



Sheffield

How we have helped people with Universal Credit

Citizens Advice Sheffield is the city's leading advice service. Since April 2018 we have helped 18,089 people with 49,799 issues and, of these, 21,906 related to welfare benefits issues.

Following the introduction of full service Universal Credit, in November 2018 we have helped 776 people with 1,241 issues. Helping people to claim is our fastest growing advice area.

We have helped more people where help is most needed

| Ward | Deprivation score | Number of people helped | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|-------|
| | | | Initial Claim | Housing Element | Disability Element | Standard Element | Other |
| Firth Park | 52.9 | 49 | 34 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 16 |
| Burngreave | 52 | 67 | 48 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| Southey | 50.1 | 28 | 21 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| Manor Castle | 49.9 | 59 | 43 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 15 |
| Darnall | 46.3 | 42 | 31 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 11 |
| Park & Arbourthorne | 43.6 | 50 | 36 | 11 | 3 | 4 | |
| Shiregreen & Brightside | 40.6 | 36 | 24 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| Gleadless Valley | 37.5 | 37 | 30 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| Beauchief & Greenhill | 31.6 | 32 | 25 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| Woodhouse | 29.5 | 19 | 12 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Richmond | 29.3 | 19 | 14 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| City | 28.8 | 10 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Walkley | 27.2 | 30 | 24 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 6 |
| Nether Edge & Sharrow | 24.2 | 56 | 37 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 16 |
| Birley | 22.4 | 18 | 14 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| Hillsborough | 21 | 11 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Mosborough | 20.9 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| East Ecclesfield | 18.7 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| West Ecclesfield | 17.9 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Beighton | 17.8 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Stockbridge & Upper Don | 17.3 | 10 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Broomhill & Sharrow Vale | 16.5 | 24 | 17 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| Stannington | 16.1 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Graves Park | 12.5 | 16 | 11 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Crookes & Crosspool | 7.4 | 12 | 10 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Dore & Totley | 6.9 | 10 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Fulwood | 5.9 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Ecclesall | 4.2 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

Between November 2018 and February 2019

We have helped **776** people with issues relating to universal credit



413

Women

348

Men

746

Working age people

352

Disabled or ill people

242

Black and Ethnic minority people

We have helped with **1,241**



741

Initial Claims

98

Housing Element Issues

143

Other

94

Disability Element issues

65

Standard Element Issues

We are encountering claimants unable to manage the demands of the new system and we are calling for immediate remedies to mitigate some of these negative effects experienced including:

- Increased resources for the DWP Universal Credit helpline
- Transparent and workable arrangements for all “non-digital” claimants
- A system to register date of claim pending submission of full information and evidence

People we have helped with Universal Credit

Case Study 1

Last December we helped a couple, both in their early 30s, who had just been granted refugee status. Their asylum support was ending and they were due to move into council housing. They had no other income and were both looking for work. They needed to claim Universal Credit for their living and housing costs.

They both knew how to use computers and had a good understanding of English. They had received help separately to set up UC accounts but were confident that they would be able to complete the claim process (to link their claims) without further help. However they came to see us as, despite their best efforts, they hadn't been able to link their claims.

We had to make two calls to the UC help line to resolve their issue - which centred on an e-mail address shared by both of them and the need to create another new account to link the claims. These calls took 65 minutes in total but eventually we were able to assist with linking their claims.

Case Study 2

We have started providing help with universal credit claims to clients on the secure psychiatric wards at Michael Carlisle Centre. Last week we helped a man who needed help with setting up his UC account and complete UC claim. This had to be done in two sittings - firstly to set up the account but as it was dinner time on the ward we had to leave.

We returned in the afternoon to complete claim which took another hour. However, he couldn't verify his identify online and we had to ring the UC helpline to set up a verification visit.

Unfortunately we couldn't get through to the verification team before having to leave the ward. We tried to arrange the verification visit back at the office but were told this had to be done in the client's presence. We had to return again to the ward the following day to ring back.



Universal Support: Help to claim

The service

Step 1: Multi-channel 'no wrong door' access



Our service will be available, face-to-face, over the phone and online through webchat and online content - to allow clients to access support in the way that's right for them. They can be sign-posted or referred by other support agencies or self-refer.



Step 2: Individual needs assessment

However clients come into our service we'll start by assessing their individual needs to make sure they can get access to the right level of support in the way that's right for them



Step 3: Support to start a Universal Credit claim



Step 4: Completing a claim and getting ready for first payment

Depending on their level of need this might include help to:

- Check whether a client should be applying for Universal Credit
- Set up an email address or Universal Credit account
- Work through claim to-dos
- Access Universal Credit phone claim service or DWP home visit support
- Verify their identity
- Provide additional evidence
- Prepare for the practicalities of a monthly payment
- Access adaptations such as direct payments to landlords and conditionality easements
- Apply for additional financial support



Step 5: Access to longer term support

Our help to claim service supports clients to make their initial Universal Credit claim. We can also support them with other issues in their lives by signposting or referring clients to other services - within Citizens Advice or through other organisations.

What our service will look like from 1 April 2019

We will provide a complete "Help to Claim" service designed to reach the greatest number of people.

This appointment based service will be provided across the city in our community sites and will be accessed via our freephone helpline, 0800 144 8 444, which will have dedicated staffing Monday to Friday, 8.00am - 6.00pm

We will also be establishing a UC Consultancy line for partners.

At a national level Citizens Advice and DWP are establishing a bespoke referral route into the service