

May 2022

# DWP Partnership News

## London East

**Dear Partners & Colleagues,**

Welcome to the May 2022 Edition of the Partnership Newsletter.

**Yousaf Akram**

[Yousaf.Akram@DWP.GOV.UK](mailto:Yousaf.Akram@DWP.GOV.UK)

East London District Partnership Adviser

## LATEST NEWS

### [DWP publishes plan: Fighting Fraud in the Welfare System](#)

The nature of fraud has changed over the last 20 years. While the digital economy has brought enormous advances and advantages including to the way that we deliver benefits, it has also increased opportunities for criminals to commit fraud at a scale and with a sophistication not possible in the past. Fraud is now the most experienced crime in the UK, accounting for 42% of all crimes. While these are mainly offences against individuals and businesses, fraud is also an increasing challenge in the public sector.

Prior to the pandemic, the cost of public sector fraud was £29.0 billion. Announced by Work and Pensions Secretary Thérèse Coffey last week, the “Fighting Fraud in the Welfare System” plan outlines how 2,000 trained specialists will review over two million Universal Credit claims over the next five years, as part of bolstered ambitions to ensure money is well spent and give taxpayers confidence that funds are reaching those who need it.

'[Fighting Fraud in the Welfare System](#)' sets out the Department for Work and Pensions' plan to tackle the growing challenge posed by those seeking to exploit the public purse. The publication sets out transformative plans to take strides in protecting the taxpayer from those who are intent on stealing from public funds. From investing £613m over the next three years to boost the Department's specialist counter-fraud response, to pursuing a range of legislative reforms, the Department intends to identify, investigate, and recover losses more effectively, saving the taxpayer billions.

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### [Customer Experience survey](#)

Fieldwork on the DWP Customer Experience survey starts on Wednesday 25 May. Selected customers will be contacted by Ipsos MORI inviting them to take part. If you receive enquiries about the survey, please reassure customers that the research is genuine. If a customer requires further information or wants to opt out, please ask them to contact Ipsos MORI using the email address or telephone number included in the letter. Alternatively, they can email the DWP research team at [customer.survey@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:customer.survey@dwp.gov.uk) ([link sends e-mail](#)).

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## [Third Party Deductions.](#)

Ongoing energy consumption deductions for Gas and Electricity have ceased from 1 April 2022 until further notice. Customers can still request to set up a new Deduction Order. The guidance, '[A guide for energy suppliers \(Fuel Direct\)](#)' has been updated and a letter has been published from the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to Ofgem about energy suppliers' response to changes to ongoing energy consumption payments from benefits.

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## [More than 1,000 Ukrainian pensioners are already receiving financial support through Pension Credit.](#)

The figures follow emergency regulations laid by the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) in March 2022 which enabled Ukrainians to immediately access benefits and other support upon their arrival. Minister for Pensions Guy Opperman said: 'Our priority is ensuring those arriving from Ukraine can find safety here and get the support they need.'

'I urge those hosting elderly Ukrainians – and all those across the country with older relatives and friends – to check with them and see if they could be eligible for this extra financial assistance.'

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## [Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy to promote the National Minimum Wage and Living Wage uplift.](#)

From this week, gamers playing Angry Birds, The Sims, FIFA, Sugar Blast and others, will be targeted by adverts calling on workers to check they are being paid properly following the annual increase in the minimum wage. With younger workers among those set to benefit most from the rise, the department for business energy and industrial strategy has widened its reach in this demographic by targeting gamers. A 15 second animation during game play will remind players of the higher rates with a link to the [check your pay page](#).

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## [Tax credits customers warned about scammers posing as HMRC.](#)

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is warning tax credits customers to be aware of scams and fraudsters who imitate the department in an attempt to steal their personal information or money. About 2.1 million tax credits customers are expected to renew their annual claims by 31 July 2022 and could be more susceptible to the tactics used by criminals who mimic government messages to make them appear authentic. In the 12 months to April 2022, HMRC responded to nearly 277,000 referrals of suspicious contact received from the public.

