



Press release

Citizens Advice launches a new service to help people applying for Universal Credit

Today Hillingdon Citizens Advice has launched a new service called “**Help to Claim**” for those who need help to apply for Universal Credit in Hillingdon.

People will now be able to get support from our charity as they submit their Universal Credit application to the time they get their first full payment.

Help will be tailored to the individual and available, face-to-face, over the phone on **0800 144 8 444 (England)** and online through [webchat](#) and advice content. This may include assistance with the online application form or help with providing evidence like childcare costs.

A recent survey by the charity found more than a third of people Citizens Advice has helped struggled to provide the evidence needed to complete their Universal Credit claim. In 2018-19 Hillingdon Citizens Advice helped local residents with 620 Universal Credit issues and this is expected to increase steeply.

Nationally, Citizens Advice has helped over 230,000 people with Universal Credit and the Help to Claim service will be delivered by the Citizens Advice network across England and Wales. (Citizens Advice Scotland will deliver the service in Scotland).

Universal Credit is a new benefit that combines 6 benefits into 1, including Jobseeker’s Allowance and Working Tax Credits. It is now fully rolled out across the UK. When fully implemented, around 7 million people in England and Wales will be receiving Universal Credit.

Joanna Smith, our Help to Claim Supervisor for Hillingdon, said:

“Today we’re launching a new service for people who need help applying for Universal Credit. We encourage anyone who needs help with their application to get in touch with us either in-person, over the phone (0800 144 8 444) or by [webchat](#).

Our Universal Credit Aides will be helping residents in the Hayes and Uxbridge Jobcentres as well as the [Hayes](#) and [Uxbridge](#) Citizens Advice offices.

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For more information contact: uc-htc@hillingdoncab.org.uk

Notes to editors:

1. Citizens Advice will deliver Help to Claim in England and Wales through its network of independent local charities from April 2019 until April 2020. Citizens Advice Scotland will also be delivering the new service in Scotland.
2. Help is available face-to-face, over the phone 0800 144 8 444 (England) or 08000 241 220 (Wales), and online through webchat and advice content.
3. Citizens Advice is made up of the national charity Citizens Advice; the network of independent local Citizens Advice charities across England and Wales; the Citizens Advice consumer service; and the Witness Service.
4. Our network of charities offers impartial advice online, over the phone, and in person, for free.
5. We helped 2.6 million people face to face, over the phone, by email and webchat in 2017-18. And we had 25 million visits to our website. For full service statistics see our monthly publication Advice trends.
6. Citizens Advice service staff are supported by more than 22,000 trained volunteers, working at over 2,500 service outlets across England and Wales.