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**19 August 2022**

## **Roundup of recent DWP announcements**

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### **Fuel Direct**

From 1 April 2022 to 1 April 2023, DWP introduced a temporary change to [Fuel Direct](#) to protect claimants given unprecedented energy prices. During this period, energy suppliers can no longer request new deductions or increased payments from a claimant's benefit to pay for ongoing fuel consumption.

For claimants who pay for their ongoing fuel usage directly from their benefits, the amount they pay was not automatically increased if their bill went up in April 2022 and will not automatically increase when the price cap changes in October 2022.

If claimants use Fuel Direct and feel they are able to pay their increased bills, they should contact DWP to amend their existing arrangement.

Universal Credit claimants can use their Universal Credit Journal to make this request or call 0800 328 5644. Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance claimants can call 0800 169 0310. For Pension Credit, claimants can call 0800 99 1234.

Anyone struggling to pay their energy bills should contact their energy supplier to discuss available options.

[More information](#)

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## Broadband Social Tariff

A new service, which will go live next week and be run by DWP, will allow internet service providers to verify – with customers' permission – whether they are in receipt of a relevant benefit and therefore eligible for extra financial support.

The Government has called on all broadband providers to offer and promote [social tariffs](#) - discounted broadband and mobile deals for people on Universal Credit and other benefits.

The scheme is already supported by Virgin Media O2 who have announced that they will use the system to verify eligible customers signing up to their Essential Broadband tariff. The company will also waive early termination fees for those moving from existing tariffs.

Customers on social tariffs could in some cases save over £100 a year. The new system will simplify the process of getting a social tariff by removing the need for customers to prove their entitlement to broadband providers as regularly as every month.

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## Local Supported Employment

A new Local Supported Employment (LSE) initiative has been launched to help over 2,000 adults with learning disabilities and autism move into work.

LSE is providing grant funding to 24 County Councils and Unitary Authorities (including Metropolitan Councils and London Boroughs) in England and Wales, representing an investment of £7.6 million over the next three years.

Each local authority area will support between 60 and 140 adults with learning disabilities, autism, or both to move into competitive employment and provide the help they need to maintain that employment.

DWP along with nine local authorities ran an LSE proof of concept pilot in November 2017 for 18 months. Following a consultation process with those involved, feedback and lessons learned have been incorporated into the design of the latest initiative.

[Read the full press release](#)

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## Health Adjustment Passport

The [Health Adjustment Passport](#) (HAP) is now available on GOV.UK and can be used by those with a disability or health condition to help identify what support and changes (known as [reasonable adjustments](#)) they may need when they are in work or moving into work. This could include support from [Access to Work](#), such as funding for specialist equipment, support getting to and from work or support when in work.

The HAP is owned by the individual, who can decide how they want to use it and completion is voluntary, with support from a work coach if appropriate.

You may wish to promote the HAP to your networks and consider hosting the HAP link on your own websites.

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## **Managed move of claimants to Universal Credit – discovery phase expands to Harrow**

In April, DWP announced plans to resume the programme to move all benefit claimants over to Universal Credit by 2024.

From 9 May, we did so in Bolton and Medway and have since further expanded our discovery phase to include Truro and Falmouth. We will now expand our discovery phase to Harrow from mid-August. During the discovery phase we will send a Migration Notice to a small number of claimants on legacy benefits to let them know that they need to move across to Universal Credit, explain how the process will work and what they will need to do.

Everyone moving over from legacy benefits as part of this process will have their entitlement to Universal Credit assessed against their current claims.

Transitional Protection will be provided for eligible claimants whose initial Universal Credit entitlement would have been less than their entitlement to legacy benefits at the point of moving to Universal Credit. This will continue unless their entitlement changes.

A dedicated helpline – signposted on the migration notice claimants receive – will provide support for people to make their Universal Credit claim, and guidance will also be available online including on the [Understanding Universal Credit website](#). Those in need of further support can also visit their local jobcentre.

Additional support remains available for those in need, including the Household Support Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments.

## Jobcentre Plus) arrangements over August bank holiday

DWP (including Jobcentre Plus) opening times are different over August bank holiday:

**On Monday 29 August offices and phone lines are closed.**

To make sure people receive their payments on a day when our offices are open, arrangements have been made to make some payments early:

If the expected payment date is **Monday 29 August** benefits will be paid early on **Friday 26 August**.

If the expected [payment date](#) is not shown, customers will get their money on their usual payment date.



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