

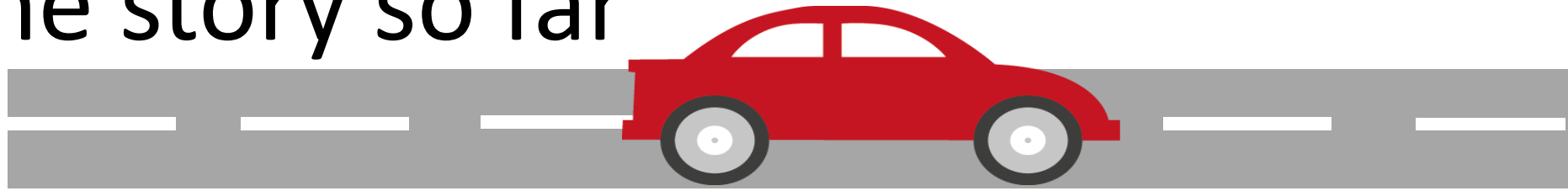
Welfare reform and Housing Costs

An update on changes to
Housing Benefit and the
rollout of Universal Credit

8 May 2019



The story so far



- Universal Credit now rolled out in full across the city –
 - Hanley/Longton Jobcentres June 2018
 - Newcastle/Kidsgrove Jobcentres December 2018
- Those switching from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit continue to receive HB for the first 2 weeks of their UC claim from April 2018.



The story so far

- Previous decision to remove housing costs within Universal Credit for 18-21 year olds reversed from 31 December 2018.
- Customers entitled to an award of a Severe Disability Premium in an existing benefit will be restricted from claiming Universal Credit from 16 January 2019 and will remain on Housing Benefit.



The story so far

Amendment to the two child cap limit for Universal Credit from 1st February 2019.

Previous legislation stated that all families with more than two children would have their benefits 'capped' at a maximum of 2 children from 1st February 2019.

This included those families with children born before April 2017 when the rules were first introduced. The amendment means that all children born before April 2017 will continue to be supported under Universal Credit.



The story so far

- DWP to 'build an online system for private landlords'
- Increased frequency of payments for some Universal Credit customers.



City of

Stoke-on-Trent

UC *Universal
Credit*



What is Universal Credit?

Housing Benefit

Employment Support Allowance

Jobseekers Allowance

Income Support

Child Tax Credits

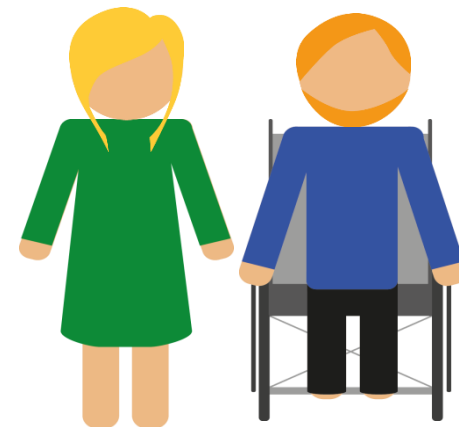
Working Tax Credits

UC *Universal
Credit*



Who is it currently affecting?

Any current Universal Credit customers and those who makes a new claim for one of the 6 'legacy' benefits.



When will it affect more people?

Full Service Universal Credit went live in Stoke-on-Trent in June 2018 and in Newcastle-under-Lyme in December 2018. This means all new claims from that date are for UC not Housing Benefit, although some exceptions apply.



Help for tenants

- Advance payments at point of Universal Credit claim.
- Personal budgeting support
- Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)
- Help to claim service



Personal budgeting support



Offered to

- **Anyone claiming Universal Credit.**

Claimants needing help with monthly budgeting will be identified at their first Universal Credit appointment with the Jobcentre

Many claimants will be able to help themselves through the online budgeting support services that are already available, and we will help people who have a clear need for more intensive support.



Discretionary Housing Payment

Extra help with housing costs for people getting Housing Benefit and housing costs in Universal Credit

- If there is a shortfall between HB and rent
- Removal costs
- Rent in advance
- Rent deposits

Apply online

stoke.gov.uk/benefits



Getting ready for UC

Encourage your tenants to:

- go online – Universal Credit is designed to be claimed online. The council offers free internet access at libraries
- open a bank account – they will need to be able to set up standing orders to pay their rent
- use the Universal Credit Personal Planner
- read the welcome guide – all claimants receive a Universal Credit welcome guide



Getting ready for UC

- Think about your payment dates – not all tenants will be paid on the same date.
- Help your tenant to setup a standing order.
- If you get a managed payment of LHA now, check with your tenant – could they manage their own rent?
- Provide your tenant with up to date proof of their rent

