**DWP Partnership Newsletter April**

**LA Welfare Direct Bulletin: April 2023**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/la-welfare-direct-bulletins-2023?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=0b3b37d1-c9a8-436d-afd0-32935892f16a&utm_content=immediately)

These LA Welfare Direct bulletins provide information that affects Housing Benefit and other areas of DWP, to local authority staff

**Housing Benefit Subsidy Circulars 2023**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-subsidy-circulars-2023?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=0ee63bc8-5974-4df1-a4f1-1694c023a774&utm_content=immediately)

Subsidy circulars are about the money the government pays local authorities to administer Housing Benefit and other financial matters.

**Employers that have signed up to the Disability Confident scheme**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-confident-employers-that-have-signed-up?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=a648820c-5168-4185-8472-84d31e5e0e49&utm_content=immediately)

The Disability Confident scheme aims to help employers make the most of the opportunities provided by employing disabled people. It is voluntary, been developed by employers, and disabled people’s representatives. This document lists the employers that have signed up to the Disability Confident scheme, and their status (committed, employer or leader). The information has been updated to reflect the position on 31 March 2023.

**Access to Work: Fact for customers**

[**Click to view factsheet**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-factsheet)

Factsheet about Access to Work and how it can help overcome barriers to starting or keeping a job if you have a disability or long-term health condition.

**Over £130 million paid out for energy bill support this winter**

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) estimates that over £130 million was paid out from November until the end of March – with over £40 million of this going to pensioners in receipt of Pension Credit.

DWP's Cold Weather Payments are an automatic bank top-up of £25, triggered to be paid to eligible households [**click for more information**](https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment/eligibility) when the average temperature has been recorded as, or is forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below for seven consecutive days at the weather station linked to an eligible person’s postcode.

**Personal Independence payment quick guide for support organisations**

A quick guide to Personal Independence Payment (PIP), providing information for support organisations.

This PIP guide is aimed primarily at advisers. It provides information on:

who is eligible for PIP

how the claim process works

how the rate is calculated

The PIP Toolkit [**Click for Toolkit**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-personal-independence-payment-pip-toolkit) gives more information about PIP for support organisations and claimant advisers.

**Thousands of people in their final year of life to have their disability benefits fast-tracked**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-of-people-in-their-final-year-of-life-to-have-their-disability-benefits-fast-tracked)

Thousands more people nearing the end of their lives now have fast-tracked access to financial support through the benefits system thanks to legislation that came into effect on 3 April 2023. The change means people who are thought to be in their final year of life can receive vital financial support through the ‘Special Rules’ six months earlier than they were previously.

Those who are eligible are not required to attend a medical assessment, and in most cases, they will receive the highest rate of benefits. This applies to Personal Independent Payment (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA). It follows the same changes that were put in place for Universal Credit (UC) and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) in April 2022

**New review to boost employment prospects of autistic people**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-review-to-boost-employment-prospects-of-autistic-people?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=2b95d188-d5ad-4cc1-8d65-59d7b5f603b2&utm_content=immediately)

A new review designed to boost the employment prospects of autistic people, has been launched by the Government to spread opportunity, close the employment gap, and grow the economy.

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Mel Stride MP, has appointed Sir Robert Buckland KC MP to lead the review, which will consider how the Government can collaborate with employers to help more autistic people realise their potential and get into work.

People with autism have particularly low employment rates – with fewer than three in ten in work – but the Buckland Review of Autism Employment, supported by charity Autistic and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is aiming to change that. Government extends mortgage support for benefit claimants.

**State Pension age review published**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/state-pension-age-review-published?utm_source=https%3a%2f%2fnews.dwp.gov.uk%2fdwplz%2f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Touchbase+-+3+April+2023&utm_term=Touchbase+-+31+March+2023&utm_content=85375)

The Government has published the second review of State Pension age. It has concluded the State Pension age rise from 66 to 67 will take place, as planned, by the end of 2028.

The Government plans to have a further review within two years of the next Parliament to reconsider the rise to age 68.

This gives the Government appropriate time to consider evidence which is not yet available on the long-term impact of recent challenges, including the covid pandemic and global inflationary pressures. These events bring a level of uncertainty in relation tothe current data on life expectancy, labour markets and the public finances.

