

Withdrawn

This publication is withdrawn.

This publication is no longer current.

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition



Key Activities for March / April	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathfinder Go Live 29 April 	
Meetings for March / April	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGA Workshop – 8 March London • Early Findings workshop 10 April at Birmingham Five ways. 	
General Information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huddle is going live at the end of March. It is a Communication Hub that is accessible to partners outside of the DWP network where we can place information and allows discussion groups in a secure environment. Huddle is technically described as social media but we will be using it for work collaboration, particularly in communicating with local authorities (LAs) (by invitation only). • Exchange workshop took place 31/01/13 and 01/02/13 for LA pilot leads with a focus on support evaluation and communications. 	
<p>This update is to support both internal and external communications in relation to the LA led pilots. If you have any queries relating to the pilots and/or suggestions for improving this Update, please send them to: <u>LALED.PILOTS@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK</u></p>	
Bath & North East Somerset Council	
Aims	<p>The Bath and North East Somerset pilot is city focussed and aims to reduce complexity and provide mediated support. It will provide face to face contact, identifying those customers most in need. This activity will complement the Customer Access Programme which is about delivering standard operating models using the web as the key delivery mechanism.</p>
Update	<p>Bath and North East Somerset attended an information sharing workshop in Rugby with representatives from all the LA led pilot areas and DWP Universal Credit stakeholders. Bath has worked with DWP analyst support to assure completion of the baseline evaluation template. The template has now been completed and submitted. The first lessons learned return has been submitted detailing the early lessons from the pilot.</p> <p>An early finding from case study work has highlighted the fact that despite customers having issues surrounding their finances; many are not taking up the support available to them. As a result of this, a measure has now been introduced to enable analysis of this lack of engagement to see if there is a pattern surrounding this reluctance to receive help and support with financial support. Early review of the breakdown of customers going through the process has revealed that the pilot has not picked up a significant number of Carers and ESA customers. To address this gap in claimant coverage the team are arranging for a piece to be included in the Carers Centre Newsletter with a view to promoting pilot participation amongst these groups.</p> <p>The JCP advisor seconded to the BANES pilot has identified those customers affected by the benefit cap and is starting to invite them in for an individual discussion to identify potential support options. Two extra members of staff have also been allocated to the pilot to help</p>

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

	<p>with the collection and analysis of pilot related data. Bath has also visited one of their main homeless shelters to discuss the changes that will be happening, and the support available to them.</p>
Birmingham City Council	
Aims	<p>This pilot will deliver channel shift by increasing self service and reducing digital exclusion. The pilot will identify, through triage, the level of intervention required to help customers sustain and manage their finances and improve digital literacy and financial capability. It will also introduce an online Digital Logbook which will be a personal account for individuals containing references to support services.</p>
Update	<p>The Digital Logbook continues to be used by new tenants with a 95% success rate of people using online facilities. Customers are taking the opportunity to register and obtain an email address before attending their initial interview which is saving time. Of those who are have not been able to access the online services, these appear to be claimants with learning difficulties and therefore require additional support to get online.</p> <p>Birmingham have been approached by existing tenants as to the availability of the Digital Logbook as they have heard about it from their friends/family who have become new tenants. Birmingham are managing the numbers accordingly.</p> <p>Birmingham has learnt an early lesson from their pilot and their use of language is now more directive rather than choice based.</p> <p>Birmingham stats from the Letting Suites shows that they have helped their tenants in identifying £8.55m in underclaimed benefits. Housing Benefit and Council Tax makes up nearly 90% of this figure.</p>
London Borough of Lewisham	
Aims	<p>The pilot will develop a model that assesses vulnerability and provides a face to face mechanism for providing intensive support where needed. It comprises 3 stages, design, delivery and evaluation and will develop a holistic approach bringing together advice on employment, housing, financial and digital inclusion. The aim is to complete assessment of individuals in the first three months of the delivery phase.</p> <p>This pilot will begin to impact on claimants during January and it is anticipated that over 1000 will be affected.</p>
Update	<p>Lewisham's pilot is working with people affected by the benefit cap to test an approach to triage and support provision for people with complex needs who may struggle to cope with the transition to the standard universal credit system. Following a three month design phase from October to December, the pilot has just completed its prototype phase, working with 100 residents to test the approach.</p> <p>During the prototype phase in January, 100 customers were contacted to test the end to end process. Of the 100, Lewisham were able to contact 81 and 51 were taken through the triage process (other support needs or unidentified exemptions excluded some residents). Lewisham have started to identify trends with the need levels identified by claimants. For example, over half are already in some debt and most say that they are concerned about monthly payments,</p>

