

North East Scotland Advice Forum is a local network for people working in advice services to share information and experiences. The Forum meets quarterly throughout the year.

## January 2025 Newsletter

If you would like an article included in the next bulletin, please contact [admin@nesaf.co.uk](mailto:admin@nesaf.co.uk)



Sign up to receive latest news and information at [www.nesaf.co.uk/contact/](http://www.nesaf.co.uk/contact/)

Previous Benefit Bulletins can be viewed and downloaded at [nesaf.co.uk/info/nesaf-benefit-bulletins/](http://nesaf.co.uk/info/nesaf-benefit-bulletins/)

## Benefit calculator

Our benefits calculator will help you find out what benefits you can claim. The calculator is free to use, and the details you provide are anonymous.

Before you start, make sure you have information about your savings, income, pensions and existing benefits (for you and your partner).

If you run out of time, you can save your calculation and come back to it later, and pick up right where you left off.

⇒ *Should take 10 minutes to complete*

⇒ *Please complete all fields with an asterisk(\*)*



[START >>>](#)

## North East Scotland Advice Forum

**Thurs 13th Feb 2025**  
**By Microsoft Teams**  
**10:00 – 12:00**

Speakers include:

- Justine Dunbar, Suicide Prevention Community Engagement Officer, North East Suicide Prevention
- Diane Alexander, Community Partnership Officer, Home Energy Scotland
- Gareth Smith, External Relations Leader, DWP
- Amy Duncan, Cash First, ACVO
- Jo-Ann De Sykes, Senior Project Officer, Child Poverty, AbzWorks

[Microsoft Teams](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 396 701 612 318  
Passcode: CWm3sd



## Universal credit rent deductions scheme declared unlawful by High Court

[Nathan Roberts v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions \[2025\] EWHC 51 \(Admin\) Decision](#)

Mr Justice Fordham allows the judicial review, finding that the DWP's policy for implementing rent deductions is unlawful due to procedural unfairness.



## Government's consultation on proposed changes to Work Capability Assessment was 'so unfair as to be unlawful'

This document is a judgment from the High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division, Administrative Court, dated 16 January 2025, in the case of R (on the application of Ellen Clifford) v. The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

The case concerns a judicial review of a consultation on proposed changes to the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) conducted by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions. The claimant, Ellen Clifford, a disability rights campaigner, challenged the consultation on grounds of inadequate explanation of the proposals, insufficient rationale, lack of impact information, and insufficient time for response.

The court found that the consultation was so unfair as to be unlawful, establishing that the consultation documents were misleading, failed to adequately explain the proposals and their rationale, and did not provide sufficient time for consultees to respond. The judgment grants a declaration that the consultation was unlawful.

Decision in full [R \(on the application of Ellen Clifford\) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions](#)

## Benefit rates 2025/2026

Rightsnet – [www.rightsnet.org.uk/resources/benefit-rates](http://www.rightsnet.org.uk/resources/benefit-rates)

Gov.uk - [Benefit and state pension rates 2025 to 2026](#)

Draft Scottish figures:

The Social Security (Up-rating) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2025

- [Social Security Assistance in Scotland Up-rating for Inflation in 2025-26](#)

Some other details-

Rises-

- Most Benefit rates for those aged under 66, uprated by 1.7%.
- Most Benefits for those over 66, uprated by 4.1%.
- Direct Deductions from most means tested Benefits
- Universal Credit Work Allowances (earnings disregards).
- Universal Credit maximum childcare costs
- Carers Allowance earnings limit
- Non dependant deductions (HB)/ housing costs contributions (UC)

Frozen -

- Bereavement Support Payment (frozen since April 2018)
- Means Tested Benefit Capital Limits (frozen since April 2006)
- Means Tested Benefit earnings disregards (excluding Universal Credit) (frozen for most in the late 1980s)
- JSA (c) and ESA (c) Pensions disregards
- National Insurance thresholds- the Primary threshold
- Benefit Cap Rate
- Social Fund sure start maternity grants and cold weather payments

## Enhanced disability premium when migrating to Universal Credit

Tabled on 6th Dec 2024

### Question

Asked by [Anna Dixon](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when her Department plans to decide (a) how and (b) when people affected by the loss of the enhanced disability premium when migrating to Universal Credit will receive the additional amount prescribed in the [Universal Credit \(Transitional Provisions\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023](#).