**Support for Mortgage Interest Loan scheme extended**

The Support for Mortgage Interest loan scheme has been extended to 200,000 additional Universal Credit claimants to support more households with the cost of living.
They will be able to access help towards mortgage interest on their home or certain home improvements worth up to £200,000. Support will be automatically offered to qualifying claimants after three months on Universal Credit. [**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-extends-mortgage-support-for-benefit-claimants?utm_source=https%3a%2f%2fnews.dwp.gov.uk%2fdwplz%2f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Touchbase+-+21+April+2023&utm_term=Touchbase+-+21+April+2023&utm_content=99579)

**Jobcentre Plus arrangements over 1 and 8 May Bank Holidays**

Jobcentre Plus opening times are different for the bank holiday on 1 May and for the King’s Coronation on 8 May.

Monday 1 May offices and phonelines are closed

Monday 8 May offices and phonelines are closed

To make sure people get their payment on a day when Jobcentre Plus offices are open payments will be paid early:

 If the expected payment date is Monday 1 May, benefits will be paid on Friday 28 April

If the expected payment date is Monday 8 May, benefits will be paid on Friday 5 May

If the expected [payment date](https://news.dwp.gov.uk/dwplz/lz.aspx?p1=M0hDU5NzU5OVM2MTQ0OjE2QjE3NkRGMTEzRUVERTEwMEQxNEZBQzMwNjc4RDA5-&CC=&w=79704) [Click Here](https://www.gov.uk/how-to-have-your-benefits-paid?utm_source=https%3a%2f%2fnews.dwp.gov.uk%2fdwplz%2f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Touchbase+-+21+April+2023&utm_term=Touchbase+-+21+April+2023&utm_content=99579) is not shown, customers will get their money on their usual payment date.

**First Cost of Living Payment dates announced**

[**Click here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/first-2023-24-cost-of-living-payment-dates-announced?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=eae4ed90-085c-482c-ab35-37b9396908d9&utm_content=immediately)

Millions of UK households will receive £301 directly from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) between 25 April and 17 May 2023.

The £301 payment will be sent out automatically and directly to recipients, meaning those eligible do not need to apply or do anything to receive it. The payment reference for bank accounts will be DWP COLP, along with the claimant’s National Insurance number.

**Move to Universal Credit Expanded to benefit more Tax Credit claimants**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/universal-credit-expanded-to-benefit-more-tax-credit-claimants?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=430bb392-fb89-4b3a-9258-5759dfeaf5cc&utm_content=immediately)

More Tax Credit claimants will soon be asked to claim Universal Credit as the Government expands the movement of legacy benefit claimants to the modern benefit system.

From April, more benefit claimants on Tax Credits will need to complete their move to Universal Credit to streamline and simplify the benefits system

Affected claimants will receive letters notifying them of action to take.

Affected claimants will continue to receive the benefit they are entitled to through a more dynamic system that better reflects individual needs each month.

By migrating to Universal Credit, with the support of the Department for Work and Pensions, claimants will continue to receive the benefit they are entitled to through a future-proofed modern benefits system.

**Pension Credit updated stakeholder toolkit**

This is an easy share online toolkit of resources and includes static and animated social assets, A5 flyer and A4 poster: Assets are available in English and Welsh. New versions will also be available from the 10 April 2023, following the State Pension uplift

[**View the toolkit**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit/pension-credit-toolkit-advice-and-guidance-for-stakeholders)

**Change to Fuel Direct ongoing consumption**

From 1 April 2023, energy suppliers can resume requesting new deductions or increases to existing deductions for Fuel Direct ongoing consumption payments but must have the claimant’s consent first. For new requests, suppliers must also seek a claimant’s consent before the request is sent to DWP.

In exceptional circumstances, when an energy supplier has exhausted all methods to contact a claimant, who has an existing arrangement, they can [**Click here to read how to notify DWP**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-request-deductions-from-benefit-a-guide-for-creditors/third-party-deductions-from-benefits-a-guide-for-fuel-suppliers).. DWP will attempt to contact the claimant and advise them to contact the energy supplier. Customers can end their arrangements by contacting DWP [**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/bills-benefits)

**Household Support Fund extended to help families in need.**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/household-support-fund-extended-from-today-to-help-families-in-need?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=28e1d29d-3f85-4a81-97ba-e20e1e873345&utm_content=immediately)

An additional £842 million was available from 1 April 2023, to help the most vulnerable households across England with essential food and energy costs.

**Outcomes in labour market for ethnic minorities by immigrant generation status**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outcomes-in-labour-market-for-ethnic-minorities-by-immigrant-generation-status)

In this paper, the Equality Hub examines the labour market outcomes of working age adults (16- to 64-year-olds) living in the UK. It compares outcomes for:

people born abroad (‘first generation’ immigrants)

people with at least one parent born abroad (‘second generation’)

white British people – people who identify as ‘white British’ ethnicity, and whose parents were both born in the UK

The purpose of this research is to establish the social mobility journey of migrants coming to the UK and understand how migration status impacts on ethnic disparities in the UK.

