**Data collection method:**

The project was characterised by its strongly collaborative character in all 3 phases. Phase 1: Prior to the commencement of research, members of relevant organisations and bodies were consulted in order to transform the goals and aims into a more detailed research framework. As a result of this scoping phase, certain field sites and contexts were modified, as specified below. Results were discussed at a first researcher workshop. Phase 2: Researchers returned to the field, proceeding by using the ‘extended case study’ method to select a sample of cases, attempting to follow these as they progressed (though this was difficult owing to confidentiality issues), and exploring how they were situated in a wider politico/legal/economic framework. Phase 3: Extending this to the macro-level a series of further researcher workshops were held at which draft research papers were discussed, with the aim of exploring three national contexts across the three sectors (housing, debt and immigration). Some were held in London, one was a conference panel at the Law and Society conference (2017). The papers together with overview introduction were submitted to Ethnos, and are now, having been accepted, pending publication. Taking these papers further, a final/end of project workshop was held in 2018 at which advisory board members and other participants provided commentary, and a ‘Visual Special Issue’ was the outcome (7a in this submission. For the pdf with the workshop brief plus list of papers/presenters, see zipfile 1, item 7a. Papers are awaiting submission to or publication in various outlets.

In sum, the field-oriented research was ethnographic; methods also included semi-structured interviews, library research (of the journal Quarterly Account and newspaper articles), literature surveys, and scrutiny of policy documents. We held methodologically open workshops and discursive seminars at LSE, and presented panels and received feedback at three international conferences.

**Data sourcing, processing and preparation:**

In our original data management plan, we made the following observation: 'Given that the seeking of advice when people fall on hard times is a sensitive matter, particularly for matters as intimate as debt for example, and given that some informants may be living or acting on the margins of the law, it will likely be necessary to anonymize both individual informants and advice-giving agencies in the process of generating data. Doing so can often be tricky, given that a range of parallel indicators exist which can make an agency easy to identify by other means. In other cases, however, informants more inclined towards the politicization of their plight may be willing, even insistent, on being named. These considerations will have to be negotiated during the process of conducting research, given that, as stated by the ethics code of the ASA, informed consent is a process rather than an event.'

Although the organisations where we did research were agreeable to the aims of our project and were informed of the data management plan, it was much more difficult, and in most cases impossible, to negotiate this point with specific individuals/advisees, who were vulnerable, in trouble, and under duress. Advisers seeking advisees’ permission for us to sit in or shadow advice sessions and interviews would do so in very general terms – as in ‘This is Doctor So-and-So from LSE who is doing research’. They assured us that confronting such advisees with forms to fill in, and especially telling them that our observations of client/advisee interactions would be archived and/or stored, would have confused and alarmed them. We thus do not have consent forms. Instead we undertook with advisers to clear with them, retroactively, the versions of fieldwork (mostly anonymised) which we included in our working papers, conference presentations and the like (offered here for storage), and we have been assured that this was an acceptable way to proceed.

In light of this, the data we are storing consists of sample interviews and pages from fieldnotes/ethnographic observations (in each case we selected those deemed to raise fewest problems of confidentiality), plus those parts and excerpts from interviews, field notes and ethnographic observations (anonymized where necessary) that were included in draft working papers for discussion during the project, which we have cleared with the organisations we were working with.

This strategy is in line with another point we made in our initial statement.

‘Even when anonymised, data collected by anthropologists is necessarily specific to particular times, places and contexts. This automatically means that archiving it – once anonymised and robbed of this specificity – can sometimes be problematic and at other times can render it unusual to other potential users.’

It is also in line with the 2018 statement on data collection by the European Association of Social Anthropologists:

'2. Archiving: In ethnographic research “data” are always part of a social relationship. It is not easily reducible to a fixed and finished product. As such, it may not always be possible to archive or store research materials. In other cases, the archiving of ethnographic materials will require specific technical features (e.g. different roles for access, editing, sharing or privacy) not available in most institutional repositories.

3. Consent: Ethnographic participation in a social milieu can lead to situations and dynamics that are not always controllable by researchers and for which it is not always possible (indeed, it is often impossible) to obtain prior informed consent. Moreover, since research materials are never completely fixed, written consent can never fully determine its future uses or interpretations as “data”. In contexts of violence or vulnerability, written consent may violate research participants’ privacy and confidentiality, and even put them at risk. For ethnographers, informed consent is an ongoing process.'

<https://easaonline.org/downloads/support/EASA%20statement%20on%20data%20governance.pdf>

**Notes on access:**

To use or access zipfiles 1-9 of this data, please contact the PI Deborah James; [D.A.James@lse.ac.uk](mailto:D.A.James@lse.ac.uk) . Videos labelled 7a (precarious\_states\_visual\_special, see ReadMe file, can be found on Youtube at the links provided under Related Resources; these are also available from UKDS upon demand due to their large file size, please contact [reshare@ukdataservice.ac.uk](mailto:reshare@ukdataservice.ac.uk) for more information).