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

	<p>nearly all of the people contacted are not currently responsible for making their own rent payments.</p> <p>During the prototype phase, 44 claimants were taken through the support planning process Lewisham have developed which includes a detailed financial calculation explaining the impact of the benefit cap and UC on household income on ways payments will be claimed and received. Following on from this, officers take the claimant through a face to face support planning session covering employment, housing, digital and financial support needs. This is followed up with a personalised support plan including referrals to key agencies which can provide on-going support. From these support interviews, Lewisham have started to identify key areas where the local authority is likely need to work with its partners in designing local provision to meet transitional needs. In particular, this includes integrated employment and childcare support and more intensive budgeting, financial management and debt management support.</p> <p>Following a week in early February spent learning, reflecting and re-designing the pilot approach following this prototype phase, Lewisham went live with the second phase of customer contact to 250 residents. Of this second group of claimants, to date 59 have been taken through the triage process and appointments have been completed or are scheduled for 59. Lewisham expect to be able to report outcomes and learning from this phase in March.</p>
Melton Borough Council	
Aims	<p>This pilot has two key aims. The first looks at improving access to, and take up of online services for working age claimants. This includes understanding and documenting the barriers faced by those who feel unable to self-serve or those who need to be supported to do so. A combination of customer insight, local authority and partner data will enable the pilot to capture customer journeys and behaviours in order to target and tailor plans to meet the needs of customers in specific groups.</p> <p>The second deals with the council's most vulnerable customers in the community. The pilot aims to identify who these people are and how best to support them towards becoming more financially independent and ready for work. This will be achieved by working closely with a small group, on an in-depth personal basis, to try to meet their specific individual needs. Partnership working is key to helping Melton achieve their aims, and they will integrate partner services wherever possible.</p>

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

Update	<p>The pilot Steering Group meeting took place on 20 February and reported good progress on all key pilot objectives. In addition to its work on channel shift and with vulnerable customer groups, the pilot is working closely with Jobcentre Plus to introduce a triage service for Lone Parents at two of its Children's Centres. Triage will provide a more holistic approach to both Jobcentre Plus and Council services for lone parent new joiner interviews. It is hoped that the service will be launched by the end of March 2013.</p> <p>The first meeting of the monthly Partnership Delivery Group took place on 18 February. It was attended by a number of key partners including a representative from the Citizens Advice Bureaux. This group will enable Melton to achieve the aims of the pilot. Initially it will be looking at new ways of using existing resources as imaginatively and innovatively as possible. In order to gain an early understanding of local provision, identify any gaps and deliver more effective signposting/referrals, members of the group have been asked to complete a template detailing the services they already provide and ideas for additional support they can offer, to increase the potential for successful outcomes.</p> <p>A local Town Forum took place in Melton on 19 February. The event aimed to promote general awareness of the Welfare Reform agenda and inform future planning. It was supported by a number of partners including Leicestershire County Council and DWP. The event was very well attended by local residents who were interested in understanding the impact of the Welfare Reforms on them as individuals. Attendees were asked to complete an evaluation questionnaire which will be analysed and used to inform both pilot activity and the broader work of the Council.</p> <p>The pilot received television coverage on 10 February as part of the regional BBC Sunday Politics Show. The coverage featured feedback from a resident who has benefited from help and support by Melton's employment and skills worker and its partners. The BBC was very positive about the pilot and expressed interest in running a follow up programme in the autumn.</p>
North Dorset District Council	
Aims	<p>Their proposal is to work in specified rural areas to provide services from CAB, Spectrum (the local housing provider), Jobcentre Plus, and Credit Union, to deliver money advice, budgeting and employability support in a rural environment and to learn lessons about the most effective approaches to deliver positive outcomes for remote customers. This will deliver lessons around engagement with online access in remote areas. The key focus of the proposals is a deprived ward in Blandford and a remote village.</p>
Update	<p>The partnership working element of the pilot is working very well and a signposting document has been produced to enable all partners to provide the same information to customers. There are strong links between the LA and Housing Associations with regard to training courses and general closer working with a member of LA staff working some days in Housing Association offices.</p>