## [Last chance to have your say on new cross-government complaint standards](#)

Over recent months DWP have been working with Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) and other government departments to develop new cross-government complaint standards. These standards will provide a consistent set of expectations for how government services should handle complaints.

The public consultation on these standards was launched on 22 March and we are keen to hear what you as colleagues and your local external stakeholders think of these. Your feedback will be critical to improving complaints handling for everybody. Please share the details of the consultation and the link with your local stakeholders and networks and encourage their participation before the **31 May**.

The consultation can be accessed via the PHSO website or [here](#).

If you wish to view the complaints standards use this [link](#).

## [New look for Way To Work campaign](#)

We've updated our Way to Work [Stakeholder and Employer Toolkit](#), and refreshed our campaign with a new look and feel. Please use the attached in your discussions with existing and new employers and stakeholders. As you know, the campaign encourages employers to use Jobcentre Plus to help fill their vacancies and address their recruitment needs.

With 1.3 million vacancies and hundreds of thousands of people on Universal Credit who are actively looking to make a fresh start in work, Way to Work aims to connect jobseekers to live job opportunities, and employers to the candidates they need. The toolkit features testimonials from employers who have used Jobcentre Plus to successfully fill their vacancies.

The latest phase of the campaign went live last week with radio and print advertising, and you may have seen our Way to Work advertisements on social media.

The Toolkit is also available on request from [Laurence.harvey@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:Laurence.harvey@dwp.gov.uk)

## [Penalties for not telling HMRC about Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grant overpayments - CC/FS48](#)

If you've received a grant but were not eligible or you've been overpaid, find out what penalties you may have to pay if you do not tell HMRC. Find out what you need to do if you've claimed too much grant and other information including:

- when to tell us about amounts you've overclaimed
- how to pay the money back
- when you may have to pay a penalty

The [fact sheet](#) is for guidance only and reflects the position of HMRC at the time of writing.

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## [194 new Jobcentres open](#)

Thousands more jobseekers are being supported into new jobs, to increase their hours and forge a career through tailored face-to-face job support.

Minister for Employment, Mims Davies MP, and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Lords Minister, Baroness Stedman-Scott, visited a new Jobcentre in Brighton to officially open the site and mark the completion of the programme to open almost 200 new temporary Jobcentres across Great Britain.

With all 194 sites now open, jobseekers from Aberdeen to Plymouth can access DWP's services in a welcoming, modern environment, where they can meet local employers and be matched to record vacancies in a wide range of sectors.

Work Coaches at the new site in Brighton have joined thousands of colleagues up and down the country at the forefront of the Government's drive to get 500,000 people currently out of work into jobs by the end of the summer as part of the 'Way to Work' campaign.

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## [Green jobs delivery steps up a gear](#)

Energy Minister Greg Hands today (11 May) co-chaired the first meeting of the country's first ever dedicated group for creating UK green job opportunities.

The Green Jobs Delivery Group will support the delivery of up to 480,000 skilled green jobs by 2030 that will be created and supported thanks to government policies set out in the Prime Minister's [Energy Security Strategy](#) and [Net Zero Strategy](#).

## [Emergency support put in place for people fleeing Ukraine and entering the UK with their pets](#)

The Government has put in place [new emergency support for those fleeing Ukraine with their pets](#). Using an emergency licence, people fleeing Ukraine can bring their pets to the UK with any quarantine costs met by the Government. The Animal and Plant Health Agency is providing quick licence approvals and quarantine arrangements to avoid creating additional burdens or delays. The Government will also be covering their vaccination, microchipping and quarantine costs, recognising that many individuals from Ukraine will not have been able to complete the full health preparations required for their pet on arrival.

