

# Welfare Reform: The Big Debate

## Summary and Links



### Introduction

Jackie Jeffrey, Chief Executive of Citizens Advice Shropshire, spoke candidly about the challenges facing voluntary organisations in supporting people through the imminent welfare changes.

“Welfare Reform will see every part of the benefit system change. It will involve a £18 billion budget cut from the welfare bill by 2014 and a further £10 billion cut is expected at a later date”

All the presentations from the day are available. To download them visit our webpages by clicking the link [here](#).

Our full report of the day is also available on our webpages on the link here.

The day included four workshops, each speaker talking about the following topics:-

1. Universal Credit
2. Personal Independence Payment
3. Housing and Council Tax Benefits
4. Impact of Welfare Reform on the Voluntary Sector

## Universal Credit

Kairen Francis  
Job Centre Plus, Department of Work and Pensions  
Email: [kairen.francis@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:kairen.francis@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk)



Kairen spoke about the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the fact that it was designed to make the benefits and tax credits systems more efficient, simple and to deliver a fair system.

The enclosed link also provides some more useful information on [Universal Credit](#) from the Department of Work and Pensions

The Guardian recently published a 'Storify' where Guardian readers shared their stories on how Universal Credit will affect them this is also available by clicking on the link [here](#).

## Personal Independence Payment

Colin Smith  
Department for Work and Pensions  
Email: [colin.a.smith@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:colin.a.smith@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)



Colin explained that, from April 2013, Personal Independence Payment (PIP) will replace Disability Living Allowance. It will apply to people aged 16-64. He spoke about the resources available from the Department of Work and Pensions and informed delegates that new toolkits and hand outs were due to be released. The main web link for PIP is: [www.dwp.gov.uk/pip](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/pip)

During the presentation Colin spoke about the Personal Independence Payment toolkit guidance for supporting organisations. It's now available and to read more about the toolkit visit the link here <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/disability/personal-independence-payment/pip-toolkit/>

Also some good info from Citizens Advice Bureau on this link [here](#)!

## Housing and Council Tax Benefits

Damian Carter  
Benefits and Face to Face Manager, Shropshire Council  
Email: [Damian.Carter@Shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Damian.Carter@Shropshire.gov.uk)



Damian highlighted a number of key areas of Welfare Reform that he would cover in his presentation: under occupation, benefit cap, Social Fund Reform and local support for Council Tax. All are due to be introduced from April 2013. More information is available on Shropshire Council's website via the link [here](#)

Also great video from Warwickshire Country Council on housing benefit changes. Good visual summary that highlights a lot of Damien's key points. Click on link here for more info!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cP4ThvRUx2E>

More information on the following can be found by clicking the links below

[Under Occupancy](#)

[Discretionary Housing Payments](#)

## Impact of Welfare Reform on the Voluntary and Community Sector

CEO, Citizens Advice Shropshire  
Email: [dpm@shropshirecab.cabnet.org.uk](mailto:dpm@shropshirecab.cabnet.org.uk)



Jackie explained that she aimed to run through the known concerns for voluntary organisations working to support people affected by Welfare Reform, but also to gain a better understanding of any additional concerns and questions from the discussion.

We hope you enjoyed the day and found the information we have provided useful.

## Tweets of the Day

We created a Twitter feed for the day for the first time to make use of the people using social media and furthering the reach of messages from the organisations who attended!

**Cit Ad Shropshire** @CABshropshire

#bigdebate thank you everyone for a great afternoon. Great information exchange ... Working together in Shropshire Yes!

@ShropDisNetwork @vcsvoice #bigdebate it's fair to say there are a lot of concerned people in the room.

**SDN** @ShropDisNetwork

People concerned about what happens when universal credit is stopped? #bigdebate yesterday Especially the vulnerable @VolunteerShrops

**SDN** @ShropDisNetwork

problems in #shropshire with engagement communication says Damien Carter Shropshire Council #bigdebate @VCSVoice @ShropshireCLASP

## Useful Links

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/>

[http://www.housing.org.uk/policy/social\\_inclusion\\_and\\_welfare/welfare\\_reform.aspx](http://www.housing.org.uk/policy/social_inclusion_and_welfare/welfare_reform.aspx)

[http://www.mind.org.uk/campaigns\\_and\\_issues/policy\\_and\\_issues/making\\_benefits\\_fairer-welfare\\_reform](http://www.mind.org.uk/campaigns_and_issues/policy_and_issues/making_benefits_fairer-welfare_reform)

<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/counciltax.nsf/open/CF811D695BBD22D180257AB1004F448F>

<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/universalcredit>