

Tower Hamlets Community Advice Network **(THCAN)**

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, Referrals portal Sarah Sauvat sarah.sauvat@island-advice.org.uk training bookings or want to share information for mailout contact jo.ellis@island-advice.org.uk

1. Welfare Rights Advisors Forum: 16th July
2. Training Information
3. Benefit Updates
4. New Projects, Services and Resources Information
5. Vacancies:
6. Advice Services Contacts (specialist advisors)

1. Welfare Rights Advisors Forum

Last meeting 16th July – minutes to be checked/confirmed before information is made available Representatives from DWP attended and answered a number of questions regarding benefit issues.

2. Free Training

- Please see attached for the **East London Benefit Awareness Sessions** for August, any issues registering please let me know.

- **IAA Level 1 Training: Step Into An Immigration Career**

This entry-level course prepares you for the IAA Level 1 exam and equips you with the practical understanding needed to support clients with basic immigration matters under supervision. Ideal for those starting out in the legal, charity, or advice sector.

[View Course Details](#)

- **Paying for Fuel Webinar**

The Paying for Fuel webinar is aimed at frontline workers with no prior knowledge of fuel statements, tariffs or switching - please contact trainingadmin@nea.org.uk Duration 2.5 hours

Course content: How energy is supplied in the domestic energy market, Identifying types of meters and how to read them accurately, Electrical appliance power ratings, consumption and running costs, Gas and electricity tariffs and different payment methods, Fuel statements and how these are calculated, Additional information on statements Webinar dates

08 August 2025 (9:30am - 12:00pm)

22 August 2025 (9:30am - 12:00pm)

01 September 2025 (1:30pm - 4:00pm)

➤ **Homeless Link September training calendar**

[Conflict management: handling violence and aggression](#)

8 Sept | Online training

[Race, ethnicity and experiences of homelessness](#)

17 Sept | Online training

[Trauma-Informed for managers](#)

10 Sept | Online training

[Alcohol: Supporting change resistant and dependent drinkers](#)

22 Sept | Online training

[Preventing Evictions, Abandonments and Exclusions](#)

11 Sept | Online training

[Assessment and Support Planning](#)

23 Sept | Online training

[Suicide: prevention, intervention and post-incident protocols](#)

16 Sept | Online training

[Hoarding awareness workshop](#)

24 Sept | Online training

[Psychologically Informed Environments \(PIE\)](#)

25 Sept | Online training

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

➤ **Child Benefit Extension**

If your client's child is 16 or over and staying in full-time education or approved training, they will need to tell HMRC by **31 August 2025** to continue getting Child Benefit payments. If they don't their Child Benefit will stop. They can extend their claim [online using the GOV.UK website](#), or on the [HMRC app](#).

➤ **State Pension Age Letter** If your client was born between **6 April 1961 and 5 April 1962**, the DWP will be writing to them soon. The letter will confirm that their State Pension age is 67. This is because the State Pension age is increasing from April 2026. The DWP will be sending letters to people to highlight the change and provide information on how to check their state pension forecast. You can check your client's pension age and get a pension forecast by [using the government's online tool](#). For more information, [read our State Pension age changes guide](#).

➤ **Issues moving to UC for ESA Claimants**

Some people who have moved from ESA to Universal Credit through the managed migration process have noticed that their LCW or LCWRA element is missing from their first Universal Credit assessment. Without the LCW or LCWRA included, your client's first payment may be lower than expected. The DWP has said that it is automatically making payments to people who have been missing these elements. Your clients won't have to wait until their next assessment period. The DWP will leave a message in your client's journal telling them that they've been paid. If your clients are affected by this situation try the Turn2us Grants Search to find a charitable grant to help cover the cost.

➤ **Transitional Element**

If your client's Universal Credit income is less than the benefits they received under the old benefits system, they could be entitled to a transitional element, which is paid on top of their Universal Credit, to ensure that they are not worse off in the short-term. To get the transitional element they must have received a Migration Notice and claimed Universal Credit within the deadline stated in their notice letter. We estimate the amount of transitional element on the Turn2us Benefits Calculator where it applies. The transitional element will decrease over time and there are situations where it can be removed all together.

➤ **New legislation - evacuated or advised to leave**

In force from 18 July, new regulations exempt certain cohorts from the habitual residence test (HRT) and past presence test (PPT) where the government has advised British nationals to leave a territory or arranged their evacuation. They also allow for temporary absences where claimants were in the country/territory before the advice to leave was given and it is deemed that returning would have been unreasonable. The stated aim is to provide a blanket approach so the government doesn't have to lay new law whenever a crisis emerges. You can [find The Social Security \(Habitual Residence, Past Presence and Temporary Absence\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2025 on legislation.gov.uk](#).

➤ **Severe Disability Premium (SDP) Transitional element compensation**

In 2024 the government enhanced transitional protection for those who had lost their premiums migrating to UC. This applies to those previously entitled to an enhanced disability premium, disability premium, disabled child premium or disabled child element as well as the SDP. Payments arising from that law are exempt from income tax but the government also brought in separate compensation for those eligible before the law was introduced. Legislation has now exempted those compensation payments from income tax too, with retrospective effect to payments received from 18 December 2024. You can [find The Disability Premium Compensation Scheme \(Income Tax Exemption\) Regulations 2025 on legislation.gov.uk](#).

