

Universal Credit update: Shepway District Council

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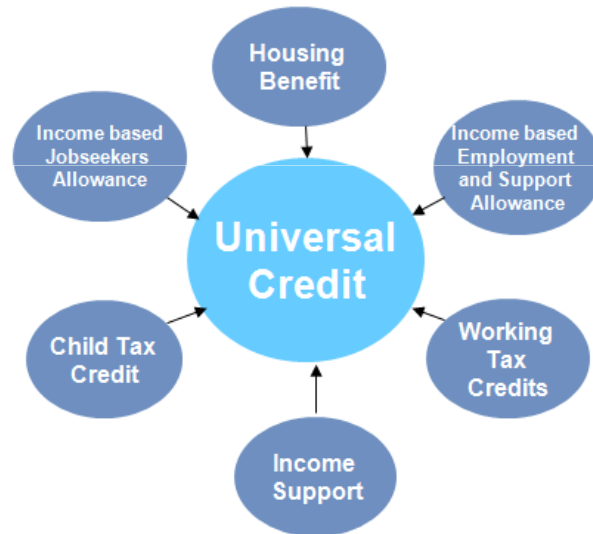
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Introduction

- What is Universal Credit?
- Universal Credit in Shepway
- Impact in Shepway
- The future

What is Universal Credit?

- Universal Credit is being rolled out across the United Kingdom and will replace 6 existing benefits and merge them into one payment will be paid monthly in arrears.



- Universal Credit is for working age people only.

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Universal Credit in Shepway

- UC was introduced to Shepway on 25 January 2016. This is currently for new claimants that would have previously applied for JobSeekers Allowance and are single only.
- Once a customer is in receipt of UC they remain on the benefit.

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Resource implications

Residents who claim benefits from the Council

- Any claimants who meet the early criteria AND who would have claimed Housing Benefit will apply for Universal Credit instead.
- All Pension age claims for Housing Benefit will still be made to the Council.
- All Supported and Exempt Accommodation claims for Housing Benefit will still be made to the Council.
- All residents will continue to apply for Council Tax Reduction from the Council.

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Resource implications

Current caseload:

	Housing Benefit	Council Tax Reduction
Working age	5711	5322
Pension age	2761	4383
Total caseload	8472	9705

- Caseload for HB and CTR has reduced by approximately 300 since January 2016
- Due to mirrored caseload reduction of HB & CTR this is not as a direct result of UC implementation
- UC was not expected to have a large impact in the first 15 months for Shepway

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Local Authority role to support Universal Credit

- SDC have a responsibility to offer three key services to support DWP in UC implementation:
 - Supported online access
 - Support for the Universal Credit Service Centre
 - Personal Budgeting Support

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Supported online access

- Shepway District Council's reception area has computers and kiosks available for supported access as required
- DWP predicted 61 claimants requiring supported access in the first 15 months
 - To date no customers have requested support with an online application for UC at the Civic Centre

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Support for the UC Service Centre & manual support

- The DWP require Housing Benefit details and the Council will be contacted for this information
- DWP predicted 341 cases in the first 15 months
 - To date no requests of this type have been logged
- DWP predicted 95 cases in the first 3 months would require manual processing with LA support
 - SDC received 37 of these cases in the first three months

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Personal Budgeting Support

- When a customer signs their claimant commitment they will be asked if they require further budgeting support; this is a service offered by the Revenues and Benefits team.
- DWP predicted 61 claimants would require this support in the first 15 months
 - 22 cases have been referred to the Council
 - 20 of these cases have been contacted by telephone
 - 2 of these cases have received a face to face appointment

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Universal Credit – Impact for Shepway

- Number of Shepway residents in receipt of Universal Credit: **454**
- Number of cases on SDC systems: **83**
 - 57 cases where claimant in receipt of Council Tax Reduction is receiving UC
 - 33 cases where a non-dependant is in receipt of UC
 - 3 cases where a joint tenant is in receipt of UC

*Figures as of November 2016

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The future

- Shepway are scheduled to move to the fully digital service (more new case types and a digital service) from February 2018
- After the rollout process has completed, DWP will then begin moving all remaining existing benefit claimants to the full Universal Credit service although timeframes are still to be confirmed

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Summary

- What is Universal Credit?
- Universal Credit in Shepway
- Impact in Shepway
- The future
- **Any questions?**