



A local network
for people
working in
money and
benefits advice
services

Grampian Advice Forum

Benefits Bulletin



Aug 2026

“Fit for work” overturned: tribunal must consider travel and actual support

The decision of the First-tier Tribunal made on 20 March 2025 under case number SC944/24/00825 was made in error of law.

- UT found error of law in a “fit for work” decision.
- Tribunal failed to properly assess travel limitations and how these affect real ability to work.
- Tribunal assumed support (e.g. family help) without evidence it was actually available or reliable.
- Key point: findings must reflect real-world employability, not theoretical capability.

Use in practice

- Strong for challenging LCW / fit for work where:
 - getting to work is problematic, or
 - support networks are uncertain / overstated
- Frame as failure to engage with material evidence + inadequate reasoning

Bottom line: Decision makers must explain how the claimant would actually manage work in practice, including travel and support.

[RB v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions](#)

Benefitscast

This Benefitscast was recorded in August 2026 - [Benefitscast – The Benefits Training Company](#)

Better late than never?

Laura Docherty explores what can be done if someone has been invited to claim Universal Credit under managed migration, and missed their final deadline.

The process of managed migration is all but over. At the time of writing less than 600 claimants are in receipt of legacy benefits.¹ At this late stage advisers are still wondering what can be done if their client has missed their final deadline. Even if the final deadline was many months ago there might be steps that can be taken to maximise the client’s Universal Credit (UC).

For a comprehensive overview of the managed migration process, you can read Josh Gilbert’s article, [A guide to managed migration](#).

Read the full article - [Better late than never?](#)

ACC Benefit calculator

Our benefits calculator will help you find out what benefits you can claim. The calculator is free to use, and the details you provide are anonymous.

Before you start, make sure you have information about your savings, income, pensions and existing benefits (for you and your partner).

If you run out of time, you can save your calculation and come back to it later, and pick up right where you left off.

- *Should take 10 minutes to complete*
- *Please complete all fields with an asterisk(*)*

[START >>>](#)



**citizens
advice**

August 2026 Multimedia Bulletin

We're kicking off August by sharing our monthly bulletin, featuring media related to all things NRPF and immigration in the UK.



No Recourse
North East

Topics this month range from **British Future's** analysis of the most recent ONS data to **Migration Unboxed's** discussion highlighting the connections between the politics of race and migration, and the **Home Affairs Committee's** most recent asylum accommodation evidence-gathering session.

If you have any suggestions, need clarification, or are having trouble accessing any of the materials, please do not hesitate to get in touch; we are happy to help.

Link: <https://nrnepartnership.org/2026/07/30/nrnes-multimedia-bulletin-august-2026/>

STAY WARM STAY WELL FREE TRAINING FOR FRONT LINE STAFF – DATES FOR 2026



Fuel poverty is a major problem in Scotland. More than one in four people can't afford to heat their homes to an adequate level. For those living in fuel poverty, the consequences are ill health, discomfort and debt. This often means choosing between heating and eating.

We provide free Stay Warm Stay Well training, to front line staff responsible for looking after the health, wellbeing, and social welfare of vulnerable people. This updated energy efficiency training will enable a range of organisations in Scotland, to provide appropriate and effective advice and information to clients, helping them to obtain all the help and support that's available.

We are delivering this course online utilising Microsoft Teams. Places are available on a first come, first served basis. The course will cover:

- Introduction to EAS and the Stay Warm Stay Well
- Fuel poverty – causes and effects
- Cold damp homes and health impacts
- Condensation dampness
- Energy efficiency
- Heat loss in the home
- Paying for fuel and fuel debt issues
- Sourcing help and effective signposting
- Tariffs and switching

The course is delivered in two sessions. Each session consists of a PowerPoint delivery followed by a Q&A session. Participants **must attend both sessions on the same day** to be eligible to receive a certificate for Continued Personal Development (CPD).

Pre and Post evaluation forms will be issued to all those who attend. By completing these, you may be eligible for one of the sponsored Energy Awareness, City & Guilds (Level 3) spaces we have available. Do you know someone who is cold at home or who struggles to afford their fuel bills? If so, this free training can help you to find solutions.

