

Tower Hamlets Community Advice Network (THCAN) is a partnership of local advice centres that work together to ensure Tower Hamlets residents have access to free, high-quality advice and representation in social welfare law (welfare benefits, debt, housing, employment, immigration, etc) www.thcan.org.uk website has information on advice providers services, factsheets, contact details and a referrals portal.

sarah.sauvat@island-advice.org.uk register to use the portal

jo.ellis@island-advice.org.uk to send info for the mailout

1. Welfare Rights Advisors Forum
1. Training Information
2. Benefit Updates
3. New Projects, Services and Resources Information
4. Vacancies:
5. Advice Services Contacts (specialist advisors)

1. Welfare Rights Advisors Forum

Last meeting Thursday 25th July 2-3pm (zoom) – if you have not previously attended one of these meetings and wish to come, please email me to be added to my list (minutes are available on the THCAN website).

2. Free Training

- ✓ **‘How to fill out an Attendance Allowance form’**. This session is in-person at our London office - 18 Avonmore Rd, London W14 8RR. 09:30 and finish at 16:00, including a 45-minute lunch break. Please note lunch is not provided.

To sign up please go to <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/3534e482-8086-4d33-bb93-dbeca1497c93@61191ab0-dcb3-464c-baf4-95ae4e245da4>

We have also enabled a waiting list for this session.

By the end of this session, you should be able to: Identify if an older person may qualify for Attendance Allowance. Encourage an older person to consider making an application for Attendance Allowance. Talk an older person through the process of making a claim for Attendance Allowance and tell them the benefits of requesting a claim form over the telephone. Support an older person to complete an application form for Attendance Allowance.

- ✓ Please see attached information on a training course provided by independent age, for more information please contact Advice.training@independentage.org

3. Benefit Updates (Information from articles produced by Citizens Advice / CPAG /LASA / Benefits and Work updates summary)

➤ **Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) policy change**

It has come to our attention that CPAG has removed all of their judicial review pre-action template letters from their site and is instead asking advisers to email them at jrproject@cpag.org.uk to discuss cases and get copies.

It's important to bear in mind that there are deadlines for judicial review, so advisers should contact them without delay if they want their support. CPAG's website says they will 'try to reply as quickly as possible and will do so within 7 days'.

You can [find a guide on using their templates and the process they want advisers to follow now on the CPAG website](#)

➤ **Using national insurance credits to maximise Universal Credit (UC) entitlement**

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) is providing free access to some articles to celebrate the 300th issue of the Welfare Rights Bulletin. '[National insurance credits and limited capability for work](#)' outlines the potential for using national insurance (NI) credits to maximise UC entitlement.

Advisers may be familiar with regulation 19 [Universal Credit \(Transitional Provisions\) Regulations 2014](#) (UC (TP) regs), which allows claimants who have been determined to have limited capability for work/work related activity (LCW/WRA) within an award of old-style ESA, to carry forward that determination into an UC claim. Advisers may be less familiar with [regulation 21 UC \(TP\) regs](#) which contains similar provisions for claimants entitled to NI credits on the basis of having LCW. This protection is wide-ranging for those who have been entitled to old-

style ESA - [see our Adviser Online article 'Universal credit and limited capability for work — case law update'](#).

CPAG suggest it might be possible to extend these principles to claimants who have been assessed or treated as having LCW/WRA under UC using regulation 21 (by making a 'credits only' claim) to link periods of LCW/WRA in between UC awards if the reason UC entitlement ends is unrelated to the determination of LCW/WRA.

Regulation 21 might also help claimants who are, or who will be, subject to managed migration, if they have health problems, but do not currently have a determination of LCW/WRA. A legacy benefit claimant in this situation who asks for determination of LCW/WRA after transferring to UC will erode any UC transitional element if the LCWRA element is awarded after the first UC assessment period. CPAG are suggesting that it might be possible to use regulation 21 to avoid this. Affected claimants should initiate a claim for NI credits as soon as possible and ask for this to be backdated for the maximum period. If the NI credits can be backdated beyond the 13 week assessment phase prior to a person claiming UC, this might prevent erosion of the UC transitional element, as regulation 21 might be broad enough to allow the claimant to be entitled to the LCWRA element from the first UC assessment period

✓ **Information / factsheets attached**

- ✓ Attach the guidance for exemption of Council Tax for clients/claimants with severe mental impairment

3. New Projects /services, information, and resources in Tower Hamlets

- ✓ **Free Turn2us PIP Helper tool.** A team of experienced PIP claimants worked together with national anti-poverty charity Turn2us to make this free, confidential tool just for you. Rest assured, we're separate from the DWP, and your privacy is very important. What you share with us stays with us.