**Findings include:**

second generation immigrants of ethnic minority groups perform better than white British people when looking at unemployment and economic inactivity

ethnic groups still face disparities in the labour market, with higher likelihoods of being unemployed or economically inactive compared with white British people.

**Pandemic support for film and TV such as Peaky Blinders kept thousands in jobs and contributed billion to economy.**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pandemic-support-for-film-and-tv-such-as-peaky-blinders-kept-thousands-in-jobs-and-contributed-billion-to-economy)

GLOBAL TV hits nominated for BAFTAs and Oscar Academy Awards survived and thrived through the pandemic thanks to the Government’s film and TV support package, which also boosted the country’s economy by £2.25 billion.

Productions using the scheme created 63,500 crew positions, plus a further 37,100 cast roles, meaning a total of up to 100,600 production industry workers were given a lifeline by the scheme during an extremely challenging economic **period. The** report also shows the scheme created 48,500 full-time jobs both directly in the sector and indirectly through supply chains.

**New Industry and government forum launched to boost freight decarbonisation and innovation**

Measures to help boost the freight sector are moving forward, as a new government-industry forum is launched to help the sector decarbonise and ensure its long-term sustainability.

Transport Minister Richard Holden said:

We recognise that the transition to clean fuels is one of the biggest challenges facing the freight sector and we are committed to delivering a strong future for the sector that will help create good long-term jobs.

The forum could help to create high-skilled, highly paid jobs across the UK by giving the industry greater certainty to invest in sustainable modes of freight transport and the supporting energy infrastructure needed to transition to net zero, in turn supporting the growth of the economy.

**Increased flexibility of alternative fuel payments, so more households will be supported with their energy bills.**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/increased-flexibility-of-alternative-fuel-payments-so-more-households-will-be-supported-with-their-energy-bills)

More households using heating oil, LPG, biomass, and other alternative fuels will receive £200 in energy bills support, thanks to the government’s expansion of the scheme, announced today.

The UK government is continuing to get help to those households across the UK that need it most - which is why today, Energy Security Secretary Grant Shapps has increased the period that applicants can evidence purchase of alternative fuels, by three months to June 2022, instead of September 2022. This ensures that households who purchased fuel in bulk ahead of the winter can receive the £200 energy bill support they are entitled to.

**Working and Workless households in the UK - October to December 2022**

[**Click Here**](https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/workingandworklesshouseholds/octobertodecember2022)

The economic status of households in the UK and the people living in them, where at least one person is aged 16 to 64 years. Taken from the Labour Force Survey.

Main points are:

Of the estimated 21.3 million households (where at least one member is aged 16 to 64 years) in the UK, 59.1% had all household members aged 16 years and over in employment during October to December 2022, down 0.1 percentage points compared with the same period last year.

There was an estimated 27.1% of households with a mix of at least one working and one workless adult, up 0.1 percentage points compared with the same period last year.

There was an estimated 13.7% of households where no member of the household was in employment, unchanged compared with the same period last year.

**One million families claiming tax credits to receive Cost of Living Payment from 2 May 2023**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/one-million-families-claiming-tax-credits-to-receive-cost-of-living-payment-from-2-may)

HMRC announces date for the first Cost of Living payment during the 2023 to 2024 tax year, for tax-credits only customers.

One million eligible claimant families receiving tax credits, and no other means-tested benefits, will get the first Cost of Living Payment for the 2023 to 2024 tax year from Tuesday 2 May 2023, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has confirmed. The £301 government payment will be paid automatically into most customers’ bank accounts between Tuesday 2 and Tuesday 9 May 2023 across the United Kingdom. Only eligible families who receive tax credits and no other means-tested benefits will receive the payment from HMRC.

**Millions get pay rise as National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage increase**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/millions-get-pay-rise-as-national-minimum-wage-and-national-living-wage-increase)

On 1 April millions of the lowest paid workers across the UK received a pay increase as the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rise came into effect.

The increase will put more money in the pockets of 2.9 million of the lowest-paid workers across the country. The rate rises included a 9.7% increase in the National Living Wage, from £9.50 per hour to £10.42, the equivalent of more than £1,600 extra per year before tax for someone working full time. This increase is the largest ever cash increase to the National Living Wage, and highest increase in percentage terms since its introduction in 2016, helping to protect the incomes of millions of workers from high cost-of-living.