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

	<p>There have been two financial awareness training courses so far; the first being well attended but only 7 attending the second. Work is being undertaken to find out why there is poor performance and in the meantime it is likely that courses will be delivered fortnightly rather than weekly.</p> <p>The CAB are getting a good number of drop ins but not targeted interventions as yet but are looking to increase the availability of drop in appointments. They are capturing information on issues that have arisen that could link to the prospect of Universal Credit i.e. people are looking for more information on how UC will affect them.</p> <p>The job club has been successful in finding more volunteers and are looking to increase opening hours to provide more public access to PCs. They are finding that people are taking longer to log on to areas such as Universal Job Match as they don't know how to use a PC and so need support and time to consolidate.</p> <p>The Credit Union have now been able to provide some small loans and in one case this was used to purchase a scooter enabling the customer to be mobile and find work. The customer successfully found a job and has been able to pay off the loan more quickly. The Credit Union is linked into the financial training provided by Adult Services.</p>
Oxford City Council	
Aims	The aim of the pilot is to identify customers who may be adversely impacted by the benefit reforms and is primarily intended to assist claimants into work
Update	<p>Oxford has written to around 1000 customers affected by the Under-Occupancy changes and is now dealing with the resultant customer enquires. Initial contact is handled by the Customer Service Centre and, where an additional support need is identified, a referral is made to the Welfare Reform Outreach worker who will pick up the case for support. To date, Oxford have identified approximately 40 customers who require further support and have held 5 triage interviews with more scheduled as the pilot goes forward.</p> <p>Partners for the initial stage of the Pilot have been identified and engaged. They are CAB, Job Centre Plus and Skills UK; these have been chosen based on the Services they are able to provide, lined to the customer needs identified to date. Processes for referrals and capturing and feeding back the learning have been established.</p> <p>With Customer interviews underway and partners now on board Oxford are testing the triage and barrier identification process. Oxford expect to start to learn quickly the effectiveness of the referral processes that have been developed and the potential levels of support needed for helping customers into work.</p>
Rushcliffe Borough Council	
Aims	Rushcliffe aim to deliver an improved service to working age claimants by offering an integrated service through multi-skilled front line

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

	<p>advisers at their Community Services Centre in West Bridgford and a number of outreach locations throughout the borough. Local authority staff are already experts in council, housing and police matters and will work with partners, including Jobcentre Plus, to gain the skills and knowledge required to provide job broking services and advice, to support claimants in accessing online services. They will also offer advice on financial management. Partnership working will enable more enquiries to be resolved at the first point of contact and provision of self service terminals with mediated support where necessary, will move claimants towards independence.</p>
Update	<p>Rushcliffe and Jobcentre Plus continue to work together to develop the provision of Jobcentre services from Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre. A gradual increase in service provision is envisaged over coming months, so that Rushcliffe residents are able to access many Jobcentre services from the Centre and receive help and advice either on-line through the self-serve terminals, or in person from an adviser. Rushcliffe and Jobcentre Plus are also working together to join up services to employers where possible and will be holding a Jobs fair in the town centre in April.</p> <p>The marketing and communications campaign for self service and the work of the pilot has commenced. There have been a number of communications featuring the launch of the self-service website including a press release, and an article on the work of the pilot has been submitted to the Local Government Chronicle for publication. Further publicity is planned for March including an article in "Rushcliffe Reports" promoting the self-service website and including a reference to the range of partners that can now be accessed at the Centre and the work of the self-service pilot. The article will reach 47,000 residents and a range of local businesses. A flyer advertising self service will be included in every Council Tax bill sent out in March.</p> <p>Rushcliffe continues to focus on one of its key project aims - Integration. The Council now have eight partners operating from the Centre on a part time basis and are in discussion with others including Nottinghamshire County Council. It is hoped that further partnership agreements will be signed over coming months and these new working arrangements will be of benefit to mutual customers.</p> <p>Rushcliffe and two of their partners – Rushcliffe Advice Network and Jobcentre Plus are running a customer survey. It aims to collect information on the percentage of people that can and will self-serve, reasons why others can't, and whether they have bank accounts. The survey is collecting postcodes, not names and addresses, and with the help of Experian Mosaic Data, Rushcliffe hope to be able to identify whether there are area clusters of customers that will require extra targeted marketing and communication in the run up to the launch of UC.</p>
West Lindsey District Council	
Aims	<p>The pilot is aimed at ensuring benefits are: easily accessible; provided in an efficient way and allows the for the discovery or prevention of fraud. The pilot will also ensure links with other service providers by</p>