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## [Guidance for businesses offering work to people coming from Ukraine.](#)

This publication provides guidance for businesses considering making offers of employment to people coming to the UK from Ukraine. Any offer of employment opportunities are completed via the [Vacancy information questionnaire](#), which need to be returned to [offerwork@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:offerwork@homeoffice.gov.uk), and your organisation will be contacted by the National Employer and Partnership Team in the Department for Work and Pensions within 5 working days, to discuss the roles available. Job opportunities will then be shared across the DWP Jobcentre Plus network and with the Refugee Employment Network (REN), a charity which works with organisations across the UK to support refugees into work.

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## [Support organisations and charities questioned on health assessments for benefits - Committees - UK Parliament.](#)

The Work and Pensions Committee inquiry is investigating the assessment processes for health-related benefits, including Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Attendance Allowance and Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit. It is focusing on how the DWP can improve the application and assessment processes.

The Committee has previously heard that the application and assessment processes for such benefits are often flawed, with a majority of people who appeal against decisions made by the DWP being successful. The DWP [has announced its intention to reform the assessment processes for PIP and ESA through the Health Transformation Programme.](#)

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## [Five ways you can get financial support for your small or medium business](#)

Small or medium businesses (SME) may be interested in the following five ways they can get government support to help them invest and grow.

1. Claim up to £5,000 with the Employment Allowance
2. Get a discount of up to £5,000 on software, with Help to Grow
3. Get up to half off your business rates
4. Invest in your business with Super-deduction and Annual Investment Allowance
5. Benefit from the cut in Fuel Duty

Find out more on [GOV.UK](#).

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## [Prime Minister to give local leaders power to breathe new life into high streets](#)

Prime Minister to bring in landmark reforms to rejuvenate high streets and restore pride in local areas. Currently shops can stand empty for years, blighting the high street and wasting opportunities for new jobs. New legislation will enable local leaders to force landlords to rent out commercial properties, revitalising highstreets, rejuvenating town centres, and restoring community pride in their home towns. Councils will be given greater powers to take control of buildings for the benefit of their communities, transforming boarded up shops or derelict buildings into thriving businesses, shared community spaces or housing.

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## [Crisis](#)

Crisis, the national charity for those experiencing homelessness, have recorded a [podcast](#) (8 minutes duration) about the important role that DWP has in homelessness prevention. Tahmina Nizam from Crisis explains how every interaction that we have with a customer is vital in terms of the many life changing interventions that we are empowered to deliver. [A written transcript](#) is available in support of the audio.

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## [Housing Benefit adjudication circulars 2022](#)

A5/2022: Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Initiative for financial year ending March 2023. The information in this circular does not affect the content of the Housing Benefit Guidance Manual.

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## [Ukraine Extension Scheme](#)

The Home Office (HO) have already introduced two new schemes for those at risk in Ukraine which are the Ukraine Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

On **3 May 2022** the HO introduced the new [Ukraine Extension Scheme](#). This is for Ukrainians who were already in the UK before the invasion in Ukraine began and whose leave is due to expire or has already expired.

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## [British Sign Language Bill set to clear final stage before becoming law](#)

Tens of thousands of British Sign Language (BSL) users are anticipating a momentous day today (27 April 2022) as a Bill that will see BSL become a recognised language in Britain is expected to clear its final hurdle on the way to becoming law.

The BSL Act will recognise BSL as a language of England, Wales and Scotland in its own right. It is also supported by a duty on the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to regularly report on what each relevant government department has done to promote or facilitate the use of British Sign Language in its communications with the public.

The Act further places a requirement on the DWP Secretary of State to issue guidance to departments on the promotion and facilitation of BSL. The guidance will be developed together with D/deaf BSL signers.

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## Benefits Update

### [Countdown to Pension Credit Day of Action.](#)

DWP's Pension Credit campaign is building towards a day of action on Wednesday 15 June. National newspapers and social and digital channels have been carrying messages reminding pensioners they should check their eligibility for financial support. The [Pension Credit calculator](#) is the quickest and easiest way to do this. The campaign aims to help with the challenges some pensioners are facing with the cost of living. On, and in the lead up to the Day of Action, the Minister for Pensions and Financial Inclusion, Guy Opperman has a range of media and digital activity planned.