**Major fund to tackle loneliness and boost volunteering in disadvantaged areas launched**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-fund-to-tackle-loneliness-and-boost-volunteering-in-disadvantaged-areas-launched)

Youth clubs, mental health charities and social enterprises are among the organisations to benefit from up to £30 million to create volunteering opportunities and help reduce loneliness.

**Leading UK bosses join mission to get thousands more prisoners into work**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/leading-uk-bosses-join-mission-to-get-thousands-more-prisoners-into-work)

More than ninety business experts have been enlisted as prison employment advisors to help drive thousands of prison leavers into work and away from a life of crime. Bosses from top firms including the Co-op, Greggs, Iceland, and Oliver Bonas have now been appointed as Employment Advisory Board chairs in all ninety-two resettlement prisons, which help prepare prisoners nearing the end of their sentence for release into the community.

The Boards link prisons to leading business figures who can offer their expertise on the skills, qualifications and training needed to help prisoners re-enter the workforce. Using these insights, prisons can tailor their training and workshops to match local labour market demands so ex-offenders are job-ready when they walk out the prison gate.

The initiative was launched in March 2022 and will play a crucial role in boosting the UK economy while tackling the £18 billion annual cost of reoffending, with ex-prisoners in steady employment being nine percentage points less likely to reoffend. Getting more prison leavers into work helps to protect the public and the number in employment 6 months after release [**Click Here**](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1087060/20220630_Employment_Ad-Hoc_publication_Bulletinv1.pdf)by almost two thirds between April 2021 and March 2022, from 14 per cent to 23 per cent.

**CBI launches ambitious taskforce to tackle economic inactivity and improve both the health and wealth of the nation**

[**Click Here**](https://www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/articles/cbi-launches-ambitious-taskforce-to-tackle-economic-inactivity-and-improve-both-the-health-and-wealth-of-the-nation/)

The employers’ organisation, the CBI is launching and co-chairing a new Health and Work Taskforce – backed by industry CEOs alongside the TUC and the Health Foundation – to recommend and implement near-term actions which will lead to long-term benefits.

The Taskforce will identify what UK industry can do to improve the health of their workforces and the working age population more broadly. It will also identify where government can provide signals, framework, and incentives to help the whole economy to value health investment more proactively.

**British Businesses set to benefit from £10 billion boost to UK Export Finance Support**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/british-businesses-set-to-benefit-from-10-billion-boost-to-uk-export-finance-support)

UK Export Finance has been granted an extra £10 billion of capacity to drive more UK exports, raising its maximum exposure limit from £50 billion to £60 billion. The additional capacity will ensure the export credit agency’s continued ability to support UK exporters and to deliver on its mission: to advance prosperity by ensuring no viable UK export fails for lack of finance or insurance, doing that sustainably and at no net cost to the taxpayer.

UKEF CEO Tim Reid said: This is fantastic news for the UK companies that we are here to support. It means we can help more British businesses export and will enable us to support more jobs and help to fuel growth.

In 2021-22, UKEF provided £7.4 billion in financing to exporters of all sizes, which supported up to 72,000 UK jobs. The increased capacity will help UKEF continue to deliver on the government’s priorities, supporting economic growth and jobs in communities across the UK.

**Major fund to tackle loneliness and boost volunteering in disadvantaged areas launched**

Youth clubs, mental health charities and social enterprises are among the organisations to benefit from up to £30 million to create volunteering opportunities and help reduce loneliness.

Recent research has revealed that adults were more likely to report feeling lonely if they lived in a deprived area, and that areas with higher rates of unemployment tend to have higher rates of loneliness.

Volunteering opportunities help to connect communities, help people to develop skills and grow their networks; and help public services serve local communities.

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-fund-to-tackle-loneliness-and-boost-volunteering-in-disadvantaged-areas-launched)

**Every social housing resident to be offered place on “watchdog style” know your rights training scheme**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/every-social-housing-resident-to-be-offered-place-on-watchdog-style-know-your-rights-training-scheme?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=b48686cf-0092-45be-8e1f-4d1e2bcb5250&utm_content=daily)

Free training events for social housing residents to be held in seven cities. Social housing tenants will be empowered to hold their property owners to account as part of a new government funded training scheme launching today (19 April 2023).

From free advice on addressing damp and mould to webinars on how to complain about anti-social behaviour, the training programme will share information like that handed out by shows such as ‘Watchdog’ or ‘Rip Off Britain,’ offering tips and advice so tenants know their rights and how to access the Housing Ombudsman service.