### Answer

Answered by [Sir Stephen Timms](#) on 17 December 2024

Regulations to provide additional transitional protection for those in receipt of Enhanced Disability premium came into force on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024 for eligible customers to Universal Credit.

The Department is fully committed to identifying and paying eligible customers who have already moved to Universal Credit.

This is a highly complex issue and work is continuing at pace on the solution to make back payments and monthly payments is expected to commence in a controlled manner in Quarter 1 of 2025, subject to payment accuracy assurances being satisfied.

[questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-12-06/18471/](https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-12-06/18471/)

## Biggest fraud crackdown in a generation

The new Public Authorities (Fraud, Error & Recovery) Bill will deliver on this government's manifesto commitment to safeguard taxpayers' money – ensuring every pound is spent wisely and effectively.

As part of new legislation:

- Benefit cheats could be disqualified from driving for periods of up to two years if they refuse all opportunities to repay the money they owe.
- The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will be able to apply to the court with the justification to suspend fraudsters from driving, provided the debt is £1,000 or over and frequent requests to repay the debt have been ignored.
- DWP's serious organised crime investigators are also expected to be handed powers to apply to a court for search warrants. It means that for the first time, they will be able to support Police and search premises and seize items such as computers and smartphones as evidence against fraudsters.
- The Bill is expected to save the Department £1.5 billion over the next five years, and forms part of wider government plans to save a total of £8.6bn over 5 years in the biggest welfare fraud and error budget package in recent history.

Measures in the Bill will be underpinned by a principle of fairness and proportionality.

Read the full press note: [Biggest fraud crackdown in a generation - GOV.UK](#)



## Ask DWP to review their decision that you must repay a hardship payment

This scheme is for people who received a Recoverable Hardship Payment from Universal Credit. Hardship payments provide financial protection for customers whose benefit is reduced by a sanction or a fraud loss of benefit penalty.

Customers might be eligible for a refund if DWP refused a request to consider either:

- stopping ('waiving') their repayments, or
- reviewing the rate of repayment

Further information on the eligibility and how to apply can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Applications must be made by 4 May 2025.

Customers who would like support in completing the application can call the scheme helpline on 0800 158 5557. Relay UK (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): 18001 then 0800 328 5644

## Move to Universal Credit update

As we move into 2025, we are increasing the number of migration notices issued to those households receiving income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) only, and ESA with Housing Benefit. In addition, we are focusing on supporting those households who received a migration notice in 2024 and are yet to make the move, particularly before tax credits close on 5 April 2025.

On 17 December 2024 we published our fourth Insight document, [Move to Universal Credit – Insight on Income Support and Housing Benefit and initial ESA cohort activity](#). We also published, on this date, three research papers:

- [Move to Universal Credit for Tax Credit Couples: Qualitative Research](#)
- [Move to Universal Credit non-claimants \(formerly tax credits customers\)](#)
- [Move to Universal Credit Late Claimers \(formerly tax credit customers\) Qualitative Research](#)

Amendments to [Universal Credit](#) regulations were laid in Parliament on 6 January 2025 and will come in to force on 27 January 2025; these regulations predominately make small clarifying changes to the regulations. Further detail can be found in [The Social Security \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2025](#).

Changes have been made to the Universal Credit Service to easily identify Corporate Appointees in the online claim. Corporate Appointees can now self-identify and will be treated as departmental trusted partners which provides flexibility on how we communicate and work with them.