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

	<p>providing a seamless process through the joint working of services provided by WLDC, Jobcentre Plus, Lincolnshire County Council, third sector partners and CAB.</p>
Update	<p>Without the on line HB form, there have been limits to work undertaken by the joint LA/DWP Ops team but it is anticipated that the form will be ready at the beginning of March when all staff will be able to provide a more holistic service.</p> <p>Those that are coming into the Guildhall are being supported where necessary to complete JSA online and directed to Housing officers on the same site to complete Housing Benefit claims at the same time. The provision of the public access PCs has also provided support for those logging on to Universal Job Match and there have been many customers coming back regularly for this purpose. When questioned the vast majority of customers said that they welcomed the help and support provided at the early stage.</p> <p>The Credit Union are soon to be based in the Guildhall too providing more of a one stop shop. Discussions are underway about verification of documents so that a bank account could be opened whilst the customer is in the Guildhall.</p> <p>Partnerships are being developed and a working group set up. Meetings have been held with training providers and community link champions and a training session is planned for volunteers in early March. This will help to support the later phases in other parts of the District.</p>
Dumfries & Galloway Council	
Aims	<p>The authority recognises that there is presently very little in terms of services for Housing Benefit and Council tax online. A survey conducted by the authority 18 months ago concluded that only 2% of users wanted on-line access to services.</p> <p>The LA will look to change tenant behaviour and develop evaluation to monitor the impact. Broadband access is around 42% for the area, RSL's, CAB and other partners such as Women's Aid will encourage access. They recognise they are at an early stage for setting up digital by default but will pursue a system of self service. This is a channel shift rather than more resource.</p>
Update	<p>Dumfries and Galloway continue to publicise digital access to HB/CTB via their website. Take up rate from Dec to Feb is rising slowly and further publicity is planned. The percentage of claimants self serving in Jan was 13% of all new claims. Significant proportions are still being completed with assistance especially from the Local Authority Homeless Team. Taking the Homeless Team assistance out of the equation, the figures rise to 31% of new claims being completed on line.</p> <p>Early lessons are that, no IT access and customer behaviour are barriers to increasing digital take up. Particularly in rural locations, customers are routinely attending the office and more needs to be done to publicise alternative methods. Initially, the plan was to develop public access points via the library network but consideration is now being given to introduce public access computers in Council</p>

