

Newsletter - Winter 2025



## The cost of living crisis continues

Our data shows households are still facing financial difficulties that mean they turn to us for crisis support.

In 2024 we helped 2,335 clients with food banks or charitable support.

We're asking people "Are you missing out on your entitlements?"



## Social housing flooring policy

We're working with all social housing providers to change the common practice of ripping out flooring between tenancies.

We're campaigning for all registered social landlords to sign up to a "Keep and Clean" pilot so fewer residents need to live on bare concrete. This will reduce land fill and energy bills, give households a decent standard of home, and improve wellbeing.

Following a meeting of all housing Directors there was broad agreement for change - we'll share developments in future newsletters.

## How can Citizens Advice help with the cost of living crisis?

We not only deal with crisis help but aim to address the underlying causes and build resilience with a series of income maximisation interventions. This could be helping people to manage their debts or identifying unclaimed benefits.

It can be as little as £50 per month extra income that makes the difference to someone's wellbeing and prevents a slide into hardship.



# Universal Credit - Managed Migration

## What you need to know

### 5,762 ESA claimants in Somerset will be affected

This year some of the most vulnerable in our community will receive managed migration letters inviting them to move from ESA to Universal Credit.

If they fail to make the move before the 3-month deadline their benefits will stop and they will lose any entitlement to transitional protection.

To date 27% of those who received a managed migration letter - 318,834 individuals - did not go on to make a UC claim and their benefits were stopped[1]. If these figures are replicated for ESA claimants, the consequences will be serious.

[1] [Move to Universal Credit, July 2022 to end September 2024 - GOV.UK](#)



### Our concerns

UC is an online benefit, we're concerned that people without IT skills or internet access may have difficulties navigating a digital platform.

UC rent help is paid to the claimant, we're concerned about people falling into rent arrears because they're not used to paying rent directly to their landlord.

UC is paid monthly, and poses budgeting difficulties for people who are used to fortnightly payments.

UC leads to less Council Tax support, we're concerned about people losing out as much as £100 per month.

### We are calling for

The DWP to readily extend a migration deadline if someone needs more time to access support.

Increased awareness of the need for claim support - including the option to make a telephone claim for UC.

Somerset Council to communicate the potential Council Tax bill changes and widely advertise the help available for people who cannot afford to pay their increased council tax bills.

### Citizens Advice UC help to claim

**0800 144 8 444**

Monday to Friday 8am-6pm

For other contact options:  
[citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/claiming/contact-us-about-universal-credit](https://citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/claiming/contact-us-about-universal-credit)