We would appreciate your support in helping us spread our Pension Credit message. We have pulled together a variety of different content in the [Pension Credit toolkit: advice and guidance for stakeholders](#) which you can use on your channels. This toolkit is designed to provide some ideas and guidance for organisations wishing to encourage pensioners they have dealings with to claim Pension Credit where they might be entitled.

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### [Please replace all 'Cheaper internet is available to customers on benefits' posters with updated version.](#)

The 'Cheaper internet is available to customers on benefits' poster last published in November 2021 has been updated with the new home broadband monthly prices for customers on means tested benefits.

Please replace outdated versions of this poster with the attached updated version [Social Tariffs for Work Coaches](#) Please pass details of this to Partners where applicable.

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### [New Government Bill extends end of life financial support.](#)

Fast-track benefit access to be extended to those nearing the end of their life on Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA). Thousands more people nearing the end of their life will have faster access to financial support through the benefits system thanks to a change of rules outlined in the Queen's Speech.

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### [How to verify your identity for Universal Credit.](#)

If you want to claim Universal Credit you must verify your identity. This guide for claimants and people supporting them explains how to do that.

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## Children in poverty: Child Maintenance Service.

Children in poverty: Child Maintenance Service is the third and final part of the Committee's wider inquiry into children in poverty, following on from the Measurement and targets, and no recourse to public funds.

### **The Committee will be looking to find out:**

- How many children in the UK live in separated families? What proportion of these children are living in poverty?
- What prevents parents from establishing family-based arrangements?
- What barriers are there for parents when trying to access support from Child Maintenance Service?
- How can DWP improve the CMS to better support children living in poverty?

The committee wants to hear your views. We welcome submissions from anyone with answers to the questions in the call for evidence. You can submit evidence until Friday 8 July 2022.

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## Tax credits and some benefits are ending: claim Universal Credit.

The Department for Work and Pensions is writing to people whose tax credits or benefits are ending. The following 6 benefits and tax credits are ending for people of working age:

- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Working Tax Credit

You will be notified of when you will be asked to claim Universal Credit. All claimants will be moved to Universal Credit by 2024. If you currently receive these benefits, you will receive a Migration Notice letter from the Department for Work and Pensions. This letter will inform you that your existing benefits or tax credits will be ending, and the date you must claim Universal Credit by.

You will have 3 months to claim Universal Credit from the date of your Migration Notice letter.

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## [Providing support for people to claim Universal Credit: supplier event.](#)

DWP currently provides grant funding to support people to make and maintain their Universal Credit (UC) claim up until their first correct UC payment. DWP is looking at how best to fulfil these requirements in the future by considering our strategy and the capability of the marketplace. The requirements have not yet been finalised, and DWP is hosting an industry pre-market engagement event to give potential delivery partners (commercial and not for profit) the opportunity to better understand DWP's objectives and challenges, and for DWP to gain some insight from the market about potential ways forward.

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## Funding & Initiatives

### [New online quiz launched to help adults improve numeracy skills.](#)

Adults are being encouraged to take a new online quiz designed to get them thinking about their maths skills as part of the government's commitment to help more people get a good job and grow the economy to tackle the cost of living.

Launched to mark [National Numeracy Day](#), the short quiz asks 6 questions of varying difficulty to get adults to think about whether they need help and signposts to where people can access support to improve maths and numeracy skills, including [fully funded maths courses up to GCSE](#) level and equivalent.

### [Government on track to deliver 26,000 more primary care staff](#)

The government is on track to deliver on manifesto commitment of 26,000 more primary care staff to help improve patient access to appointments and reduce the coronavirus (COVID-19) backlog. This follows £520 million investment to improve access and expand GP capacity during the pandemic, on top of £1.5 billion to retain and recruit staff and is alongside record government investment of £39 billion to tackle the COVID-19 backlog and reduce waiting times.

