**This is Tower Hamlets Community Advice Network’s welfare rights advisors monthly information exchange, it is sent to around 200 individuals and organisations with an interest in welfare rights in Tower Hamlets and is available to see on the** [**www.thcan.org.uk**](http://www.thcan.org.uk) **Up-to-date information on advice providers services and opening times are available on the website**

**Tower Hamlets Welfare Rights Advisors Information Exchange –  October  2018**

1. **Welfare Rights Advisors Forum Meeting**

**Thursday – 6th December -  2-4 pm**

Does anyone want to host this meeting – venue will have to be in Tower Hamlets with room that can accommodate at least 20 people (will do in here if no other offers)

**2    Welfare Rights -  Free Training Session  – email me to book place**

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| **Immigration status and benefits**  2 hour workshop | How immigration status effects entitlement to benefits, right to reside, EEA nationals NOTE this is not an immigration course, there will be no information on immigration issues  **Suitable for** basic session but suitable for anyone including benefit advisors who haven’t already carried out or want to review knowledge training | Island Advice  Island House  Roserton Street  E14 3PG | Fatima Begum  29th November 2018  2pm to 4pm |

**.    Other information / Services**

1. Universal Credit Full Service is live now in Barking & Dagenham, Newham and Tower Hamlets and City. DWP offer to deliver an awareness session on the process – contact - **Linda Devereux|** Partnership Support Manager | Department for Work and Pensions | National Partnership Team| Barking Jobcentre | Phoenix House 12-14 Wakering Road Barking Essex IG11 8QB | Phone 020 8258 8848| Mobile 07900 057115
2. New Private Renters Project in Bromley by Bow Centre. ttached leaflet details issues dealt with - surrounding private renting in Tower Hamlets - sign post or refer client for the required assistance and guidance. **Kwame Anim-Addo -** Integrated Housing Caseworker **020 8709 9721**  [**bbbc.org.uk**](http://bbbc.org.uk/)
3. Welfare Rights Advisors Forum meeting discussion provided advice on write-off/reduction of council tax debt on hardship grounds, attach template letter (which can also be downloaded from THCAN website) – if you would like further information (course notes) please email <http://thcan.org.uk/advice-agencies-information/>
4. Real is feeding into a review that the council is currently undertaking, regarding charges for social care and are carrying out a survey Please pass it on to your clients and networks of people who are being charged. The results of this survey will feed into a formal paper that Tower Hamlets Councillors will consider The survey should take  about 10 minutes, and can be accessed by clicking the link <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TH_social_care_charging>

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1. DWP newsletter September and October attached

F    Tower Hamlets Debt & Money Advice Forum on Monday 5th November at Toynbee Hall. Contact   Sam Crosby   2-4pm [sam.crosby@toynbeehall.org.uk](mailto:sam.crosby@toynbeehall.org.uk)

Toynbee Hall 52 Old Castle Street, London E1 7AJ         020 7247 6943

G    Financial Health Centre now open in Massingham St, advice services timetable attached.  LBTH has a UC specialist deliver a drop-in session every Wednesday morning 9.30-12.30pm to help and to advise residents on making new UC claims

H   DeafPLUS are offering advice service for hard of hearing residents living in Tower Hamlets they will provide advice service and support on a number of issues; including benefits, housing, employment, and consumer matters. Leaflet attached

I       Survey by AudienceNet (commissioned by LBTH abd CPAG) (will take approximately 10 minutes to complete) and will help us to understand your experiences of Universal Credit (UC). The feedback you give in this survey is anonymous and will in no way affect your Universal Credit claim.   <https://live-lbtower.cloud.contensis.com/lgnl/council_and_democracy/consultations/Local_Council_Tax_Reduction_Scheme_consultation.aspx>

J              **BUDGET announcements for** UC claimants For those who can work, there is an increase in the work allowance of £1,000 from April 2019. And from July 2020 income support and income-related ESA and JSA will continue in payment for a fortnight when claimants begin the transfer to UC.  The transfer process itself - managed migration - will take place more slowly, beginning in July 2019 and not completing until December 2023.  Oh and don’t forget austerity has ended 

# K         **Two child limit – as you may be aware CPAG are challenging this on human rights grounds and give the following advice to advisors -** Anyone affected by the two child limit in its first year of operation will have received a final decision around 31 July 2018, which confirms their entitlement for the tax year 2017/18.Claimants who became responsible for a child born on or after 6 April 2017 and are not receiving a child element for that child can request a mandatory reconsideration of that decision, and subsequently lodge an appeal.  In any case, this can be done with a request that the appeal is listed behind [SC & Ors v SSWP [2018] EWHC 864 (Admin) Case No: CO/3806/2017](http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2018/864.html); the wider challenge to the two child limit on human rights grounds for which permission has been granted to appeal to the Court of Appeal. See for <http://www.cpag.org.uk/content/two-child-limit-challenge> for more information and a template. In cases where a child element is not payable for a new baby because an older child or children in the household are adopted or in a non-parental caring arrangement, the government has accepted the High Court’s finding that the ‘ordering rule’ for an exception in this situation is perverse and unlawful (para 215). A necessary amendment to the tax credits legislation is still awaited, and we have asked HMRC to contact those affected. However, to safeguard maximum backdating of the child element to the child’s date of birth, it is advisable to request a mandatory reconsideration/lodge an appeal against the final decision on the grounds that it is wrong on the basis of the court judgment given on 20 April 2018, which is the law that applied when the decision was made around 31 July 2018.

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| **5.**    **Specialist Welfare Rights Workers Referrals for Tower Hamlets Residents**  **Legal Advice Centre**: Only take referrals for appeals when got the appeal bundle, not Mandatory Reconsideration.  Otherwise can be ‘signposted’  (ie send client to drop in advice session) for assistance. Referrals can be emailed to [admin@legaladvicecentre.org](mailto:admin@legaladvicecentre.org) they will email back to confirm that clients have been booked – full guidance available on [www.thcan.org.uk/advice-agencies-information/](http://www.thcan.org.uk/advice-agencies-information/#_blank)  **Law Centre**: Chris Parsons very limited capacity but to email or phone him, has no particular criteria [c.parsons@thlc.org.uk](mailto:c.parsons@thlc.org.uk)  **Island Advice**: Tower Hamlets clients only, limited casework and usually all appointments are taken up through our drop in advice session clients but email  [steph@island-advice.org.uk](mailto:steph@island-advice.org.uk)  or phone direct line 020 7538 0094 (phone number is for advisors only) Clients can ring 0207 987 9379  **CAB** advisor Eukay email [eukandu@eastendcab.org.uk](mailto:eukandu@eastendcab.org.uk)    Also their full drop in services sessions are available on:  [www.thcan.org.uk/advice-agencies-information/](http://www.thcan.org.uk/advice-agencies-information/#_blank) | ` |  |
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