Please click on your preferred date on the list below which will take you to the appropriate booking page.

Please note that each session is limited to 35 places so if your first choice is not available, please try another option.

Available dates

Course	Date
1. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Monday 17 August 2026</u>
2. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Friday 21 August 2026</u>
3. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Friday 28 August 2026</u>
4. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Wednesday 2 September 2026</u>
5. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Monday 7 September 2026</u>
6. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Wednesday 9 September 2026</u>
7. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Friday 11 September 2026</u>
8. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Wednesday 16 September 2026</u>
9. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Friday 2 October 2026</u>
10. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Tuesday 6 October 2026</u>
11. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Wednesday 7 October 2026</u>
12. Stay Warm Stay Well	<u>Friday 9 October 2026</u>

Supporting Families to Thrive

The Scottish Government is investing £2 million in 2026-27 to expand the Children First Support Line, helping up to 7,500 families across Scotland.



The service provides a single point of access to:

- Financial support, including emergency grants, budgeting and debt advice
- Emotional support for stress and anxiety
- Help accessing services such as childcare and housing
- Connections to specialist employment and family support services

The funding will allow Children First to more than double its current reach, building on support already provided to over 5,000 families in 2025-26.

The Support Line is available 365 days a year by phone, webchat, text, email, video and face-to-face support. Families can self-refer and receive ongoing help where needed.

The investment forms part of the Scottish Government's "Bringing Hope, Building Futures" child poverty delivery plan and wider efforts to provide simpler, more joined-up family support across Scotland.

1. [Children First support line](#)
2. [Bringing Hope, Building Futures: Tackling child poverty delivery plan 2026-2031](#)
3. [Supporting families to thrive](#)



Universal Credit claimants with LCWRA



There are increasing reports from people in the LCWRA (Limited Capability for Work and Work Related Activity) group receiving Universal Credit journal messages inviting them to attend a meeting or "chat" with Jobcentre staff about support to help them prepare for work or return to work.

These messages are causing a great deal of unnecessary worry.

If your Universal Credit journal confirms that you have LCWRA, any work related support should be voluntary.

 Read the journal message carefully. Somewhere within the message it should make it clear that taking part is voluntary.

If the message appears to suggest the appointment is mandatory, or it does not make it clear that attendance is voluntary, **don't simply ignore it**.

Instead, reply through your Universal Credit journal and ask your Work Coach to clarify why you are being asked to attend mandatory work related activity when you have already been assessed as having Limited Capability for Work and Work Related Activity (LCWRA).

You can also remind them that your journal confirms you are in the LCWRA group and that, under the Universal Credit rules, you are not subject to work related requirements.

 We would still recommend responding to the message rather than ignoring it completely, just in case it has been sent incorrectly. Although a sanction would be unlikely, it is always better to clarify the position through your journal.

That said, if you want to attend, there are some genuinely useful voluntary programmes and courses available which some people find beneficial. Just remember that participation should be your choice, and if you find the course or meetings too difficult, make sure you let your Work Coach know. You should not feel pressured into continuing.

Long-Term Conditions in Scotland

Long-term health conditions affect around half of Scotland's adult population, with almost two in five people reporting that their condition limits daily activities. Common conditions include diabetes, heart disease, respiratory illnesses, chronic pain, mental health conditions and long COVID.

The impact is greatest among older people and those living in deprived communities, where limiting long-term illness is reported at twice the rate seen in the least deprived areas.

Public Health Scotland projects that the overall burden of disease will increase by 21% by 2043, with cancers and cardiovascular disease remaining the leading causes of ill health.

The Scottish Government is developing a new approach to long-term conditions, recognising that current support is often focused on individual conditions rather than the needs of people living with multiple health problems. As demand continues to grow, prevention, early intervention and coordinated support will be increasingly important to improve health outcomes and reduce inequalities.