Backed by £500,000 government funding, the four million homes programme will also encourage tenants to take an active role in how their homes are managed, with advice on how to set up a residents panel so tenants are treated with respect.

**UK Small and Medium sized enterprises secure funding to transform future of freight**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-smes-secure-funding-to-transform-future-of-freight)

Drones will be used to deliver packages on remote Scottish islands as part of nine new innovative freight projects which have been awarded £1.2 million in government funding.

The first Fund backed by £7 million overall, was announced on 11 April 2023 and could help create cleaner, more innovative ways of delivering freight around the country. This could lead to reduced emissions, increased numbers of high-skilled jobs and better delivery services in hard-to-reach parts of the United Kingdom.

The winners include Sky ports Deliveries, which will use drones to improve island-to-island connectivity in the Orkney Islands, and Electric Assisted Vehicles, which is developing a 4-wheel, electrically assisted lightweight delivery vehicle to help reduce road emissions.

**Rural communities up and down the country set to benefit from funding to support rural business and create jobs.**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/rural-communities-up-and-down-the-country-set-to-benefit-from-funding-to-support-rural-business-and-create-jobs)

Communities across rural England are set to benefit from an extra £110 million in local authority funding to support rural business and community groups, announced on Friday 7 April 2023.

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-england-prosperity-fund-prospectus/rural-england-prosperity-fund-allocations)to view eligible local authorities in England will receive the funding, which they can invest in initiatives such as farm diversification, projects to boost rural tourism, and community infrastructure projects including electric vehicle charging stations. The funding will also help people start up local businesses to supercharge growth and create employment opportunities for rural areas.

**Frequently Flooded Allowance: Funding for repeatedly flooded communities**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/frequently-flooded-allowance-funding-for-repeatedly-flooded-communities)

Floods Minister Rebecca Pow, announced on Wednesday 5 April 2023, the first communities in England to receive better flood protection as part of the government’s £100 million Frequently Flooded Allowance to protect areas which have been affected by repeated flooding.

The first fifty-three projects announced will be allocated more than £26 million in total, better protecting more than 2,300 households and businesses across the country.

Communities that will be better protected include those in Worcestershire, which faced severe flooding with Storm Christoph in 2021, and Cumbria, whose residents suffered major flooding from Storm Desmond in 2015 and Storm Ciara in 2020.

It will also better protect properties in the Calder Valley, which was devastated by flooding when it was hit by two storms in 2015.

The allowance targets communities where ten or more properties have flooded twice or more in the last 10 years. These communities are often smaller and can face barriers to access funding due to the relative complexity and cost of building flood defences compared to the size of the community.

**Government launches campaign to help businesses drive down energy bills**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-campaign-to-help-businesses-drive-down-energy-bills)

On 1 April, the Government launched a new campaign launched today to help organisations save money on their energy bills by improving energy efficiency.

**‘Shop around for £2.00’ this Easter as bus fare cap extended until end of June**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hop-around-for-2-this-easter-as-bus-fare-cap-extended-until-end-of-june)

Government invests £75 million to provide discounted bus travel for another 3 months across 5,000+ routes from over 140 bus companies across England.

Thanks to £75 million of extra government investment, the fare cap means passengers can save on single bus tickets, helping them travel more affordably to education, work, and medical appointments.

Extended from 1 April 2023, the offer will apply to more than 5,000 routes in England from over 140 operators, as the government continues to help households through this tough economic period, while levelling up transport and growing the economy.

**Touchbase**

Touchbase provides a roundup of recent announcements. It is produced weekly and circulated to subscribers. If you have not subscribed, please click on the link below, and I encourage you to share this with your partners

[**Subscribe to Touchbase**](http://news.dwp.gov.uk/dwplz/WebCapture.aspx?pID=2764&t=0&utm_source=http%3a%2f%2fnews.dwp.gov.uk%2fdwplz%2f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Touchbase+122&utm_term=Touchbase+122&utm_content=5&gator_td=cKaAAc%2bdb6aX2BocZoQKMNeS6FGiVFgPIc6SPjozwRs%2fnKj%2bni4q0ObcpgPjP0FVV44xM2Q95fbt4GA5EWI92MGrCaeFlmWcL8jf9aqU8cTAM2VVc0cjUAy6wBCMGJ990XXUTFntinyox8wk1EiJnBys59wZGLxkOASQiIoM%2fA3rUKU8aRDeB3jp7h1JolnS)