➤ **Changes to Child Benefit (CB)**

From September 2025 Child Benefit eligibility is being expanded. The definition of full-time education will include education of less than 12 hours per week for those who suffer 'from an illness or physical or mental disability' for 'any amount of hours appropriate for that person's individual circumstances'. It will also no longer be a requirement, where education is provided outside a school or college, that the education began before the young person turned 16 (as it does now, with limited exceptions). You can [find The Child Benefit \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2025 on legislation.gov.uk](#)

➤ **LATEST ON UC AND PIP BILL AS LABOUR GETS THROUGH THIRD READING**

The Labour government has got its severely weakened welfare bill through its third reading without further defeats, after the major concessions made before and during the second reading. 47 Labour MPs voted against the bill at third reading, compared with the second reading where 49 Labour MPs voted against. The chamber was largely empty as a large number of amendments were debated, only filling up for the votes. All the government amendments to the bill, including the promise to remove clause 5, the 4-point rule clause, were agreed. Every non-government amendment failed, except for one relating to co-production of the Timms review, which was withdrawn after concessions from the government. You can learn what the bill now contains in more detail from the link below. [Read More and Comment](#)

➤ **Updates on the Universal Credit (UC) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Bill**

The UC and PIP Bill passed its second reading in the House of Commons on 1 July. However, the government announced significant changes to the bill, and has tabled these as amendments which will be voted on this week. The changes to PIP eligibility conditions (the proposed 4-point rule) will be removed from the bill and revisited in a review in Autumn 2026. There won't be any changes to PIP eligibility in the legislation currently going through parliament. The review plans to consider the assessment criteria for both components, and the role of the PIP assessment as a future single gateway to health and disability benefits.

In relation to UC, the bill will increase the standard allowance above inflation in the tax years from 2026/27 to 2029/30. It will reduce the limited capability for work and work-related activity (LCWRA) element from £423.27 to £217.26, at current rates, for most new claimants from April 2026. Claimants who already have LCWRA, and some new claimants meeting severe conditions criteria, will continue to get the higher rate. The LCWRA element will be frozen from 2026/27 to 2029/30, but for those still getting the higher rate it will be uprated where there is a shortfall following the increase to the standard allowance.

You can [see the progress of the bill, and read the current draft of the bill, on the UK Parliament website](#)

4. New Projects /services, information, and resources

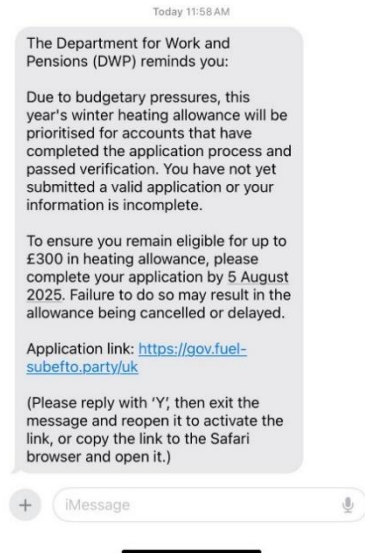
- Please see attached for the July edition of the East London **DWP Partnership Newsletter**.

➤ **"Documentary Production company True Vision**

Are doing some research into the effects of substandard housing on children's health for a potential new project. They are looking to connect with families with at least one child over 7, who are living in poor-quality housing and are struggling with their health as a result. If you work with families who might be open to an initial chat about taking part in this research, please contact the Researcher tilly.wax@truevisiontv.com. To find out more about True Vision, please visit www.truevisiontv.com."

➤ **There's a scam going around targeting older people telling them to apply for the winter fuel allowance.**

The wording etc makes it look quite genuine so I wanted to share it with you should you want to warn those you support.



➤ **Attached Signposting Database and Migrant's Guide information**

Really helpful resource produced by Praxis - with the database specifically being more useful the more people contribute and use it.

Clara Hopfgarten Clara.Hopfgarten@praxis.org.uk

➤ **School Uniform Grant**

Tower Hamlets residents with household incomes of up to £50,350 and a child starting primary or secondary school this September can apply for a £50 (primary) or £150 (secondary) grant towards the cost of school clothes and uniforms. applications are now open until 30 September. Full details on the application process, including who can apply, what proof of income is required and the form itself is available on the council website

➤ **Expert debt webchat for advisers**

Are you an adviser dealing with debt cases for a client? Shelter's Specialist Debt Advice Service is available to contact by webchat (Monday to Friday from 9-5pm) in addition to our helpline and web enquiry.

[Contact us](#)

➤ **Praxis**

This week marks one year since some of the worst racist violence in generations. Last summer many of us were made to feel unsafe and unwelcome in our own home. But up and down the country people stepped up. We cleaned up, protected asylum accommodation, rebuilt community spaces, and so much more. With the far-right on our streets again, this solidarity is more important than ever. Here's three things you can do:

Sign our open letter calling for action against the far-right

Download guide to having meaningful conversations about migration

5. Vacancies

None this month

6. 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.

Legal Advice Centre PIP appeals and Family Law matters. For PIP, please use the following email Benefits@legaladvicecentre.London
For Family Law, please use the following email Familylaw@legaladvicecentre.London

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

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 Tuesday 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