[Turn2us PIP Helper](#)

- ✓ **Useful help to the individuals regarding their domestic energy.** [Make a Referral - Better Housing Better Health \(bhbh.org.uk\)](#), refer people over to us if they are interested in our

support. Individuals can also call our services directly on **0800 107 0044** if they wish. **General Energy Advice**

3x £49 Emergency Fuel Voucher (for prepayment meter residents)

Priority Service Register Service Sign Up £300 Small Measures Grant

I have also included our BHBH leaflet in this email, so please feel free to share this with anyone in your network, M: 07544 518429 T: 01908 665555 E:

Ellis.Holmes@nef.org.uk W: www.nef.org.uk

✓ **Island House Benefit Checks / Drop-in session for pensioners.**

Support for pensioners with benefit checks and Pension Credit applications.

Please feel free to signpost any of clients of pension age to check: Pension Credit and attendance allowance entitlement. Or email Cathy Weir cathy.weir@island-house.org with the clients name, telephone number (and email address if they have one) and they will get a call back/telephone advice, Monthly (3rd Thursday of the month). **Next session; Thursday 15th July 11.30 to 1.30**

Island House, Roserton Street, E14 3PG

- ✓ **LBTH are refreshing their VCS Strategy** and have just launched the second phase of **consultation** and are keen to hear from the VCS, the community and partners on what they think of the draft vision and objectives and ideas of actions we can take to support the VCS. All information on how to get involved can be found here: [VCS strategy consultation \(towerhamlets.gov.uk\)](http://VCSstrategyconsultation.towerhamlets.gov.uk).

4. **Vacancies**

- ✓ **Welfare rights vacancy Carers Centre Tower Hamlets, E1 0SG**

The link is here <https://www.charityjob.co.uk/jobs/carers-centre-tower-hamlets/older-persons-welfare-rights-caseworker/977517>

Carers Centre Tower Hamlets, 21 Brayford Square, Stepney, London E1 0SG

Office No: 020 7790 1765 Direct No: 020 7791 5595 Email: danielle@ccth.org.uk

Web: www.ccth.org.uk

✓ **Tower Hamlets Community Advice Referral System Administrator**

Employer: Island Advice Centre (IAC) , Roserton St, London E14 3PG

Salary: £27,200 FTE (SCP3 inc London Weighting), plus 8% employer's pension contribution

Hours: 21 hours pw – flexible hours

Email request for full details to sarah.sauvat@island-advice.org.uk

✓ **Finance worker – Island Advice**

Terms: Six month fixed-term contract

Hours: 7 hours per week (expected to increase as project funding increases)

Pay rate: Up to £28,000 pa (pro-rata of 35 hours per week) according to experience

Email request for full details to sarah.sauvat@island-advice.org.uk

5. Advice Services

Tower Hamlets Advice benefit advice services details [Advice Centres - THCAN](#)

Specialist advice providers All the advice providers listed on www.thcan.org.uk provide benefit advice and help with form filling.

Complex/appeal/specialist advice is available at the below organisations

Legal Advice Centre we have spare capacity concerning PIP appeals and Family Law matters. In terms of PIP appeals, we are happy to take on cases from MR stage. In terms of Family Law, we will take any matter, including non-molestation orders and Section 8 child arrangement

issues. We will take such cases regardless of the clients income. For PIP, please use the following email Benefits@legaladvicecentre.London For Family Law, please use the following email Familylaw@legaladvicecentre.London

Organisation	E-mail	Tel Advice
Citizens Advice Bureau	advice@eastendcab.org.uk	0203 855 4472
Island Advice Centre	admin@island-advice.org.uk	0207 987 9379 Tues & Wed 10am to 12
Legal Advice Centre	admin@legaladvicecentre.london	0203 606 0372
Tower Hamlets Law Centre	info@thlc.co.uk	0207 538 4909 9.30am-5pm Mon-Fri