Next steps announced  
on addressing  
**Carer's Allowance**  
overpayments

**Economic inactivity**  
set to be tackled  
with **funding boost**

**Keep Britain Working:**  
An independent review  
into employment support  
for disabled people and  
the long-term sick



## Introduction of Scottish adult Disability Living Allowance from March 2025

### [The Disability Assistance \(Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance\) Regulations 2025](#)

The policy note confirms that no action will be required on behalf of the individual.

Claimants will be issued with a notice of intention to transfer, which will set out the process and timescales.

Scottish Ministers will use the information from the DWP to make a determination (without an application) of the individual's entitlement to Scottish adult DLA on a like-for-like basis over a period prescribed in the notice.



## Adult Disability Payment has replaced Personal Independence Payment in Scotland

[Adult Disability Payment](#) has replaced Personal Independence Payment in Scotland

Personal Independence Payment (PIP), which is paid by the Department for Work in Pensions, has been replaced by [Adult Disability Payment](#) in Scotland. [Adult Disability Payment](#) is money to help people who have a disability or long-term health condition that affects their everyday life.

Social Security Scotland is responsible for delivering Adult Disability Payment and we ask anyone in Scotland who is getting Personal Independence Payment (PIP) to contact us if they have not yet received a letter explaining that their benefit is moving to Adult Disability Payment.

People should now either have their benefit transfer in progress or have been transferred to [Adult Disability Payment](#). Anyone with a Scottish postcode who is still getting PIP and not received a letter should get in touch with us. They can do this by calling our freephone number 0800 182 2222 or getting in touch on [Webchat](#).

### More information on disability benefit case transfer

- [Moving from Personal Independence Payment to Adult Disability Payment](#)
- The process of [moving Disability Living Allowance awards for adults](#) is still ongoing. If you live in Scotland and still receive Disability Living Allowance, you do not need to contact us.
- Disability Living Allowance for Children has been replaced by [Child Disability Payment](#) in Scotland. If the child or young person you look after lives in Scotland and still receives Disability Living Allowance, please contact Social Security Scotland on 0800 182 2222 or via [webchat](#).
- [Pension Age Disability Payment](#) is replacing Attendance Allowance in Scotland, which is delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). People who already get Attendance Allowance do not need to apply separately as their award will automatically be moved to Social Security Scotland, starting early 2025.

[www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/news-events/news/adult-disability-payment-has-replaced-personal-independence-payment-in-scotland](http://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/news-events/news/adult-disability-payment-has-replaced-personal-independence-payment-in-scotland)



## Higher rate of Pregnancy and Baby Payment for domestic abuse survivors

Financial support is available to people forced to leave their home with their children because of domestic abuse. The help is in the form of a higher amount of [Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment](#).

Pregnancy and Baby Payment is £754.65 for your first child. Your first child is your oldest child under 16 and can include a stepchild, or any child you're responsible for through adoption, or kinship care. Normally this changes to a payment of £377.35 for any subsequent child.

However, if you and your children have been forced to leave your home because of domestic abuse by your partner or ex-partner, you may get £754.65 for any child after your first.

You can get Pregnancy and Baby Payment any time after you have reached the end of the 24th week of pregnancy, up until your baby is six months old.

If your baby is born before 24 weeks, you can apply from this earlier date. If you've taken over looking after a child (for example, if you've adopted), you can apply up to the day before the child's first birthday. You can get Pregnancy and Baby Payment for multiple children, as long as each child is the right age when you apply.

You can use the payment for anything you might need, including: pregnancy clothes, a pram, a cot, baby clothes, toys etc.

You can still get the Pregnancy and Baby Payment part of Best Start Grant for a baby that was stillborn or died after they were born. If you're paid when you're pregnant, and your baby is stillborn or dies later, you will not need to pay any money back. If you apply after a stillbirth or death, you can apply up to 6 months after the baby's birth date.