### [Lasting Power of Attorney revamp to improve safety and efficiency](#)

Ministers have set out plans to transform the lasting power of attorney (LPA) system – making it quicker to use, easier to access and even more secure from fraud. Under the proposals, people will be able to make an LPA completely online for the first time – bringing it in line with other government services such as applying for a divorce. The current paper-based system will continue to operate meaning people can choose an accessible process that's best for their specific needs. Crucially, the reforms will bolster safeguards to protect vulnerable people from abuse or fraud.

### [Traineeships in England - criteria extended](#)

Traineeships are courses that include work experience for young people who want to find a job or apprenticeship but don't have the skills, experience, or behaviours that employers are looking for. A traineeship, unlike an apprenticeship, is not a job. The criteria for Traineeships in England have been extended to include those aged 16 to 24, qualified up to and including, a full level 3 qualification. Traineeships can be found on [Find a Traineeship](#). Information on local Traineeships may feature on your District Provision Tool. For further information please read [UC Traineeships guidance](#) and [Legacy Traineeships guidance](#).

## [£15 million government funding for garden communities.](#)

This is part of a £69 million programme to deliver up to 16,000 homes per year from 2025, creating almost 200,000 jobs and boosting the economy and builds on the government's plans to level up the country, regenerate underused land and bring forward beautiful new developments.

## [Secretary of State for Work and Pensions attends G7 Labour and Employment Ministerial meeting in Germany.](#)

The meeting, which took place on Tuesday 24 May 2022, sought to build on the UK G7 agenda from 2021, which focussed on building back better, greener and more inclusively. This year delegates focussed on structural change to the labour market in the context of decarbonisation, digitalisation, and demographic change. The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Thérèse Coffey outlined the UK's commitment to achieving net zero by 2050, and delivering on the commitments made at COP26, including by greening pension scheme investments.

## [Grant fund launched to support women's reproductive wellbeing in the workplace.](#)

Applications for funding have opened for voluntary, community and social enterprise VCSE organisations who support women experiencing reproductive issues to remain in or return to the workplace. The application portal for the [VCSE grant fund](#) opened on Friday 13 May and close on Friday 5 August. Women experiencing the menopause, fertility problems, miscarriage and pregnancy loss, menstrual health and gynaecological conditions in the workplace will be supported to remain in or return to the workplace by a multi-million pound funding boost to (VCSE) organisations.

## [Retirement calculator](#)

GAD (Government Actuary's Department) has developed a retirement calculator which provides benefits options information to public sector pension scheme members. This online tool is designed to help people understand their pensions more clearly. In the coming financial year, the retirement calculator is set to be rolled out to several public sector clients including police, teachers, and fire services throughout the UK.

## [Budgeting Loans and Sure Start Maternity Grant](#)

A Budgeting Loan is to help pay for essential things or services. A Sure Start Maternity Grant can help with the costs of having a child. These [easy read guides](#) explain how it works, who can apply and how to apply.

## Statistics

### Universal Credit statistics, 29 April 2013 to 14 April 2022

- 40,000 [claims made to Universal Credit](#) per week, on average, in the 5 weeks to 14 April 2022
- 33,000 [starts on Universal Credit](#) per week, on average, between 14 January 2022 to 14 April 2022
- 5.6 million [people on Universal Credit](#) at 14 April 2022, up 35,000 from January 2022
- 4.7 million [households on Universal Credit](#) in February 2022
- 4.2 million households received a payment in February 2022, up 100,000 from November 2021
- a rise in the average (mean) payment to households in payment to £790 in February 2022 from £780 in November 2021
- 87% of new claims and 97% of all claims received their payment in full and on time in January 2022 compared with 85% and 95% respectively in October 2021.

