

Ms Sarah Gresty
Clerk to Stretton Parish Council
Tar Cottage
Ryhall Heath
Stamford
Lincs PE9 4EF

30 May 2019

Dear Ms Gresty,

We would like to update you on the work of Citizens Advice Rutland. We aim to ensure that there is equal opportunity for all residents in the county to be able to access the service when they have a need.

We improved our telephone and webform (email) service over the last few years. As advised last year we are leading the Rutland Community Wellbeing Service which works in partnership with many agencies that provide advice and support to all residents across Rutland. During 2018/19 we saw 2,500 unique clients who brought 15,500 different enquiry areas to our service. Over 50% of our clients live in the wards and parishes outside Oakham.

Over 44% of the enquires received were regarding Welfare Rights issues and we expect this figure to rise in the future due to more residents claiming the benefit, Universal Credit. We have started the new Help to Claim Service for Universal Credit from April this year and we enclose a leaflet regarding this service for your information.

Below are some of the key statistics from our recent client survey

- 97% said it was easy or very easy to access our service
- 99% were satisfied or very satisfied with our opening times
- 100% were satisfied or very satisfied with the service received
- 99% were satisfied or very satisfied that the information or advice provided was easy to understand.

Here is a selection of comments received from clients from the same survey:



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

"I am most grateful for all the help I have received from your adviser. She has been most helpful to me and I would have not known what to do without this advice"

"I have been in need of your services several times over a period of many years, and have always found your help invaluable"

"Without your help I would not have been able to know that there were forms I could fill in for certain places to be aware of my situation and therefore help me even more. Many thanks"

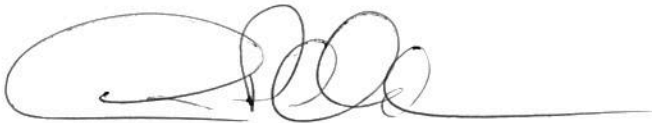
"Lovely staff very friendly and welcoming"

During 2018/19 Citizens Advice Rutland gained over £2.5 million for our clients in benefit gains and debt write offs.

We still very much rely on the support of the Rutland community to enable us to provide our vital services. We hope that you will be in a position to help us again this year in the sound knowledge that every penny donated goes to help our communities.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Mutsaars', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Simon Mutsaars
CEO

Call us for free

0800 144 8 444

Advisers are available 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Chat to us online

citizensadvice.org.uk/helptoclaim

Chat is usually available 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. If no advisers are available, the chat box won't appear.

Chat lets you talk to a trained adviser online about your Universal Credit application process – in the same way as you would over the phone or face to face.

Speak to us face to face

Help to Claim advice is available face to face in local Citizens Advice offices, and in other locations like libraries and Jobcentres.

Find the details of your nearest face to face service on our website: citizensadvice.org.uk/helptoclaim

Read our online advice

citizensadvice.org.uk/universalcREDIT

Visit our website to read more about applying for Universal Credit. This includes information on how to check if you're eligible for Universal Credit and explains what each stage of the application process involves.

Good quality, independent advice. For everyone for 80 years.

We give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.

Our network of charities offers confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person, for free.

With the right evidence, we show companies and the government how they can make things better for people.



Get help applying for Universal Credit



Help to Claim is a dedicated service from Citizens Advice.

It's free, independent, confidential and impartial.

citizensadvice.org.uk



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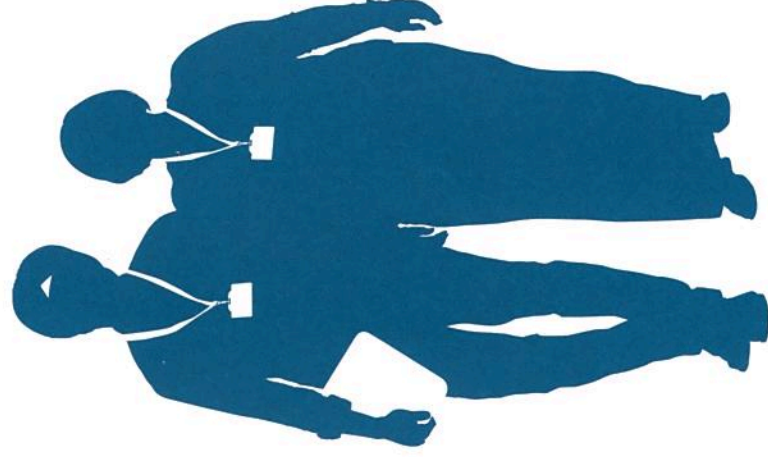
Citizens Advice is an operating name of The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux. Registered charity number 279057.

Help to Claim is a new dedicated service from Citizens Advice.

Our trained advisers can support you in the early stages of your Universal Credit claim, from the application, through to your first full payment.

It's free, independent, confidential and impartial.

You can get in touch with our advisers by phone, through online chat or face to face.



What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a benefit that can help with your everyday living costs.

You might be able to get it if you're not working or you're on a low income.

It's gradually replacing 6 other benefits:

- Housing Benefit
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Child Tax Credits
- Working Tax Credits (WTC)
- Income Support

You can't usually claim Universal Credit and any of these benefits at the same time.

If you're claiming any of these benefits, you can stay on them for the moment – unless your circumstances have changed. For example, you've moved to a different council area.

You can find out more about Universal Credit and who is eligible on our website. This includes information on how to check if you're eligible for Universal Credit and explains what each stage of the application process involves.

Visit: citizensadvice.org.uk/universalcredit

Applying for Universal

Credit

You can apply for Universal Credit online or – in some limited circumstances – by phone or at home. We can help you with any part of the application process.

If you need help with starting your Universal Credit application, it's best to gather all the details you'll need together in advance, if you can. This will save you time and make it easier to apply.

To start the application you'll need details of your:

- Housing
- Income and savings
- Childcare situation
- Other benefits, if you get any

You can find more information about what you'll need at each stage of your claim on our website citizensadvice.org.uk/startingyourclaim