Call us free on 0800 182 2222 to find out more about [Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment](#)

[www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/news-events/news/higher-rate-of-pregnancy-and-baby-payment-for-domestic-abuse-survivors](http://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/news-events/news/higher-rate-of-pregnancy-and-baby-payment-for-domestic-abuse-survivors)



## FM: Removing two child limit will help thousands

Published 15 January 2025

Progress to eradicate child poverty. Thousands of families will be helped as part of the Scottish Government's plans to remove the two child benefit cap.

### Background

[Vision for eradicating child poverty in Scotland: First Minister's speech - 15 January 2025](#)

- CPAG, the Child Poverty Action Group, estimates that mitigating the two-child limit in Scotland could lift around 15,000 children out of poverty: [cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-12/Cost\\_of\\_a\\_Child\\_Scotland\\_2024.pdf](http://cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-12/Cost_of_a_Child_Scotland_2024.pdf)
- The Scottish Fiscal Commission has also published estimates of the number of children in Scotland impacted by the two-child limit this year, and who would benefit from mitigation were it to commence in 2026-27 (39,000 in 2025-26, rising to 42,000 in 2026-27). [Mitigating the two-child limit and the Scottish Budget | Scottish Fiscal Commission](#).

Read the full article—[www.gov.scot/news/fm-removing-two-child-limit-will-help-thousands/](http://www.gov.scot/news/fm-removing-two-child-limit-will-help-thousands/)



## People in Scotland urged to check if they're eligible for thousands in financial support

Unpaid carers, disabled people and people on low incomes could be entitled to thousands of pounds in benefits in 2025.

We are encouraging anyone who thinks they might be eligible for financial help to check their entitlement by using one of the online [benefits checkers](#) on mygov.scot or by getting in touch with us directly.

Our organisation provides 15 benefits, ranging from Funeral Support Payment for people on low incomes who lose someone close to them, to Job Start Payment for young people getting back into work.

Support is also available to people who are disabled, terminally ill or who have a long-term health condition. Child Disability Payment and Adult Disability Payment provide up to £180 a week to help cover the extra costs of being disabled and are available no matter whether someone is in work or has savings.

In Aberdeen City, Argyll and Bute, Highland, Orkney and Shetland, disabled people also have the option of applying for Pension Age Disability Payment. In the rest of Scotland older disabled people can apply for Attendance Allowance from the DWP.

Pension Age Disability Payment is replacing Attendance Allowance in Scotland and will be available across the country by Spring.

Support for unpaid carers is already available nationwide. Carer Support Payment is for people over 16 who spend 35 or more hours a week looking after adults or children who get disability benefits. Teens who spend 16 hours or more a week caring can apply for Young Carer Grant. The payment of around £380 can be applied for once a year at ages 16, 17 and 18.

Help is also available to parents and guardians on low incomes who get Universal Credit, tax credits or other qualifying benefits.

Scottish Child Payment provides around £106 every four weeks to parents getting certain benefits who have children under the age of 16. This benefit was introduced by the Scottish Government and is not available elsewhere in the UK.

Parents can also get a Best Start Foods payment to help buy healthy food. The monthly payment is available from pregnancy until a child turns three.

Three other Best Start Grants are available and provide money at key stages of a child's early life.

Additional support is available to anyone who is disabled, terminally ill or living with a long-term health condition.

Contact independent advocacy organisation [VoiceAbility](#) on 0300 303 1660.

### Background

Social Security Scotland provides 15 benefits. As well as those outlined above, it also provides:

- [Carer's Allowance Supplement - mygov.scot](#)
- [Child Winter Heating Payment - mygov.scot](#)
- [Winter Heating Payment - mygov.scot](#)

[www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/news-events/news/people-in-scotland-urged-to-check-if-theyre-eligible-for-thousands-in-financial-support](http://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/news-events/news/people-in-scotland-urged-to-check-if-theyre-eligible-for-thousands-in-financial-support)





Social Security Scotland  
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba



## Draft regulations will require people moving to Scotland and are in receipt of disability or carer benefits to make a new application to Social Security Scotland

Referral of draft regulations from the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice

### **Social Security (Cross-border Provision, Case Transfer and Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2025**

These draft regulations make changes to the regulations for Child Disability Payment, Adult Disability Payment, Pension Age Disability Payment and Carer Support Payment so that people moving from the rest of the UK to Scotland who have been in receipt of a corresponding DWP benefit will need to make a new application to Social Security Scotland.