For more information on healthy life expectancy see the SPICe blog [Scotland's life and healthy life expectancy: Key facts and figures](#) and the SPICe briefing [Promoting Healthy Ageing in Scotland](#)

[Long-term conditions in Scotland – SPICe Spotlight | Solas air SPICe](#)

Free Housing Lunch & Learn sessions

Links to our free Lunch and Learn sessions we're doing at Shelter Scotland. These are 1-hour sessions on Homeless Rights and Damp & Disrepair.



The dates are as follows:

Tue Aug 18th (12pm – 1pm) Shelter Scotland - Housing Rights - Homelessness Part 1
[Shelter Scotland - Housing Rights - Homelessness Part 1](#)

- Wed Aug 19th (12pm – 1pm) Shelter Scotland - Housing Rights - Homelessness Part 2 [Shelter Scotland - Housing Rights - Homelessness Part 2](#)
- Tue Aug 25th (12pm – 1pm) Shelter Scotland - Housing Rights - Dampness & Disrepair Part 1 [Shelter Scotland - Housing Rights - Dampness & Disrepair Part 1](#)
- Wed Aug 26th (12pm – 1pm) Shelter Scotland - Housing Rights - Dampness & Disrepair Part 2 [Shelter Scotland - Housing Rights - Dampness & Disrepair Part 2](#)

Join us online on for an informative session on homeless rights!

Enquiries to admin@grampianadviceforum.co.uk

More Support for Carers During Breaks in Care

Good news for unpaid carers across Scotland. Social Security Scotland has made changes to **Carer Support Payment** that give carers greater flexibility to take a temporary break from caring without losing financial support.



Since March 2026, carers no longer need to have been providing care for a minimum period before they can continue receiving support during a temporary break. This removes previous eligibility restrictions and makes it easier for carers to take a holiday, recover from illness, or manage other circumstances while maintaining their benefit entitlement.

Under the new rules, **Carer Support Payment can continue for up to four weeks during a temporary break from caring, or up to 12 weeks where a hospital stay is involved**, within any six-month period.

The Scottish Government has also extended bereavement support, allowing carers to continue receiving payments for **12 weeks after the death of the person they cared for**, giving additional financial security during a difficult time.

These improvements are unique to Scotland and form part of a wider package of support for unpaid carers, including the **Scottish Carer Supplement** and **Carer Additional Person Payment**.

Find Out More

- [Social Security Scotland: More access to financial support during temporary breaks from caring](#)

In summary: Carers in Scotland can now take a temporary break from caring with greater confidence, knowing that their financial support can continue during that period.

Pensioners to Benefit from Winter Heating Support

The Scottish Government has confirmed that Pension Age Winter Heating Payment will continue to provide vital support to older people across Scotland, helping with the cost of heating their homes during the winter months.



The payment replaces the previous Winter Fuel Payment in Scotland and is delivered by Social Security Scotland. Eligible pensioners will receive financial support automatically in most cases, meaning there is usually no need to apply.

The support is intended to help older people manage rising energy costs and reduce the risk of fuel poverty during the colder months. Payment amounts depend on individual circumstances, including age and household composition.

Anyone who is unsure whether they qualify, or who wants to learn more about the payment, can find full details on the Social Security Scotland website.

Find out more: [Read the Social Security Scotland announcement](#)

Pensioner Poverty: Millions Missing Out on Support



A new report from Independent Age highlights that many older people are missing out on benefits they are entitled to, including Pension Credit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction. The charity estimates that 1.2 million pensioners are not claiming Pension Credit, leaving around £2.5 billion unclaimed.

The report suggests that improving benefit take-up could help 2.5 million older people facing financial hardship, lift 280,000 out of poverty and reduce pressure on health and social care services.

For advisers, the message is clear: a full benefit check can make a significant difference to an older person's income and wellbeing. The report calls on the Government to develop a national strategy to increase take-up of pensioner benefits.

Read the full report: [The only way is up](#)

CONFERENCE ON NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS (NRPF)

SAVE THE DATE

Informing Policy
and Practice
through Lived
Experience

↓ when
Tuesday 25th August 2026
10:00 – 17:00

↓ where
Woodhill House
Westburn Road
Aberdeen, AB16 5GB

No Recourse
North East
Partnership