### Government hits goal to see a million more disabled people in work

Over one million more disabled people are in employment compared to five years ago according to the latest Office for National Statistics (ONS) data released today (Tuesday 17 May), confirming the government has achieved a key ambition in its efforts improve the lives of disabled people.

The latest figures show the number of disabled people in employment has increased by 1.3 million since 2017, delivering on a government goal to see one million more in work by 2027.

### More than £2 billion to boost UK submarine programme

Defence contracts worth more than £2 billion have been awarded to BAE Systems and Rolls-Royce to begin the third major phase of the future submarine nuclear deterrent programme – Dreadnought.

With the overall programme supporting around 30,000 jobs across the UK, from design through to build, Delivery Phase 3 (DP3) represents the most significant stage of the Dreadnought programme so far. In 2021 alone, it supported around 13,500 jobs in the Northwest of England and a further 16,300 over the rest of the UK, making a significant contribution to the Government's levelling-up agenda.



## Links and resources



Touchbase is being produced weekly and is being circulated to subscribers every Friday. Although these provide a roundup of announcements and are useful for organisations they will not be published on GOV.UK

[Subscribe to Touchbase](#)

**1. Touchbase:** News and articles from across government for advisers, employers and organisations that help people find jobs.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/touchbase-dwp-news-about-work-working-age-benefits-and-services>

**2. The Personal Independence Payment (PIP) toolkit:** This toolkit provides information to individuals and organisations that support PIP and DLA claimants.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-personal-independence-payment-toolkit-for-partners/the-personal-independence-payment-pip-toolkit>

**3. Independent Assessment Service:** Each person claiming PIP is unique and might face all kinds of challenges from a wide range of health conditions or disabilities. The Independent Assessment Service work in partnership with trusted organisations, and their experienced health professionals are fully trained to understand the complex effects of living with a health condition or disability

<https://www.mypipassessment.co.uk/>

**3a. PIP Consultations for London:** These sites are used for PIP consultations.

<https://www.mypipassessment.co.uk/consultation-centres/>

**3b Independent Assessment Service:**

<https://www.mypipassessment.co.uk>

**4. Maximus** - The Health Assessment Advisory Service arranges and carries out assessments on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). If you are claiming benefits as a result of a disability or injury, you may be required by DWP to have an assessment with a qualified Healthcare Professional as part of your claim process.

<https://www.chdauk.co.uk/assessment-process>

**5. Universal Credit Toolkit:** This toolkit contains information about Universal Credit and the changes it brings.

<https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit-toolkit-for-partner-organisations>

**6. HM Revenue and Customs Employer Bulletin:** A bi-monthly magazine for employers and agents giving up-to-date information on payroll topics.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hm-revenue-and-customs-employer-bulletin>

**7. UK Online:** All 3,000 UK online Centre's partners offer FREE or low-cost access to computers and the internet, plus help and support to use them.

<https://www.gov.uk/ukonline-centre-internet-access-computer-training>

**8. Supporting people back to work:** Useful links to support people back to work. [@JCPinEastLondon Twitter](#) account.

[Job Help website](#) an external Government website with a range of information on finding a job, applying for opportunities and developing skills.

[Find a Job website](#) an external website for job seekers with nearly 65,500 vacancies

[Find a Job website](#) an external website for employers to post their opportunities

[@JCPJobsPlusMore](#) National Employer and Partnership Teams National Twitter account.

[Civil Service Jobs](#) Search for jobs in the Civil Service.

I trust that existing partnerships arrangements are meeting your needs. However, if you have any questions or would like to discuss local partnership issues further please do not hesitate to contact me.

I am available to deliver any DWP benefit awareness sessions to all external partners and your colleagues using MS Teams. If you would like to discuss arranging a session, please do get in touch.

**Yousaf Akram: East London District.**

**Barking & Dagenham, Hackney, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest.**

Yousaf Akram District Partnership Adviser

Yousaf.Akram@dwp.gov.uk