These draft regulations therefore remove the current provision of 'determination without application' for cross-border movers but provide that people who apply within a certain period will ultimately have no gap in entitlement between the two benefits.

Additionally, these regulations will allow access to support through Scottish Carer Supplement and Carer Additional Person Payment for carers moving to Scotland from the rest of the UK and receiving a 13 week run on of Carer's Allowance.

The draft regulations also include provisions to amend the Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance regulations, using a similar process to that used for Scottish Adult DLA awards made after an interval, for cross-border moves. We have included draft provisions on Scottish Adult DLA for scrutiny in square brackets pending the outcome of discussions with DWP on this process. This is because new applications are not available in Scottish Adult DLA, therefore further detailed impacting is required on this client journey.

Similarly, we are finalising our position on revoking case transfer provisions for CDP, ADP, PADP, CSP and Scottish Adult DLA, as the automatic transfer process winds down.

The regulations also include amendments to the CSP regulations to allow for applications for the benefit to be made up to 13 weeks in advance of entitlement. This change will support the new cross-border process by ensuring clients can apply for CSP while still in receipt of Carer's Allowance, additionally allowing access to support through Scottish Carer Supplement and Carer Additional Person Payment for carers moving to Scotland from the rest of the UK and receiving a 13-week run on of Carer's Allowance.

Finally, we are also taking this opportunity to make some minor changes to residence and presence conditions for Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods regulations, updating references to international agreements, and removing now redundant provisions relating to the initial period of applications for disability benefits within these regulations.

We plan for the regulations to come into force in September 2025. Changes to PADP and Scottish Adult DLA will come into force later if required to take account of the different end dates of case transfer.

Along with the draft regulations, I am also providing a draft policy note. The relevant impact assessments are still being drafted but we hope to share them in due course. These impact assessments may continue to be updated as we gather more data before the Regulations are formally laid before Parliament.

SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE

[socialsecuritycommission.scot/current-work/the-social-security-cross-border-provision-case-transfer-and-miscellaneous-amendment-scotland-regulations-2025/](https://socialsecuritycommission.scot/current-work/the-social-security-cross-border-provision-case-transfer-and-miscellaneous-amendment-scotland-regulations-2025/)





## Winter Heating Payment

[Regulations to introduce a means-tested Pension Age Winter Heating Payment in Scotland were laid in the Scottish Parliament on 25 September 2024.](#) This is the Scottish equivalent to Winter Fuel Payment (WFP).

### Change of plan

The plan was to introduce a universal Pension Age Winter Heating Payment (PAWHP) this winter administered by Social Security Scotland. This would have provided a £200 annual payment to all pension age households, or £300 where someone in the household was aged 80 or over. The Scottish Government [consulted](#), the Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCOSS) [reported on draft regulations](#) and £178 million in funding through the Block Grant Adjustment for Winter Fuel Payment was added to the 2024-25 Scottish Budget.

But in July 2024, the UK Government announced that the benefit would be means tested in England and Wales. The Scottish Government has estimated that this will [reduce the funding for Scotland by £150 million](#). This is because, under the [fiscal framework](#), the UK Government provides enough funding through the Block Grant Adjustment (BGA) to follow UK policy.

The Scottish Government is therefore, reluctantly, following the UK Government and restricting eligibility to pensioners getting means-tested benefits – primarily Pension Credit. Scottish regulations and parliamentary scrutiny

The [Winter Heating Assistance \(Pension Age\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2024](#) make the change in eligibility. They will be discussed in the Social Justice and Social Security Committee before being voted on in the Chamber.

