Universal Credit -
Our Recent Journey

Pre Covid Activities

A refreshed national housing group is in place to look at what can be improved in Universal Credit housing at this point and going forward.

We constantly review our plan of activities to embed continuous delivery and drive stakeholder improvements

Our areas of focus are generally taken from internal, stakeholder and customer feedback, ongoing system review along with analysing where things have gone wrong (or working well) to share good practice.

Scotland

- New Scotland Housing Lead in place

- Leads by DWP district were reviewed

- A Scotland Housing Group was set up

- Refreshed our local escalation routes

- Use customer and landlord insight to understand issues that impact.

- Look at methods of improving our communications and engagement internally/externally

- Senior Safeguarding roles have been introduced

Our Covid Response

- Immediate, rapid "avalanche" style increase in Universal Credit claims, other DWP benefits were also impact
- We moved to a mix of working from home and on site
- Every office was kept open to protect and continue to deliver a service to our most vulnerable customers.
- We adapted the way we deliver – we now have a significant increase in telephony and digital contact.
- We reviewed our internal process
- Initially, most efforts were targeted toward ensuring customer payments were made on time.
- We added another layer of support contacting customers by phone – a check-in style call.
- Now returning to a new kind of business as usual.
- Focus on additional support for homeless customers (in Scotland with SFHA and other stakeholders).

Housing Areas Progressed during the Covid Period

In 2020 we made a number of improvements to the verification process and continue to look for ways to make the UC experience better for landlords and customer. The match rate on the portal has increased significantly.

A test and learn approach to allow Landlords to upload annual rent changes has shown that are still issues to work through. Going forward towards April 21 Programme colleagues prioritised time to look again at this area and they continue to explore short/long term options that might be possible.

A feature to allow you to change a tenancy reference number, this feature has been well used and supports the roll out of the new payment feature we started in August and are scheduled to complete in early November. Roll out went in order of the landlords with highest volumes of Managed payments first so we are now working with those that have smaller numbers.

UC Housing

Thank You - Time for Questions