



# Welfare Rights Newsletter

Spring 2026



**Find out inside how we can help get benefits to the people who need them.**

**Argyll and Bute Council**

[www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)

# Welfare Rights Newsletter

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## Welfare rights – how we can help you

We help people get the benefits they are entitled to. Many people claim benefits at some point in their lives, often when their circumstances change. Our service is free, confidential and includes advice and information on all aspects of the welfare benefits system

- Advice or help on how and when to apply for benefits including completion of benefit application forms
- Benefit checks to ensure clients are receiving all the benefits they are entitled to advice and assistance with challenging decisions including representation at benefit appeal tribunals where appropriate
- Signposting to other help and support available

In 2025/26 people in Argyll and Bute accessed more than **£5.4 million** of additional income through benefit entitlement thanks to help from our Welfare Rights Team.

To Contact Welfare Rights please:

- Call us on **01546 605517**
- Complete our [online form](#)
- Or email us at [welfare.rights@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:welfare.rights@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

## Benefit news

### Key changes to Scottish Government's Carer Support Payment

The Scottish Government has making further improvements to the financial support for unpaid carers in Scotland.

From March 2026:

- Carer Additional Person Payment, a new payment for carers who look after more than one person is available
- Carer's Allowance Supplement replaces Scottish Carer Supplement, meaning carers will now receive £11.70 per week, this will have no effect on any other benefits
- Financial support for carers after the person they look after dies will be extended from 8 to 12 weeks



The new rules will improve access to support during breaks in care

Carers will not have to do anything because of these changes to [Carer's Support Payment](#), unless they want to tell us about an additional person they are caring for.

### Changes to Universal Credit in 2026

From April 2026, the Limited Capability for Work and Work-Related Activity (LCWRA) element of Universal Credit has been reduced for new claimants, from £423.27 to £217.26 per month. Existing claimants will continue to receive the higher rate, which will be frozen at its current level until 2029/2030. The standard allowance for Universal Credit (UC) will increase annually from April 2026, and the name for the LCWRA element will change to "health element".

The Work Capability Assessment will continue for the time being, but the government is developing a new system to assess a person's ability to work and apply sanctions.

#### What this means for claimants

- If you are a new claimant after April 2026: You will receive a lower LCWRA amount, unless you meet the criteria for a severe condition, are terminally ill or are a "pre 2026" claimant
- If you are unsure: You may want to contact us to understand how these changes will affect your specific circumstances.

**Please contact us if you need help to apply for Universal Credit**

## Moving to Scotland on disability benefits

Disabled people and carers who move to Scotland from other parts of the UK must take action if they want to continue receiving financial support.

The Scottish Government has introduced replacements for Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance and Carer's Allowance.



Anyone getting one of these benefits who moves to Scotland will need to apply for the replacement benefits from Social Security Scotland as soon as possible after they move to avoid any delay in payment.

**Contact us for more information if you require help with an application**

## Support for households using heating oil and LPG

The Scottish Government's Emergency Heating Oil Scheme provides £300 of support for those struggling with the cost of domestic heating oil and Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG). It will last until Wednesday 30 September 2026, or until the fund runs out. It is administered by Advice Direct Scotland. Payments will be made directly to suppliers, where possible, to help qualifying households to place an order.

### Who is eligible?

You can apply if all the following apply to you:

- your home is heated by oil or LPG
- you pay the fuel bill for your home
- the home is your main or only home
- you've bought fuel on or after Wednesday 1 April 2026 OR you are about to place an order; and
- no-one at your address has had an award in the last three months.

### How to apply

You can apply through Advice Direct Scotland online at [homeheatingadvice.scot](https://homeheatingadvice.scot) or by calling [0800 048 7413](tel:08000487413).

## Do you know your State Pension age?

Between April 2026 and March 2028, the State Pension age will gradually rise from 66 to 67, affecting those born on or after 6 April 1960.

Use the free State Pension age calculator on [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk) to find your exact age — you just need your date of birth. You can also use the [Check your State Pension forecast tool](#) to see how much you might get and if you can increase it, for example, by filling any gaps in your record.



Remember, your State Pension doesn't start automatically. The Pension Service will write to you around four months before you reach State Pension age to invite you to apply.

## Out and about

The Welfare Rights Team works closely with a variety of partners, community groups and organisations to provide talks and training on a range of welfare rights issues.

We continue to attend and provide information at events and groups across Argyll and Bute including the islands. These have generally been well received and have generated a number of referrals to our service.

We also provide Welfare Rights advice at various GP surgeries across Argyll and Bute.

To find out more and book, please contact us on: **01546 605517**

Or email us at [welfare.rights@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:welfare.rights@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

## Debt counselling/Money advice

The Debt Counselling/Money Advice Service is available to anyone and covers the whole of Argyll and Bute. There are various options of temporary or permanent solutions depending on individual circumstances.

If assistance is required, please contact the service on **01546 604176**

## Help and support contacts

To contact Welfare Rights please:

Call us on **01546 605517**

Complete our [online form](#)

Or email us at [welfare.rights@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:welfare.rights@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

[Cost of living support – money, bills and benefits information](#)



Cost of living support

Debt counselling/Money advice service: **01546 604176**

Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau: **01546 605550**

[info@abcab.org.uk](mailto:info@abcab.org.uk)

Help to Claim Universal Credit: **0800 0232 581**

Bute Advice Centre: **01700 502 784**

[info@buteadvice.org.uk](mailto:info@buteadvice.org.uk)

Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) provide Welfare Rights advice to their tenants, Call **0800 028 2755** to make an appointment with an adviser.

[welfare.rights@acha.co.uk](mailto:welfare.rights@acha.co.uk)

Fyne Homes Welfare Rights: **0345 607 7117**