Without these regulations, there is no legal basis for any Winter Fuel Payments at all.

The [Westminster regulations](#) abolished the existing scheme across the UK, but only put in place a replacement for England and Wales.

In the longer term, it's expected that the benefit will be delivered by Social Security Scotland. However, for this winter, there will be an agency agreement for the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to deliver the payment on behalf of the Scottish Government.

### How many pensioners will be affected?

A universal payment benefits all pensioners – around a million people in Scotland. The Pension Credit caseload is around 140,000 individuals. Some others will be eligible through being, for example, a 'mixed age' couple on Universal Credit, but the main way to qualify will be Pension Credit.

Constituency	People losing Winter Fuel Payment
Aberdeen Central	8,000
Aberdeen Donside	13,300
Aberdeen South and North Kincardine	13,400
Aberdeenshire East	14,800
Aberdeenshire West	14,900
Angus North and Mearns	13,800
Angus South	15,600
Banffshire and Buchan Coast	14,100
Dundee City East	11,200
Dundee City West	9,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>128,700</b>



## Nearly a third of people feel too 'embarrassed' to seek support for their energy bills in the UK



Jessica Taplin, chief executive of the British Gas Energy Trust, writes about why fuel poverty is a crisis that cannot be ignored

A recent survey by the British Gas Energy Trust has revealed that 35% of people find it difficult to discuss their energy bills, 34% believe they do not qualify for assistance, and 28% are too embarrassed to seek support. These statistics highlight the significant impact of stigma and misinformation on individuals experiencing [fuel poverty](#).

Fuel poverty extends beyond [unaffordable energy bills](#). It is exacerbated by substandard housing conditions, poor health, and the stress associated with mounting debts. For some, the stigma and embarrassment prevent them from seeking help altogether, further deepening their hardship.

Currently, more than six million UK households are living in fuel poverty, with the [energy price crisis](#) contributing to the most substantial increase in poverty seen in over 30 years. The comforting image of families gathered in warm, well-heated homes for a shared meal this winter remains a distant and unattainable luxury for many. Nearly half (46%) of adults in Britain are now rationing their energy use –turning off heating, skipping hot meals, or cutting back in other essential areas to make ends meet.

Read the full article [www.bigissue.com/opinion/bills-support-british-gas-energy-trust/](http://www.bigissue.com/opinion/bills-support-british-gas-energy-trust/)

## Getting IR-ESA to top up Contributory ESA?

## Housing Systems

### How Managed Migration will work for these claimants

Some claimants will be receiving Income-Related ESA to top up an award of Contributory ESA.

As Income-Related ESA is a legacy benefit, these claimants (if they have not already done so), will receive a Migration Notice at some point during 2025.

The Migration Notice is a letter notifying the claimant that their legacy benefit/s i.e. the Income-Related ESA (and any HB\*) are due to end and inviting them to claim Universal Credit (UC) instead.

\* unless living in 'specified' or 'temporary' accommodation.

As Contributory ESA is not a 'legacy benefit' the claimant's entitlement to this will not end – whether or not they claim UC.

Read the full article - [www.housingsystems.co.uk/News/News-Articles/id/187](http://www.housingsystems.co.uk/News/News-Articles/id/187)

## Effectiveness of the devolved benefit system survey

This year, NAWRA surveyed Scottish members about the effectiveness of the devolved benefit system.

The results revealed widespread dissatisfaction with Social Security Scotland (SSS) and the tribunal service. Advisers reported ongoing issues with ADP case transfers, poor communication, and delays in decision-making, while many also noted that their clients' experiences had worsened.

Additionally, problems with tribunal scheduling and the telephone-default approach to hearings raised concerns about fairness.

