, though the same proportion do not and 20% do not know. This is a fairly consistent trend across service types, though users of a conveyancing service are more likely to say they had not seen anything. Since 2018, there has been an increase in those saying they do see the type of information recommended by the CMA when shopping around for a provider. The proportion who report this increased from 35% in 2018 to 40% in 2019.

Those using conveyancing are less likely to see information when shopping around than those who use a will writing, a power of attorney or a probate service. 50% of conveyancing consumers say they don't see any information, compared with 33% of will writing, 33% of power of attorney and 30% of probate consumers.

- Overall, the majority of consumers do find it easy to find the information they are looking for when they shop around. However, consumers do report they find it most difficult to find information on the quality of the service (14%) and information on how long it would take (17%). Focusing on two of the largest service areas, it is more likely for conveyancing consumers to report it is difficult to find information on how long the service would take than on will writing (20% vs 6%). The same is valid when it comes to finding information on the quality of services (17% vs 8%).

Note on methodology: For the last eight years, the Legal Service Consumer Panel has commissioned YouGov to conduct an annual survey in of a sample of people who have used legal services in the last two years. This year they spoke to 3589 legal service users. All differences in the results between sub-groups and over time presented in this report represent statistically significant differences. The results have been tested to the 95% confidence level – LSCP are 95% confident that these findings are not due to chance. Fieldwork took place during 19 February and 26 March 2019.