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

	<p>offices.</p> <p>The Employability team have delivered 1 basic IT course with 2 more in progress and a further 6 planned for March. Evaluation from these events will be provided.</p> <p>2 Financial awareness sessions have now been run. Although well received by participants, the attendance rate has been disappointing and the authority is now looking to integrate the sessions with other events to increase numbers. Early feedback is that claimants do not fully understand the financial implications of wider welfare reforms, in particular under occupancy.</p> <p>Arising from these sessions 1 customer is receiving additional support for her debt situation.</p> <p>Strong partnership links are in place between the authority and JCP and discussions have taken place to facilitate referrals and support.</p>
North Lanarkshire Council	
<p>Aims</p>	<p>The intention is to target around 6,000-7,000 council tenants who will be affected by the new “under occupancy” rules and to look at those that have the worst financial impact.</p> <p>There is a clear recognition that the people being targeted have the highest levels of poverty and poor levels of tenancy sustainment. Many live in workless households where there is generational worklessness. The advice they intend to offer will be based on individual needs, not just welfare changes, and will include information and advice around returning to work.</p> <p>The intention is to set up a new system which will compare council rents to information on under occupancy and use data such as birthdays (e.g. someone about to reach 18) to enable early intervention to be initiated especially with the vulnerable. Housing and social work will provide a conduit to direct customers to a range of services based on their individual needs (including employment and advice services).</p> <p>Historically Housing Benefit services have sat alone but this pilot will provide links to other services.</p>
<p>Update</p>	<p>North Lanarkshire are currently undertaking an extensive exercise involving contacting 1300 council tenants affected by the 25% reduction in Housing Benefit as a result of under occupancy. Visits commenced 4/2/13 and are being undertaken by Tenancy Sustainment Officers. The exercise is due to be completed early March with initial findings being available Mid March. In conjunction, 300 tenants from 2 RSLs and 180 claimants affected by Benefit Cap are also being interviewed.</p> <p>The interviews will focus on claimant plans to make up the shortfall and exploring financial situations such as reviewing household budgets and employment options. Information is also being gathered on vulnerability, digital access and rent arrears.</p> <p>Following on from the interviews, referrals are starting to come through to debt advice and income maximisation. There has also been interest in financial capability training and more details will be available on completion of the exercise.</p> <p>The interview process is being supplemented by outgoing calls from</p>

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

	<p>North Lanarkshire Customer Contact centre to RSL tenants and this has contributed to increased service take up.</p> <p>JCP are prominent in a Joint Welfare Reform group incorporating Housing Benefit, Money Advice, Social Work, Employability and 3rd sector providers. All are supportive of the pilot and view it as necessary claimant preparation for welfare reforms.</p>
West Dunbartonshire Council	
Aims	<p>The key focus of the pilot is to evaluate the delivery of a new service called Working 4U. The proposal is to fund additional evaluation, specifically to focus on the 'customer experience'. This evaluation will look at how customers are benefiting from the pilot in terms of the cultural change and getting them ready for the introduction of Universal Credit.</p>
Update	<p>West Dunbartonshire have carried out a small number of telephone based evaluation calls to gauge the effectiveness of Working 4U. The selection was based on customers who had used Employability/ Community learning and Welfare Rights advice.</p> <p>The findings were that customers were happy with the quality of advice and options and the services had high engagement levels. All respondents felt they had accessed what they wanted from the Local Authority and it had helped them move forward.</p> <p>However, respondents didn't recognise the Working 4U branding which suggests the "joined up approach" needs to be communicated / publicised. Discussions are ongoing within the authority regarding a re-launch which should result in a greater awareness and take up. Discussions are also ongoing with JCP to facilitate closer partnership working and the JCP District Manager is fully supportive of presenting a joined up approach and sharing of experience. This will result in the provision of Working 4U being clarified to JCP staff and enhance referrals.</p> <p>The authority is now looking to develop evaluation of those who have left the Working 4U services and document the reasons for disengagement. They will also be surveyed regarding the effectiveness and quality of services provided.</p>
Caerphilly County Borough Council	
Aims	<p>The overall aim of the pilot is to reduce the need for mediated support for claimants. This will be achieved by increasing their awareness of the move to Universal Credit and its capacity for self-service via greater access to digital services and access to work. The pilot will also explore the viability and efficacy of enhancing support available to help citizens make claims within their communities (eg, in local libraries) and from agencies other than the Council, such as Registered Social Landlords.</p>
Update	<p>Digital Fridays within Caerphilly continue to be successful with six sessions held so far and 125 customers attending these (20-25 per week). These sessions are held in local libraries where customers are given a basic overview of computer skills to enable them to get online</p>