[Read the full survey results and insights](#) into how these challenges impact both advisers and clients



## Free online training on Pension Age Benefits

As part of our ongoing commitment to strengthening the financial resilience and tenancy stability of individuals and families across Scotland, our HSBC project offers essential support in income maximisation, debt management, and guidance on benefits and financial obligations. Our team regularly assists those facing severe financial hardship, many of whom struggle to cover their basic living expenses. We are also pleased to announce that as part of our ongoing commitment to capacity building and upskilling, we will be offering targeted training sessions to enhance your team's knowledge.

We are excited to offer **free online training on Pension Age Benefits**. This session will cover key topics such as how to apply for pension age benefits, an overview of the available benefits, and case studies.

A Q&A segment will also be included to address any specific queries your staff or service users may have from the training provided.

The online training will be held on **Tuesday 4th, Wednesday 5th, and Thursday 6th February 2025**, and we would be delighted to invite your team to participate. We believe this training will help raise awareness about the various benefits available to those of pension age and provide the tools necessary to ensure they access the support they are entitled to. If you are interested in this free training to ensure we can tailor the training to meet your needs, please kindly fill out the link below with the necessary information before joining the session.

### **[Pension Age Benefits Training Registration Form](#)**

If you are unable to attend this training session but would like to be included in the email distribution list for future training opportunities, please just let me know. Bronwyn McClory [Bronwyn McClory@shelter.org.uk](mailto:Bronwyn_McClory@shelter.org.uk)



Free Online Training on Pension Age Benefits

4th, 5th & 6th 2023 | 10-11.30am

Join us for free online training on Pension Age Benefits, hosted by Shelter Scotland's HSBC project.



## Benefits conditionality survey launched

On January 18, 2025, [we launched a new survey](#) to explore how single parents in Scotland are affected by the threat of benefit sanctions and rising work requirements. **The survey will run until 3 March 2025.**

### **We need your support**

To receive Universal Credit, people usually have to attend job centre interviews, look for work, increase working hours or attend job training. If they don't meet these conditions, they risk losing some of their benefit.

We want to understand how these requirements affect single parents in Scotland. We will use an online survey, focus groups and consultations with our local services to find out more.

You can help us by sharing our [Benefits Conditionality Survey](#) widely to ensure we reach as many single parents across Scotland as possible.



**One Parent Families Scotland**



## Found anything yet? Exploring the relationship between Universal Credit claimants and their work coaches

21/01/2025

[Found anything yet? Exploring the relationship between Universal Credit claimants and their work coaches. 625 KB](#)

Work coaches have a significant role in shaping claimants' experience of Universal Credit. Their responsibilities range from providing employment support and giving general advice to monitoring compliance with conditionality requirements. While many work coaches seek to provide meaningful support to claimants, they face multiple challenges in achieving this.

We recorded a wide spectrum of claimant experiences. This included empathetic and constructive support; bureaucracy and indifference; and even actively hostile and unproductive interactions. Work coaches work in a system that prioritises the application of a harsh conditionality regime to achieve short-term outcomes. It offers limited capacity to deliver high-quality employment support and accommodate personal needs. Too often this leaves claimants feeling unsupported and disempowered.

citizens  
advice

## Unclaimed Pension Credit by local authority area

Authority	Pension Credit amount	Pension Credit households
Aberdeen City	£4,432,055	1,911
Aberdeenshire	£4,327,223	2,121



## Wider unclaimed support by local authority area

[£23 billion of support goes unclaimed each year](#). Pension Credit is only one benefit included in this figure.

## More than money: The lifelong wellbeing impact of disability benefits

Disability benefits are a lifeline for many disabled people in the UK. They provide vital financial support to cover the extra living costs that arise from their long-term conditions, from daily living to mobility. Having this support is particularly important as disabled people in the UK tend to have lower incomes and lower wellbeing than average. In other words, not only are disabled people facing more financial difficulty overall, but they report a lower quality of life.

[Read the full report](#)