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

	<p>and do such things as search for jobs using Universal Jobmatch.</p> <p>All Digital Friday sessions are now being supported by Digital Champions. A total of eleven volunteers have been registered and received training and a further 6 are awaiting training.</p> <p>Caerphilly in association with CAB has designed a half day training overview for their staff on the financial impacts of Welfare Reform on their customers. This will give staff insight into Debt and financial awareness, what it is and how customers need to prioritise their financial profiles better. A full day course is currently being designed as staff have requested further training in this area. A review of the courses will be undertaken at 6 and 12 weeks to see how well the training has been received and how this has been shared with customers.</p> <p>Caerphilly's online claim form has gone live and despite not being widely advertised take up has been better than expected. Caerphilly will be designing a leaflet to promote the service and this will hopefully be published in March.</p>
Newport City Council	
Aims	<p>The key focus is to greatly increase the number of customers accessing services via non-mediated channels, and will support their activity with an aggressive marketing/publicity campaign. Newport recently introduced an Information Station where they have co-located their face to face services, including partner organisations eg, Jobcentre Plus, CAB, and RSL's. These partners are keen to be involved in the pilot and extend their service to further support work service activities and financial inclusion. Newport will mobilise Customer Service Officers into their Information Stations to encourage customers away from face to face support and onto self-serve machines.</p>
Update	<p>Touch screen Kiosks have been successfully installed at 2 of the 3 locations with Newport with the remaining kiosk due to be installed imminently.</p> <p>Staff have begun working at Newport's Information Station and attending events to promote online awareness.</p> <p>The online claim and change of circs forms are now "Live" but being tested by staff with real Council Tax data before being made live to the public.</p> <p>Internal communications and an information session have been successful in raising awareness of the project for Council staff, allowing staff to promote the campaign to Newport customers.</p> <p>The "Save time, Go online" logo has been added to paper application forms.</p> <p>Major publicity campaign has been launched with a "Save time, go online" video and competition.</p> <p>Significant work has been put into planning and designing the posters and business cards that will be used throughout the project</p> <p>Newport has begun a massive campaign to encourage parents to re-</p>

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

	<p>enrol online, when their child's swimming lessons end. This will include having a presence at leisure centres (evenings and weekends when the lessons are taking place), talking to parents while their children swim, and handing out business cards with instructions for them to keep.</p>
<p>Pathfinder area</p>	
<p>Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council</p>	
Aims	<p>The pilot aims to reduce the demand for face-to-face support by encouraging the use of on line services. It will also improve community resilience and self-help by equipping a broad range of community leaders at a local level with a tailored training programme who would offer peer-to-peer support initially focusing on specific BME groups within the borough.</p>
Update	<p>The sub group dealing with the specific tasks of the Face to Face pilot is now in place and we are in the process of identifying and setting up engagement with BME (Black and Ethnic Minority) Groups and identifying other vulnerable groups. The procurement of our Housing Benefit e-form is almost complete and Oldham will use this to allow our team to demonstrate the ease in which an electronic claim can be made. The Pilot team are about to receive a course on Personal Budgeting Support (PBS) so that they can discuss this with the groups they engage with. This course will form the basis of the course which is being developed for PBS in Pathfinder from 29 April 2012 where a customer has a payment exception.</p>
<p>Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council</p>	
Aims	<p>The pilot aims to increase on line services and build confidence in self service when using them. It also aims to give individuals the ability to achieve financial independence through increased earnings and the ability to earn and manage their money well, providing claimants with the skills and knowledge to achieve budgetary competence.</p>
Update	<p>The delivery of the on line training course continues while take up has been slow feedback has been positive. In an effort to promote the courses new contact and advertising methods are being developed. These include including flyers in benefit notifications, leafleting in the community, local press advertising and North West tonight has arranged to air a report.</p> <p>A Community Bus is being used to take key messages out; the bus is being used to support the delivery Universal Credit priorities and key messages with Local Authority staff and their client groups being aligned. Currently the bus is predominantly a marketing tool but over the next 2 to 4 weeks it will include a 20-30 minute online training solutions and residents will be able to complete modules on the bus. This will hook them into the automated training database that is being developed.</p> <p>Surveys to capture data from customers in the field are being developed. These will ask customers where would be a good venue. What time is best for them, what do they feel they need support on.</p>

2013 Focus LA Led Pilots Monthly Update 4th Edition

	<p>Other training developments include dialogue with Wigan Warriors Marketing Director. They are very supportive of what is being done and have offered support through their web and an ambassador from their playing squad.</p>
--	---